

Luxury Brands and Millennials

Understanding millennial consumers in the context of luxury brands



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Abstract

Recent and unconventional developments have taken place in the luxury industry in the branding context. A new generation is entering the luxury market and will soon become a consumer group spending more money than the other age groups. Given the subjectivity of the concept of luxury, it became key to understand the motivations and drivers of millennials in relation to luxury brands. By gathering an initial knowledge, it will be possible to obtain an overview of the context in which these brands operate. To obtain such knowledge, a conceptual framework was developed, identifying social status signaling, the need for uniqueness and hedonism as the main perceived luxury values.

In order to understand and get a deeper insight into those topics, this study proposes the following research question: *How do millennials perceive and understand the luxury values?*

The research is embedded in the perspective of social constructivism and interpretivism. Therefore, society as socially constructed was accepted and allowed the authors to become part of the study in order to provide an answer to the research question.

The question is answered through the collected data of qualitative interviews and analyzed through meaning coding. Through the analysis, a positive perception towards the need for uniqueness and hedonism was observed, and a rather negative attitude towards status signaling in terms of wealth. Furthermore, new values emerged - sustainability, ethics and inclusivity - and their relationship towards the brands. However, it was found that millennials feel an attraction towards luxury brands as long as those values are perceived by the millennials as authentic, meaningful and transparent. Therefore, luxury brands have to focus on transmitting those values to the millennials

Reflecting on the brand mechanisms, managerial implications are given for luxury brands to reconnect with this specific target audience.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Problem formulation

In recent times, different developments and events have taken place in the luxury industry. One that especially hit the headlines of well-known international publishers has been the agreement between the largest luxury group, LVMH, and the celebrity Rihanna, to develop her own luxury fashion brand (Blanks, 2019). Over the years, besides her music career, the artist has collaborated with different ready-to-wear brands and launched in 2017 her successful makeup brand, Fenty Beauty (ibid.). This occurrence caught our interest, since her makeup brand has attracted a broad mass of consumers and thus represents an abrupt change of direction in her business and brand focus. Yet, it becomes intriguing the objective behind developing a luxury brand from scratch under these conditions, in a rather conservative industry mostly ruled by large conglomerates that own long existing brands with an extensive heritage and tradition. Added to the complexity, this would also be the first time that the LVMH group launched a luxury brand from scratch, after the designer Christian Lacroix, and with someone, as Rihanna, with no formal training in fashion (Diderich, 2019). As Friedman states (2019), this event reflects a shift in status in the luxury industry, in which suddenly a celebrity could have the upper hand.

We can observe a trend towards similar innovative approaches in luxury brands that have started to emerge in the luxury industry.

To begin with, Louis Vuitton, a LVMH brand, named Virgil Abloh as the artistic director of the brand's menswear line in 2018. He became one of the few afro American designers to lead a major global fashion brand (Paton and Friedman, 2018). Abloh has no formal education in fashion, his CV rather includes experience as an artist and DJ with a civil-engineering degree. He has collaborated as a creative consultant for Kanye West and created numerous fashion brands, among them Off-White, acknowledged as one of the fastest-growing brands (Long, 2018). Thus, he differs considerably from the previous artistic directors appointed in these brands. As a result, he has provided a new approach to the brand that has been perceived as something unique and innovative, which brought unusual attendants for the fashion brand, such as Kanye West and the

artist Kid Cudi (Blanks, 2019). Experts have attributed his appointment as a reflection and affirmation that the luxury industry must respond to the contemporary culture in new forms (Paton and Friedman, 2018).

Other angles have also been given to other luxury brands by increasing their relationship with social, environmental or political issues. Even though this tactic has traditionally been perceived rather as a risk in this industry (Young, 2018), well-known luxury brands, such as Balenciaga, have been giving an increased exposure to these topics and taken a position in these areas. Balenciaga's CEO expressed that in the future, commitment, activism or being "meaningful" must be part of luxury brands. He added that wearing a logo is more than a status expression nowadays, consumers must embrace the aesthetic and share the brand values (Amed, 2019).

Lastly, not so long ago, feminism messages and activism also struck the fashion shows of Chanel and Dior, causing a turmoil in the industry and the critics (Young, 2018).

All these developments made us take a step back to understand the drivers, complexities, mechanisms and perceptions of the luxury brands nowadays. However, when taking a look at the existing literature, the most recent and relevant studies about luxury brand management seemed to have not caught up with the fast-paced luxury industry dynamics. It has to be considered that the main studies were conducted in a period during or after the financial crisis and addressed potential consumers who belonged to a different generation. As a result, this relevant literature cannot fully explain the newest occurrences and trends.

Luxury as a concept has existed since the beginning of society (Kapferer and Bastien, 2009b). Throughout history, luxury was found in all the major historical periods, such as Romans or Greeks, evolving to represent and differentiate the distinct social ranks in society. In the last years, globalization broadened the availability of luxury products to new cultures and markets. In conjunction with the development of global mass media, the communication led to a wider diffusion of the luxury world (*ibid.*).

Thus, the construct of luxury and its management has been evolving over time along with societal changes and developments. Moreover, it is also a very subjective topic which is also assessed in consumers' minds. In other words, what one person might find luxurious, another person might qualify as irrelevant or non-luxurious (Kapferer, 1997; Berthon *et al.*, 2009).

Given the emerging approaches adopted in luxury brands and the potential gap in brand management literature, it is required to understand how luxury is perceived in a new generation, the millennials, which will soon spend more on luxury products, than any other age group (Mundel, Huddleston and Vodermeier, 2017). Authors such as Kapferer (1997) or Keller (2009) already mentioned that luxury brands must remain relevant and attractive to the young consumers. Due to financial constraints, young people may not be able to afford most of the luxury products that made a brand famous, but it remains a key market in terms of brand equity (Kapferer, 1997). Therefore, resources and effort must also be allocated towards consumers that have the potential in the long run to become profitable (Keller, 2009).

In essence, the millennial generation thus represents an important consumer group necessary to comprehend. Additionally, due to the characteristics of millennials and the context they grew up in, they pose new challenges in today's market. Some studies even suggest that millennials entail difficulties for brand managers to create strong emotional bonds with them (Van den Bergh and Behrer, 2016).

There are two main aspects in literature encompassing luxury branding as a whole. The first one, mentioned previously, focuses on the brand management and strategy perspective, whereas the other one revolves around the functioning of luxury brands from the consumer behavior perspective. In the latter one, main literature establishes different perceived luxury values, which involve and explain the drivers and motivations of consumers towards luxury brands. However, to the authors' knowledge there is no research involving the perceived luxury values from millennials' point of view. Thus, in order to understand how luxury brands can remain relevant to the millennial consumers, it is required to first explore how luxury values are understood and perceived by millennials, as well as which values are important. The perception of luxury values from the millennial consumers is throughout the thesis referred to as perceived luxury values. Taking all these factors into account, in order to research this topic in depth, the research question of this paper is defined as the following:

How do millennials perceive and understand the luxury values?

This generation will become the luxury consumers of tomorrow. Therefore, it is key to understand how the different perceived luxury values interact and explain the relationship and drivers between millennials and luxury brands. With this initial knowledge gathered, this research will provide a first basis for the development of future strategies in order to increase the attractiveness of luxury brands for the new generation.

1.2. Structure of the thesis

In the following, the structure of the thesis is introduced. As seen in figure 1, the thesis starts with the introduction, where the problem statement and the research question of the study is addressed. The gap in the literature between luxury and luxury branding and millennials is described. In the second section, the conceptual framework is presented, providing deeper insights of luxury in general and luxury brand mechanisms. In addition, also the framework for the study with the three main values, uniqueness, hedonism and status, is elaborated. Afterwards, the methodology and the research design and all the related decisions made for the study are presented in order to answer the research question. In the fifth section, analysis, the findings of the interviews are presented. These are put in context and explained further in the discussion part, where the research question is answered.

In section 7 recommendations for luxury brands are given in the context of the brand mechanisms. Thereafter, in the section perspective, a broader scope for the thesis as well as future research in the research area are proposed. Finally, in section 9, the conclusion of the whole study is presented.

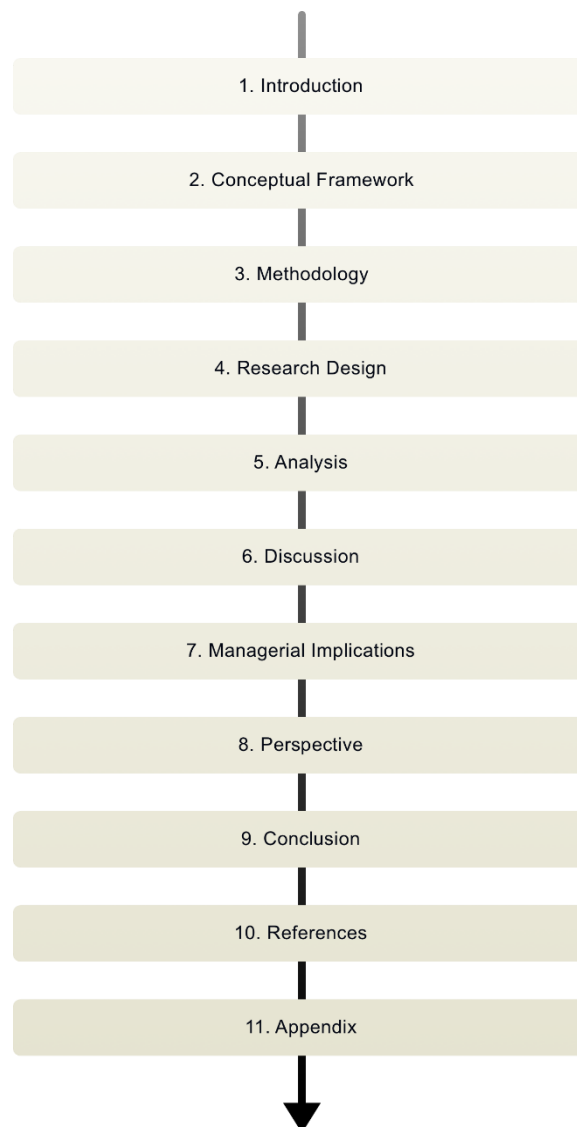


Figure 1 - Structure of the paper. Source. Authors' own creation

1.3. Limitations

In the underlying section, the limitations and the scope of the thesis are clarified.

Firstly, the research considers one specific subgroup of millennials as a sample of the millennial generation. Due to the choice to only include students about to finish their degree with perspectives of high paid salaries in the near future, the age group was narrower than the one of the whole generation. Consequently, some age groups inside the millennial generation who could be luxury consumers were not included. For

example, this applies to those who are younger and possibly earning less money at the moment, or the older ones who are already working.

Even if the interviewees included in the sample come from different countries, the focus will be on European citizens living in the same culture. Nevertheless, the cultural differentiations and aspect are not considered in this research.

The thesis is construed in order to obtain deeper insights from the potential future consumers of luxury of a certain age and situation. Even if the branding perspective is part of the thesis, the focus will not lay precisely in analyzing in depth brand campaigns. At the end, recommendations in the form of managerial implications will be provided, touching on the brand mechanisms established in the literature.

There are different areas having an influence on luxury brands and millennials, such as the role of internet or social media. However, given the focus of the research and the time and resources restriction, this aspect is not encompassed in this paper. Moreover, another important area in luxury branding and millennials is the brand experience field. However, literature concerning this big area of research has already emerged. Hence, this area will also be excluded from the main focus of this paper.



2. Conceptual Framework

In the problem statement of the underlying paper, three main interrelated topics arise: luxury and branding from the strategic brand management perspective, luxury branding from the consumer behavior angle and the millennial context. Thus, in order to obtain a thorough understanding of these three topics, the conceptual framework has also been divided in three sections accordingly. Each of them, covers and provides the necessary knowledge to comprehend these three topics in depth so that all of them in conjunction provide a consistent framework and basis to assist the whole study.

2.1. Luxury

In this first part of the conceptual framework, a review and description of the concept of luxury, followed by its brand development over time will be provided. The objective is to obtain and gather deeper insights about the main research conducted regarding this topic to then, move to the luxury brand mechanisms and characteristics. This last part focuses on the main brand management and strategies of luxury, which have been developed and researched by the main academics in the field.

Therefore, in the following, an overview of the existing main luxury literature is analyzed to examine how relevant and efficient the theories of luxury are in the context of the millennial generation.

2.1.1. Luxury as a Concept

Out of all the different studies that exist about luxury, there is not one single definition that construes the concept in precision. As many professionals and researchers point out, luxury is a highly subjective term, often related to different moral and polemic point of views that make it complex to determine an objective or universal definition (Kapferer, 1997; Berthon *et al.*, 2009).

The reason behind is that luxury is more than the material. Instead, it is better understood as a concept that depends on the social and individual context and perceptions (Berthon *et al.*, 2009). Numerous authors reflect on its subjectivity, meaning that what can be qualified as luxury for some individuals, to others it will be just ordinary, or even irrelevant and valueless (Kapferer, 1997; Berthon *et al.*, 2009).

Different perspectives have been employed to conceptualize this term. From an economic point of view, luxury objects are defined as “*those whose price/quality relationship is the highest of the market*” (Kapferer, 1997, p. 252). For example, companies such as McKinsey have referred to luxury brands as those which have steadily been able to maintain and justify high prices, i.e. substantially higher than the price of comparable goods with the same tangible functions (Kapferer, 1997). However, this approach does not help to distinguish between different luxury levels neither does establish an absolute minimum threshold. Moreover, under this definition, a brand either is or is not a luxury brand (Kapferer, 1997). In contrast, researchers defend that an absolute demarcation between luxury and utilitarian brands does not exist, they are rather perpetual (Berthon *et al.*, 2009). That is, luxury brands are not simply launched, they are rather build progressively by managing the allocation of resources in a particular way (Kapferer and Bastien, 2009a).

Academics also attempted to explain luxury from its etymological origin. On the one hand, Kapferer (1997) explains how luxury comes from the Latin term “lux” which means light. He relates both terms in the sense that a luxury brand must be seen by oneself and by others, which is why these brands externalize all their signs, so that its signature is recognized on the person wearing the brand. From this perspective, luxury brands are made to stand out and more than to offer an object, they provide a signal of good taste and wealth. Following this logic, he argues that a luxury brand is strongly associated with intangible values and ethics more than to tangibles (Kapferer, 1997). On the other hand, Berthon *et al.* (2009), relate it to the term “luxus”, meaning excess or extravagance. This stance hints the morality and polemic perception of luxury. Especially in less favorable economic times, social commentators can consider it as an indecent concept or even as a betrayal of community values (Kapferer, 1997; Berthon *et al.*, 2009).

As an abstract and intangible concept, not only etymology but also sociology and history can provide insights to better understand it. Originally, luxury was the visible and intentionally ostentatious and conspicuous result of hereditary social stratification. It acted for aristocrats as a mean to show their social rank to the rest of the population, while preserving a social distance. Thus, luxury brands evolved and exemplify the signs and attitudes of former aristocracy (Kapferer and Bastien, 2009a). Different authors, echoing Veblen, stress how luxury plays a social divisive role, since people use the conspicuous consumption of luxury brands to signal wealth, power and status (Berthon *et al.*, 2009; Kapferer, 1997). Therefore, one of the essential functions of luxury is to recreate this social stratification (Kapferer, 1997). Additionally, some authors also explain the importance and success of luxury in the last decades as a consequence of the industrialized and mass production era, in which luxury products serve as an antidote for consumers in a humdrum world (Berthon *et al.*, 2009).

Given the importance of luxury brands acting as a status symbol, there is a big area of research aiming to explain its consumption as a symbolic function at an individual, material and social or collective level. This area will be further explored in the section 2.2.

In conclusion, luxury is understood as an abstract, intangible and symbolic concept. When linked to brands, different constructs are thus given by the main authors. For example, Berthon *et al.* (2009, p. 49), summarize a luxury brand as a *“differentiated offering that delivers high levels of symbolic, experiential and functional value at the extreme luxury end of the utilitarian-luxury continuum”*. Kapferer and Bastien (2009a) view the DNA of luxury brands more from the social status impact perspective. They refer to it as *“the symbolic desire to belong to a superior class, which everyone will have chosen according to their dreams, since anything that can be a social signifier, can become a luxury”* (Kapferer and Bastien, 2009a, p. 314). It can also be noticed how different authors refer to this “dream” as a key factor inherent to luxury brands, that leads to legitimate the curiosity and interest from consumers (Okonkwo, 2009).

Furthermore, Keller (2009) refers to luxury brands as the purest example of branding, given the competitive advantage achieved that generated an immense value and wealth for companies. As a consequence, some brands as, for example, Prada, Cartier and Louis Vuitton have existed for decades (Keller, 2009). Lastly, in a more complete interpretation, Okonkwo (2009, p. 287) summarizes then the concept of luxury within the socio-psychology scope, as a *“result of its connection to a culture, state of being and lifestyle, whether it is personal or collective”*. It is associated to brands as a *“recognisable style, strong identity, high awareness, and enhanced emotional and symbolic associations. [Luxury brands] evoke uniqueness and exclusivity, and are interpreted in products through high quality, controlled distribution and premium pricing.”* (Okonkwo, 2009, p. 287).

2.1.2. Development of Luxury

As previously introduced, one of the departure points to fully grasp and understand luxury nowadays, along with its branding, is to look back in its development over time (Kapferer and Bastien, 2009b).

The concept of luxury has had a long presence in the history and intrinsically exists along with the context of society. It has been formerly reflected that this concept it was the visible outcome of the stratification of society. In those societies, the leading people had objects signaling their status. Those chosen ones enjoyed privileges that were reserved only for them. This can be seen nowadays as one of the key functions of luxury (Kapferer and Bastien, 2009b).

Luxury in this sense existed on societies with social differences, hierarchies and inequalities. The function of luxury at that time was to differentiate those higher positioned in the society from those with lower ranks, by using powerful status signaling objects. The idea of luxury then, was based on sociological issues which occurred in every society. Along with social stratification, the notion of practical utility and waste and the choices of the distribution of luxury appeared. An example is the culture of the Egyptian empire. During their lifetime the pharaoh and people close to him enjoyed indulgence of privileged products and treatment. After death, they received the honor of being buried in all honors in the pyramids *ibid*).

Similar examples can be found throughout the history of the Greek and Roman eras. The rulers and emperors and their families received during both their life time and after special treatment, only preserved for them. In essence, it can be argued that not only luxury varies with the social context, but also that, in turn, society shapes what luxury is (Berthon *et al.*, 2009; Kapferer and Bastien, 2009b). Furthermore, this also shows that the basis of luxury are not only shaped through social aspects, but also due to culture and religion (Kapferer and Bastien, 2009b).

These proceedings can be observed until the 19th century, when luxury was isolated from the main society until then and only available for a small circle of selected people. However, from then on, wealth and luxury became more accessible to everyone through the general democratization. Up until now, the following major drivers led to the dissemination of luxury and its immense growth. First of all, the continuous democratization gave access to luxury for everyone, leading to an increased growth. Furthermore, the increase in the spending power of society led to the availability of more money to spend on acquiring luxury goods. The globalization gave access and availability to new products, cultures and markets. Lastly, the development of the global mass media the communications helped to increase the awareness of the luxury world (*ibid.*).

At the end of the 20th century, another shift could be observed, which caused to blur the defined boundaries of luxury. There was a market expansion to *masstige* – mass luxury – making premium brands more accessible for broader masses. This implied that luxury was not only reserved anymore for the richest social class, but for the middle rich socio-economic level (Kapferer and Bastien, 2009b; Nueno and Quelch, 1998).

But not only the scope of luxury changed over time, it can be also detected a shift in value and locus of luxury. While during the 19th century the value originated from the functional dimension based on the creation of craftsman, the focus laid on the product itself and its durability. Later the focus switched to a symbolic value creating a “dream world” around the products and the luxury brands. A more recent trend arising is the emphasis of the experience and the value the consumer receives through it (Berthon *et al.*, 2009).

Finally, in the last decades, a trend in luxury brand companies emerges in which they tend to build conglomerates. As a consequence, large luxury groups with a diversified offer of brands dominate the luxury market. One of the biggest players in the market is Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton SE (LVMH). The enterprise owns a broad spectrum of different luxury brands and products, from wines to fashion, cosmetics and perfumes, defined in 70 diverse categories. Their revenues are immense: LVMH reached in 2018 46,8 € billion with a yearly growth of 10% (LVMH, 2019). Along with similar numbers from other competitors in the market, the huge potential of the luxury market is demonstrated.

2.1.3. Luxury brand characteristics and mechanisms

The previous paragraphs provide a deeper insight into the development and logic of the symbolic function luxury brands have, compared to its utilitarian function. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that its branding

strategy differs from mass product branding. In order to manage luxury brands strategically and sustain its symbolic value for the consumers, several researchers in the area point out some common characteristics and mechanisms. Departing from these, in the following paragraphs the most important mechanisms and characteristics for this study are further detailed.

Clear brand signature and identity

The concept of a brand with a clear name and identity is one of the fundamental characteristics of luxury brands. Establishing a premium image on consumers' minds is what can support the high luxury prices (Keller, 2009). For that, not only the extrinsic properties of the product or service are involved, but also the way in which brands aim to meet customers psychological or social needs. Therefore, brand image consists of the perceptions and thoughts people have when thinking about a brand abstractly, more than what they think a brand actually does; which will exhibit its more intangible aspects (ibid.).

One of the main ways to constitute such a luxury brand concept is through the product attributes such as quality, craftsmanship, innovation, creativity and uniqueness (Fionda and Moore, 2009; Okonkwo, 2007; Kapferer and Bastien, 2009a). In fact, several researchers also emphasize the relevance of iconic products or services. These are described as authentic, high quality and exclusive products or services that evoke an aspirational feeling. Thus, they contribute to represent the personality and values of the brand and its creators, embodying the brand signature or DNA (Fionda and Moore, 2009).

Furthermore, an essential factor to establish such a luxury brand image is to create a consistent and coherent brand identity. Brands must remain deeply rooted in its identity traits. This will provide the basis for long-term capitalization and international harmonization (Kapferer, 1997). To create a solid brand identity ensuring the brand's image and its more intangible aspects, a relevant, strong and consistent marketing strategy must be established (Keller, 2009; Fionda and Moore, 2009). During a brand's international expansion, different forces and parties can exert discontinuity and change. However, such strategies aim to support a global brand reputation and presence, as well as to leverage its status and awareness internationally (Fionda and Moore, 2009).

Exclusivity

Luxury brands must be perceived as something special, different from the ordinary and aspirational (Keller, 2009). Scarcity and rarity enhance the desire and appeal of a luxury brand, which increases further when perceived as expensive (Kapferer, 2017). This is mainly because if everyone would own a particular brand, its prestige gets deteriorated and the luxury component decreases (Phau and Prendergast, 2000).

Therefore, in order to create this scarcity and rarity perception with the aim to maintain the prestige, brand managers must sustain high levels of awareness, but very low and tightly controlled levels of brand diffusion (ibid.). Managers pursue this strategy through their advertising, endorsement, control of the

distribution and price, as well as by introducing limited editions (Fionda and Moore, 2009). Retail distribution is usually very selective, leading to have most of the retail outlets and company stores owned directly by luxury brands (Keller, 2009). Such tight control ensures that only a limited number of consumers have the access and the possibility to own a brand's products or services. This will sustain the brand exclusivity and, at the same time, it will be elevated and projected by the prestigious and privileged few (Phau and Prendergast, 2000). Therefore, paradoxically, luxury brands must be desired by everybody, but only consumed by a minority (Kapferer, 1997).

Uniqueness

This is a concept very related to exclusivity. It departs from the same principle revealed by researchers, in which the scarcity or limited supply of products enhances consumers' preferences for a brand (Kapferer, 2017). Consumers express a need for uniqueness (Snyder and Fromkin, 1977) when searching for something hard to obtain. Uniqueness enhances individual's self-image and social image by being attached to one's personal taste, breaking with the conventional rules or avoiding similar consumption (Vigneron and Johnson, 2004). However, this concept has been more thoroughly developed in the consumer behavior literature, which will be also further described in section 2.2.4.

From a rather brand management perspective, uniqueness is an intangible brand element associated with originality, scarcity, innovative design, creativity, creative quality and unique symbols, logos and package design (Vigneron and Johnson 1999; Keller 2009). When linked to luxury, being unique is key, since it acts as an expression of personal taste, creative identity or of the intrinsic passion of the creator (Kapferer and Bastien, 2009a). Therefore, when a luxury brand is difficult to find due to its uniqueness, e.g. a limited edition, and would be expensive, compared to other categories in the market, it would become even more valuable (Vigneron and Johnson, 2004).

Heritage

Heritage refers to the past and specific events of a brand's history (Keller, 2009). Many luxury brands have existed for a long time and were based on craftsmanship in a family business with renowned founders (Wuestefeld *et al.*, 2012; Kapferer, 2017). Thus, they have a deep-rooted and genuine history, both factual and legendary (Kapferer, 2017). By telling their story, luxury brands can create an emotional involvement with consumers (Kapferer and Bastien, 2009a). Associations to history and heritage adds authenticity to the brands and has the potential to create nostalgia, credibility and durability to consumers (Urde, Greyser and Balmer, 2007; Keller, 2009). For example, some brands story tell about the craftsmen who required years to acquire their unique know-how or, as in the automobile industry, some brands connote in their communications their heritage of engineering excellence, style or prestige (Urde *et al.*, 2007; Kapferer, 2017).

In line with the above, researchers suggest that luxury brands should reflect its own story, or even create one from scratch in order to create such emotional involvement. This in turn will contribute to build an appealing and unique identity. Some brands become iconic by elevating these associations to a higher level and become a myth, which persists in consumers hopes and dreams (Keller, 2009; Kapferer, 2017). In other words, heritage helps brands not only to be relevant in the present, but also prospectively in the future (Urde *et al.*, 2007).

Brand heritage not only retains value for both its stakeholders and customers, but at the same time it also distinguishes the brand in a difficult-to-imitate manner. Consequently, this will eventually contribute to build brand equity (Urde *et al.*, 2007).

Premium Price

In a standard market model, when price decreases, demand increases. Thus, in order to increase sales, what most of the brands would usually do is to reduce costs and prices to gain a major market share. However, when using the same technique in luxury and assigning reasonable prices, these prices would appeal for a specific reason and would be compared to other product's prices. Consequently, attributing reasonable prices will leave the luxury product and its brand with only its tangible elements and will turn down all the intangible ones. Due to this, in the luxury market, premium prices are established, which would be out of reach for most of the average people (Kapferer and Bastien, 2009a).

By introducing premium prices, all the non-high-end customers will be left out, since it will be less likely that they can afford it. Consequently, the brand becomes even more attractive to the luxury high-end buyers' segment (Kapferer and Bastien, 2009b). Moreover, these prices reflect not only the craftsmanship and the quality associated with luxury brands, but also manifest other intangible and symbolic elements, especially exclusivity, since a high price acts as a barrier of entry (Fionda and Moore, 2009; Kapferer and Bastien, 2009b). This mechanism is grounded in Veblen's theories (1899), which advocate that in general, an increase in price of a luxury product will lead to an increase in sales volume (Veblen, 1899).

However, it has to be considered that a company must manage to find new ways of creating more value for the customer in order to live up to those prices. By only offering its products or services at very high prices, a brand does not simply become a luxury brand. The goal is not to be the most expensive brand, since that does not create loyalty and it is very easy to imitate (Kapferer and Bastien, 2009b). Thus, premium prices are key, but must act in conjunction with the brand values and the other principles to sustain the luxury and symbolical value (*ibid.*).

Luxury environment and experience

The environment and the service provided by luxury brands are an essential part to transmit the luxury proposition to consumers (Fionda and Moore, 2009). Luxury brand stores use architecture to evoke a sense of

magnificence and are perceived as “shopping cathedrals” (Kapferer, 2017; Fionda and Moore, 2009). The importance of these stores in the luxury environment lies in the fact that the brand cult can be expressed through all the five senses, more than on an internet site, and helps to define the shopping experience (Kapferer, 2017). It is worth to mention the relevance that flagship stores have in displaying a brand’s environment and experience. These are major outlets usually located in capital cities, which have been provided with a considerable financial investment and that are key for brand’s marketing communication and reputation (Fionda and Moore, 2009). Given the importance of exclusivity for luxury brands, as mentioned before, most brands have vertically integrated their value chain and own most of their stores in order to provide a controlled, personalized and perfect experience in their retail locations. Additionally, the human interaction in the store plays a key role in providing the perfect luxury experience and in transmitting the brand’s lifestyle, which is why salespeople are experts and experienced members (Kapferer, 2017; Okonkwo, 2010).

The same applies to luxury services, such as hotels or restaurants, for which providing an exceptional experience in the environment is carried out by outstanding human contact. Additionally, this experience is fostered by features that shape the atmosphere and complement the unique environment in customers surroundings i.e., the style, colors, the art works and decorations displayed as well as the lighting and scent (Okonkwo, 2010).

Thus, the bottom line and goal of this luxury mechanism is to make a positive consumer experience by providing them impressions that make sure they feel good and associate those positive feelings to the brand. As a result, the latter will probably lead the consumers to return to the brand’s location (ibid.).

However, given the digital revolution, the luxury brand experience and environment had to also be translated and applied to the online world. Luxury brands must provide an exceptional online experience for every individual visiting their websites. The online presence must appeal to the senses and evoke a deep desire to the visitors to be associated with the brand (ibid.).

Nevertheless, it has to be considered that the luxury brand experience literature goes further and deeper in the field. Given the research purposes, this section stressed its importance on a less detailed level and was adapted according to the research purpose of the thesis.

Distinctive design and aesthetics

Kapferer (1997) stated that luxury defines beauty in the sense that it is art applied to functional goods. As a consequence, luxury goods provide more than functionality or utility, they become references of good taste. Due to this, it is stated that luxury items provide an extra and multisensorial pleasure, adulating all the senses (Kapferer, 1997). Additionally, he argues that the aesthetics of luxury goods contribute in the differentiation of luxury from non-luxury brands (ibid.).

Style consistency and integrity are components of the aesthetic appeal (Dubois, Laurent and Czellar, 2001). In line with the multisensorial pleasure proposed by Kapferer (1997), the aesthetic appeal of luxury

brands does not only involve being pleasant and beautiful to view, but also to hear, touch or smell. Thus, the aesthetics of luxury brands are not only related to high-level designed elements, but also to the experiential dimension, which is sustained by the luxury environment and experience mechanism (Dubois *et al.*, 2001).

This luxury brand characteristic is also influenced by the aesthetics' brand ideology and originality set by the artistic director behind the brand. These aesthetic ideologies and principles, are also transmitted in the retail locations and other touchpoints. As a result, the luxury brand aesthetics are diffused to the consumers, contributing to this experiential and emotional dimension luxury brands provide (Dion and Arnould, 2011).

2.1.4. Sub-conclusion of luxury from the brand management perspective

As described in the previous sections, luxury does not exist as an isolated and objective concept. The term of luxury, its subjectivity and symbolical function from its historical development, brand mechanisms and characteristics have been illustrated from its branding aspect. Specifically, the mechanisms and characteristics part provide an outlook of how luxury brands are managed to a certain extent. Their relevance lies in the fact that the way mechanisms are managed is strongly interconnected in the manner consumers perceive luxury brands. Thus, in general, the previous sections have been covered from a brand management perspective, providing a more managerial understanding.

Nevertheless, the perceptions and interpretations of consumers and its context determine what luxury is and if there is a deeper meaning connected. Then, luxury brands become meaningful for consumers and receive their symbolic value through consumption (Phau and Prendergast, 2000; Kapferer, 1997; Berthon *et al.*, 2009). The complex concept of luxury has also been studied from a psychological and consumer behavior point of view, emphasizing its needs, desires and drivers. Therefore, it is of key importance to examine this from the subjective context of consumers' point of view. In order to obtain a deeper understanding of the perceived luxury values from millennial consumers, the next sections will explore and connect in more detail luxury branding from this point of view.

In this area, many researchers have established a different number of perceived luxury values. However, the following three perceived luxury values that will be described in this theoretical framework are captured in most of the studies, being the departure and primary point of most of the theories. Moreover, they are strongly intertwined, multidimensional and act simultaneously. As a result, instead of understanding luxury consumption as an identical form of consumption, it is explored and perceived as a combination of the following three value dimensions: status signaling, need for uniqueness and hedonic consumption from the material, individual and social perspectives. Thus, these perceived luxury values will provide a solid basis for this research purpose.

2.2. Perceived values of luxury brands

As anticipated, in order to understand the motivation of the consumers behind luxury consumption, the underlying values have to be comprehended. Consumers purchase products for different reasons and therefore actions related to luxury consumption differ from one consumer to the other (Holt, 1995).

In the following, as mentioned at the beginning of the section, some of the most important frameworks from the existing literature have been selected and will be further analyzed to get an adequate and deeper understanding of the perceived luxury values. Departing from them, the conceptual framework for this thesis will be created.

2.2.1. Existing frameworks from the literature

Functional, Experiential and Symbolic Value of Luxury Brands

Berthon *et al.* (2009), as shown in appendix 1.1., defined in their study three different dimensions: the experiential value related to the meaning to the individual, the symbolic value in relation to the meaning to others and the functional value in regards to the physical attributes and “*what an object does*” (Berthon *et al.*, 2009, p. 48). The experience of the brand is an individual subjective value and refers to the subjective taste of one person, in which a hedonic value can be found. The symbolic dimension refers to the symbolism of luxury and the value the luxury brand signals to the social collective and also to the value the signaler gets from the signal of the luxury brand. The last dimension elaborated in the study refers to the functionalism of the brand, emphasizing what it does in the sense of its functionality. In their study the importance of context is further highlighted and elaborated on changes over time in relation to the symbolic and functional value. Thus, they defend that the functional, experiential and symbolic values can change with the context. In particular, the experiential value can change as the individuals’ taste changes or adapts over time (Berthon *et al.*, 2009).

Interpersonal and personal effects of luxury values

Vigneron and Johnson (1999), developed a framework with five perceived values, including three interpersonal effects and two personal effects, as depicted in appendix 1.2. This framework was developed further in a later study (Vigneron and Johnson, 2004). In the first study, five values were defined, to which five relevant motivations were allocated (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999).

The five values are conspicuous, unique, social, emotional and quality. The motivations on which the values are based are Veblenian, snob, bandwagon, hedonist and perfectionist. The values and motivations are further divided into two categories: interpersonal and personal effects. The first value and motivation are explained by the Veblen effect, that is based on the conspicuousness theory. The assumption of luxury consumers is that a higher price indicates an increased demand in a luxury brand or product. The snob effect on the other hand, explains the unique value of a brand. This effect may occur when launching a new brand

and the snob is a first mover, who buys the product first. On the other hand, this type of consumer also rejects products and brands when too many people own it (Leibenstein, 1950; Vigneron and Johnson, 1999). The bandwagon effect as the motivation of the social value, has the same basic motivation, even if the reason for the consumption is the reverse (Leibenstein, 1950; Dubois and Duquesne, 1993). Here, through luxury consumption the motivation is to belong to certain groups or to distinguish themselves from other groups. Furthermore, the paper also points out personal effects. The emotional value is motivated through the hedonic effect. The last effect described is the perfectionism effect as the motivation for the quality value (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999).

Financial, Functional, Social and Individual Value of Luxury Brands

Wiedmann, Hennigs and Siebels (2009) describe four dimensions of perceived luxury value in their study: social value, functional value, individual value and financial value. Their model, illustrated in appendix 1.3., is an extension of the five-dimensional framework of Vigneron and Johnson (2004). These four dimensions are defined to add on the luxury value (Wiedmann, Hennigs and Siebels, 2007; Wiedmann *et al.*, 2009).

The financial dimension of luxury value addresses direct monetary aspects such as price, resale cost, discount, and investment, and refers to the value of the product as expressed. The functional dimension of luxury value refers to the core benefits of the product and the basic utilities such as quality, uniqueness, usability, reliability, and durability (Sheth, Newman and Gross, 1991). The individual dimension of luxury value refers to the personal orientation consumers have towards luxury consumption. In this context, personal matters such as materialism (e.g., Richins and Dawson, 1992), hedonism, and self-identity (e.g., Vigneron and Johnson, 2004; Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982) are taken into account. Finally, the social dimension of luxury value refers to the perceived utility consumers obtain through luxury products, that is recognized within their own social group. Such conspicuousness and prestige value, can affect the evaluation and propensity of luxury brands (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999; Bearden and Etzel, 1982; Brinberg and Plimpton, 1986).

2.2.2. Development of the conceptual framework

Based on the previously described models, the conceptual framework for this study has been constructed. Each of those studies defined different values in the context of luxury brand consumption to describe the motivations of customers. (Berthon *et al.*, 2009; Vigneron and Johnson, 2004; Wiedmann *et al.*, 2009).

Three main perceived luxury values can be drawn from all these studies that contribute in the comprehension and perception of luxury from the millennials' point of view, according to the thesis' purpose. Moreover, the authors also assume that some luxury perceived values, such as the financial value, only mentioned by Wiedmann *et al.* (2007) will not diverge compared to other generations. In addition, this value

is rather perceived as a characteristic of luxury brands than as a value or driver. In line with this, other stated values such as quality, fall under the other established perceived luxury values, such as hedonism.

As a result, the following three perceived luxury values constitute the conceptual framework of this study: status signaling, need for uniqueness and hedonism. These three values are strongly intertwined, multidimensional and act simultaneously. Thus, instead of understanding luxury consumption as an identical form of consumption, it is explored and perceived as a combination of these three.

In addition, when comparing all the studies described above, it is possible to identify three perceived luxury values that influence and act in conjunction in all the three perceived luxury values established in our conceptual framework. These are the individual, social and material dimensions, which will be used further in the analysis to gain deeper insights of the luxury values.

2.2.3. Status signaling

In history, the use of objects or symbols in order to signal status in a determined group have always existed, as already introduced in this thesis (Kapferer and Bastien 2009b). There are several definitions of status (Eastman *et al.*, 1999), all highlighting the important role society has in it. Status can be referred to as “position or rank in a society or group awarded to an individual by others” (Eastman *et al.*, 1999, p. 42), and can be also seen as a form of power originated from other people's respect, reflection and envy (Barkow 1992). Historically, there have been three different kinds of status. The first one is status by definition or an assignment like the royalty. The second type is status through achievement, like hard work. And the last one is status by consumption (Eastman *et al.*, 1999). In this research, the interest lies solely in the latter view of status.

There are two main forms of status consumption – internally and externally motivated. External motivations are among others the signal of wealth through public consumption (O’Cass and McEwen, 2004), to gain social prestige (O’Cass and Frost, 2002), improve the social status (Eastman *et al.* 1999), to obtain the approval or envy of others (Truong *et al.*, 2008), or also to belong to a certain reference group or to distinguish oneself from certain groups, which derives from the so-called bandwagon and snob effects (Leibenstein, 1950; Vigneron and Johnson, 1999) or even the recognition from others (Scitovsky, 1992).

On the other side there are several internal motivations that drive consumers to status consumption: the expression of inner values and tastes, uniqueness, hedonism (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999) or self-reward and perfectionism (Eastman and Eastman, 2015).

In this study, under status signaling as a perceived luxury value the focus is set on the external aspect of the status consumption and status signaling. The underlying intrinsic motivations as described in many studies (Vigneron and Johnson 1999, 2004; Kastanakis and Balabanis, 2012) are seen by the authors as distinctive, yet interrelated constructs to status as a concept. Hence, the internal motivations interrelated to status consumption are assigned the other two main constructs: uniqueness and hedonism. These two will be developed further in a separate chapter.

Related to status is also the signaling of it and the wealth coming with it towards others through luxury consumption (O’Cass and McEwen, 2004; Truong, 2010). Significant levels of status consumption exist in all communities in which the utility of products or brands is based on the social advantage the consumption offers (Mason, 1981). An often-mentioned construct related to luxury consumption is the conspicuous consumption. This term reaches back to the work of Veblen (1899), who proposed that rich classes engage in the consumption of expensive goods to show wealth and social status, the “conspicuous consumption”. This is picked up in the theory of Leibenstein (1950), proposing under the Veblen effect increasing consumption when the price for a good increases due to the allocation of higher importance of price as a signal of prestige (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999).

It can be distinguished between conspicuous consumption which is social oriented because it relays on the perception of others from which the status is deducted. On the other hand, the desire for status involves next to the social dimension also the individual dimension (Truong *et al.*, 2008). Therefore, O’Cass and McEwen (2004) characterize these as two unique, though related constructs.

Furthermore, associated with status consumption is the acceptance of a group and the recognition of that group. Scitovsky (1992) argues that also the motivation for status consumption derives from the desire of recognition within their reference group. This leads to distinguish them from others outside the group and therefore has also a secondary effect (Scitovsky, 1992; Eastman *et al.* 1999).

The motivation to distinguish oneself from others is also described as the snob effect in the literature (e.g. Vigneron and Johnson, 1999). As defined by Leibenstein (1950), the snob effect is “the extent to which the demand for a consumers' good is decreased owing to the fact that others are also consuming the same commodity” (Leibenstein 1950, p. 189). Individuals are motivated by the striving to differentiate themselves from others and therefore be unique (Leibenstein, 1950; Vigneron and Johnson 1999). However, this effect will be further described under 2.2.4.

The bandwagon effect on the other side, describes the effect of increase of the demand for a luxury, because of others consuming the same (Leibenstein, 1950). Bandwagon consumers consume actively luxurious goods to signal their belonging to a specific group of higher rank in society (Kastanakis and Balabanis, 2012). As Vigneron and Johnson (1999) propose in their framework, the luxury value can be interpreted with Belk’s (1988) study, stating that people purchase luxury goods in order to possess them as symbolic markers of the belongingness to a group (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999).

As a summary of those two effects, it can be said that the snob and bandwagon effects complement each other interactively: luxury consumers aim to differentiate themselves from others (snob effect) in order to belong to a desired group (bandwagon effect). Even if snobs and bandwagon-followers buy luxury products for opposite reasons, the basic motivation for luxury consumption is the same. That is, they aim to enhance their self-concept (Dubois and Duquesne, 1993).

Status can also be put in the context of brands and branding. As described by Wernerfelt (1990) consumers through the choice of brands can send meaningful social signals. This meaning perceived by different brand consumers emerges from the associations between a brand and the type of people that consume it (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001). Furthermore, the reference group plays a role, since the purchased brands have to be recognized and be visible to others in order to signal (Bearden and Etzel, 1982).

Regarding brand choice, the study of Han, Nunes, and Drèze (2010) links status consumption to brand prominence in the context of signaling. Brand prominence is defined as "*the extent to which a product has visible markings that help ensure observers recognize the brand*" (Han *et al.*, 2010, p. 15). Therefore, in their framework, they differentiate between luxury consumer types depending on their purpose and use of quiet or loud brand signals. Thus, they are divided according to their need to signal their status and wealth horizontally or vertically. In summary, consumers prefer quiet or loud brands, depending on whether they want to associate themselves with and/or dissociate themselves from different social groups (*ibid.*).

Quiet signals are subtle brand identifications and the loud signals are rather conspicuous and visible brand identifications. Consumers purchasing quiet luxury brands are usually wealthy individuals who prefer not to signal their wealth. The brands they consume are only signaled and recognized in their own wealthy group (*ibid.*).

In contrast, consumers who make use of luxury goods with loud signals, intend to signal their wealth in order to be differentiated vertically from lower social groups. At the same time, they also signal loudly in their own social group and towards other wealthy groups, to be recognized. Lastly, it could also be the case of those consumers who want to signal wealth and status in order to aspire to belong to wealthier social groups, and differentiate them from the less wealthy classes (*ibid.*).

2.2.4. Need for Uniqueness

The need for uniqueness is a perceived luxury value strongly related to exclusivity and uniqueness - thus also to rarity and scarcity - described in section 2.1.3. From the consumers' point of view, the need for perceived uniqueness is considered as the need to acquire and use brands and goods that differentiate an individual from the rest of the people. Products qualified as falling outside the norm can serve as visible symbols of uniqueness or specialness (Tian, Bearden, and Hunter, 2001).

The need for uniqueness accentuates consumers own feeling of being distinct, independently of their status in society. This luxury perceived value, despite emphasizing the individual and material dimension, is also seen as a driver defined in terms of other people and society. To be the 'only one', 'special' or 'unusual' requires that the product and brand stand out and are different compared to the rest (Tian *et al.*, 2001; Festinger 1954). Thus, consumers driven by a need to be seen as unique, not only their own personal and intrinsic meanings and reasons are key determinants, but also the social and interpersonal assessments play a role. In

contrast, consumers motivated rather by the need for status and conspicuous consumption focus especially on the social level (Tian *et al.*, 2001).

One of the effects causing individuals' need for uniqueness is the snob effect, which evolved from Leibenstein's (1950) theory. This effect reflects the behavior of consumers who purchase and display publicly goods with the aim of feeling differentiated from the rest of the people. In turn, this will elicit the sought opinions and interpretations from the rest, in terms of being perceived as different and thus, unique. However, in the event that a particular good is owned by too many people, these type of snob consumers will cease to wish them. As a consequence, they will search for new and special products (Mason, 1992). Some consumers will even seek for limited editions, handcrafted or innovative goods (Tian *et al.*, 2001).

The need for uniqueness can be satisfied by luxury goods, given their intrinsic scarcity and exclusivity (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999). Hence, the perceived limited accessibility to the products of a brand, will enhance the value and preference for this brand for the consumers driven mainly by this need (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999). At the same time, this emotional desire to purchase luxury goods given its exclusivity and scarcity is also influenced by others' consumption preferences (Tian *et al.*, 2001).

Self-expression

This need is perceived to enhance consumer's self-image as well as their social image by attaching their own personal taste, breaking the social norms or avoiding similar consumption (Vigneron and Johnson 2004; Tian *et al.*, 2001). Expressing one's distinctiveness compared to others demands to create a personal style through material possessions that will represent the self (Tian *et al.*, 2001; Kron, 1983).

A consumer's self-concept will be sustained if ones believes that the goods purchased match and support one's self-concept. A unique product becomes a mean for the consumer to establish his or her identity, as one which is distinct from the others (Tian *et al.*, 2001). In a way, enhancing a person's self-image occurs by the transmission of symbolic meaning from an acquired good to the self, effect which stems from an internal and personal process. Moreover, when this product is recognized publicly, it becomes a mean to obtain the wished evaluations from others, heightening further the self-image in terms of being unique (*ibid.*).

As established, consumers can differentiate and express themselves and their unique identity by the acquisition of luxury brands, given its exclusive and distinctive characteristics (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999). In addition, they will select luxury products with the associations and images that are coherent with their own self-image and allow to enhance it (Tian *et al.*, 2001).

2.2.5. Hedonism

From the consumer research perspective, certain services and products have been identified as providing more emotional than functional utility (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982). Consumers are driven to seek products or

services that proportionate them emotional benefits (Hagtvedt and Patrick, 2009). The motivation to consume goods in order to achieve emotional benefits is described as hedonism (Hudders, 2012; Vigneron and Johnson, 1999).

This motivation arises due to the fact that these type of products or services are multi-sensorial and linked with enjoyment, feelings, pleasure, excitement or fantasy (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982).

In the case of luxury brands, hedonism prevails over functionality. As Kapferer and Bastien (2009b) defend, luxury is found closer to art than to solely functionality, therefore these brands entail strong multisensorial and experiential aspects, which contribute to their symbolic function (Kapferer and Bastien, 2009a). Thus, it can be said that luxury brands add pleasure and comfort, while at the same time are something rather unnecessary by consumers (Vigneron and Johnson, 2004).

Tsai (2005) elaborates further in his research on two concepts: self-directed pleasure and self-gift giving. The first one describes the behavior in which consumers self determinately create their own hedonic experience, the second, self-gift giving, derives from self-indulgence, which implies consumption meant solely to satisfy the self's own needs and aspirations (Tsai, 2005). In both, consumers may want to indulge and consume for self-serving aims in a finer way, for which buying luxury goods, given its characteristics and the high quality usually attributed, evokes positive feelings (*ibid.*). However, under these motivations, consumers are less oriented to purchase in order to impress their social groups, but according their personal preferences instead (*ibid.*). This implies that hedonism is a need that emphasizes the personal evaluations and interpretations, not necessarily influenced by the social dimension. In addition, hedonism is the perceived luxury value most related to the experiential side of luxury consumption (*ibid.*).

In summary, researchers argue that it is due to luxury brands' characteristics, its excellent quality, the aesthetics and innovation they provide, that the attraction increases for consumers in order to acquire them and obtain emotional benefits (Hudders, 2012). This is related to the multi-sensory, affective and fantasy feelings that these products or services cause (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982), together with the satisfaction of consumers' intrinsic needs (Tsai, 2005). Hence, this perceived luxury value entails the motivation of consumers to purchase luxury brands for their hedonic effects, rather than for their functionality and utility (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982; Vigneron and Johnson, 1999; Hudders, 2012).

2.2.6. Sub-conclusion of perceived luxury values

In this section of the conceptual framework, the main models and studies about luxury from the consumer behavior perspective have been examined. As described, departing from these, a conceptual framework with three interrelated perceived luxury values, status signaling, need for uniqueness and hedonism, have been created.

Moreover, it has been shown that luxury is a more profound and complex phenomenon. There are a lot of different interactions and links between the different drivers and motivations described above. These in turn, help to understand the relationship between luxury and consumers.

Therefore, the framework established provides not only a guidance in order to conduct the research and data analysis, but it also proportionates the fundamental knowledge required in order to interpret millennial consumers' perceptions of luxury brands.

2.3. Millennials

After having gone through the luxury branding theories from both angles, an overview of the millennial generation traits and behavior will be provided in the next paragraphs.

2.3.1. Millennials as a generation

Despite the existing relevant literature in luxury branding, a new generation with a different mindset and behavior is bringing changes and slowly building a new context. Since the luxury concept depends on the individual and social context, it is key to obtain a relevant overview of this generation. As authors such as Kapferer (1997) and Keller (2009) suggest, luxury brands must remain relevant and attractive to the young consumers. The different characteristics present in the generation compared to others, can have an impact in the way luxury brands are evolving. Thus, it is important to understand this generation in order to interpret and comprehend how the perceived luxury values are understood.

Defining the generation

Multiple researchers argue that, given the dimensions of the millennial generation, they can account for sufficient purchasing power to have a significant impact on world economics, becoming a powerful consumer group in the marketplace (Bucic, Harris and Arli, 2011; Farris Chong and Danning, 2002). Furthermore, a research conducted by Bain and Company (2017), estimates that this generation will represent a 40% of the global personal luxury good market by 2025.

Generations designate and comprise individuals within a broad age range that share a set of experiences during the years of formation as well as an array of social and economic conditions. All these factors in common condition them in a particular way, and shape in turn their way of thinking, values and beliefs (Pendergast, 2007). The exact age range that comprises the millennials, or generation Y, varies depending on the scholars or studies, but it roughly includes people born from around 1982 to 1999. Nevertheless, the key factor that distinguishes them from other generations is that they came of age in the new millennium (Howe and Strauss, 2000).

The world in which they were born was characterized by an international interdependence and a global engagement. Millennials are the first generation that grew up with the transition and development of mobile digital technologies and internet, which shaped their beliefs, values and experiences (Farris *et al.*, 2002; Pendergast, 2007; Howe and Strauss, 2007). Connectivity and digital advancement conditioned the generation's social DNA, the same way the industrial revolution influenced it by the end of the 19th century (Van den Bergh and Behrer, 2016). Such technological forces allowed the proliferation of network communications and rapid information exchange. For millennials, having mobile phones during their years of adolescence or even before, became commonplace while internet was already used at school. These developments led them to possess the ability to effectively use digital communication technologies and networks in order to perform a wide variety of tasks (Gorman, Nelson and Glassman, 2004).

The millennial setting

In the recent years, millennials have been using more social media platforms and maintain larger networks online than the rest of generations (BCG Report, 2012). The rise of social media allowed this generation to create and exhibit their own personalized lifestyle. In turn, this also allowed them to express themselves and give voice to their opinion, influencing in turn the branding and marketing of the brands they care about (Van den Bergh and Behrer, 2016). Concurrently, when it comes to make purchases, millennials are more likely to favor brands that own social media pages and mobile websites than other collectives (BCG Report, 2012). Thus, not surprisingly, studies such as Bain and Company (2017) have found that 70% of luxury purchases from millennial consumers are influenced by online interactions with the brand or product. Moreover, the digital traffic to luxury brands' websites is the double than the amount of store visits and already 14% of consumers from 18 to 24 completed their first luxury purchase online (Bain and Company, 2017).

From another perspective, the rise of such digital tools and media advertisement has increased their capacity to filter out commercial messages. As a result, on one hand, they tend to rely more on collective peer wisdom and social connections, but on the other hand, it has become challenging for marketers to create a strong emotional and psychological bond between their brands and millennials (Van den Bergh and Behrer, 2016; Adkins, 2016). Experts suggest that brands need to develop further strategies to build a connection with the millennial target group. Brands are no longer perceived as simply product providers, but as life and lifestyle supporters. Therefore, there is a strong emphasis from generation Y on brand experience, authenticity and credibility (Van den Bergh and Behrer, 2016).

Despite being a generation leaning more on their independent self-view, seeking uniqueness and personalization when possible, it is a caring and social generation. Millennials tends to be very receptive to social, environmental and ethical issues (Smith, 2011). They were taught about sustainability since their early life stages and have a strong will to "be good" to their environment. In general, they believe that they can make a difference in the world (Van den Bergh and Behrer, 2016). To consider the holistic picture is more important

than the individual transactions for them, hence they believe that collective action can make a difference (Boyd, 2010). In comparison to other generations, they are more likely to integrate their causes into daily life by buying products that support sustainability or ethical principles or by joining other movements aiming to solve social or environmental problems (BCG Report, 2012). For example, in a survey conducted in the United States, 74% of millennials were more likely to buy a brand supporting social issues (Nielsen, 2018). Other cases that reflect such focus nowadays are the emergence of strikes for the climate (Rodriguez, 2019).

2.3.2 Sub-conclusion of millennials

The last paragraphs provided an overview of the main traits that distinguish and define the millennial generation. In summary, the communications and technology shaped the generation and led to a rapid information exchange. As a consequence, the rise of social media enabled them to express their own personality and give voice to their opinions. At the same time, this led them to become more marketing-savvy and seek for deeper meanings and richer experiences in brands. Despite their focus in uniqueness and personal lifestyle, they are a very social caring generation. Thus, social issues have become topics more and more integrated in their everyday habits.



3. Methodology

3.1. Research Onion

The research onion based on Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) will be used to address the methodology in this thesis. The model of the research onion consists of different stages represented as layers. These layers will be addressed starting from the outer one to the inner one to ensure coherence throughout the research design of the thesis. Therefore, with this model, the underlying assumptions and decisions conducted prior to the data collection and analysis will be structured and navigated through (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

The distinct parts of the research design are divided into the following six different layers, which build the core of the research onion (*ibid.*):

1. **Research Philosophy**, entails the worldview applied for this thesis, involving the manner in which knowledge is understood and developed.
2. **Research Approach**, concerns on using a deductive or inductive approach.
3. **Research Strategy**, the classification of research purpose, in terms of explanatory, exploratory or descriptive.
4. **Research Methods Choice**, refers to the selection of quantitative, qualitative or mixed research methods.
5. **Time Horizon**, specifies the time perspective adopted in the study.
6. **Techniques and Procedures**, encompasses the choices of data collection and analysis.

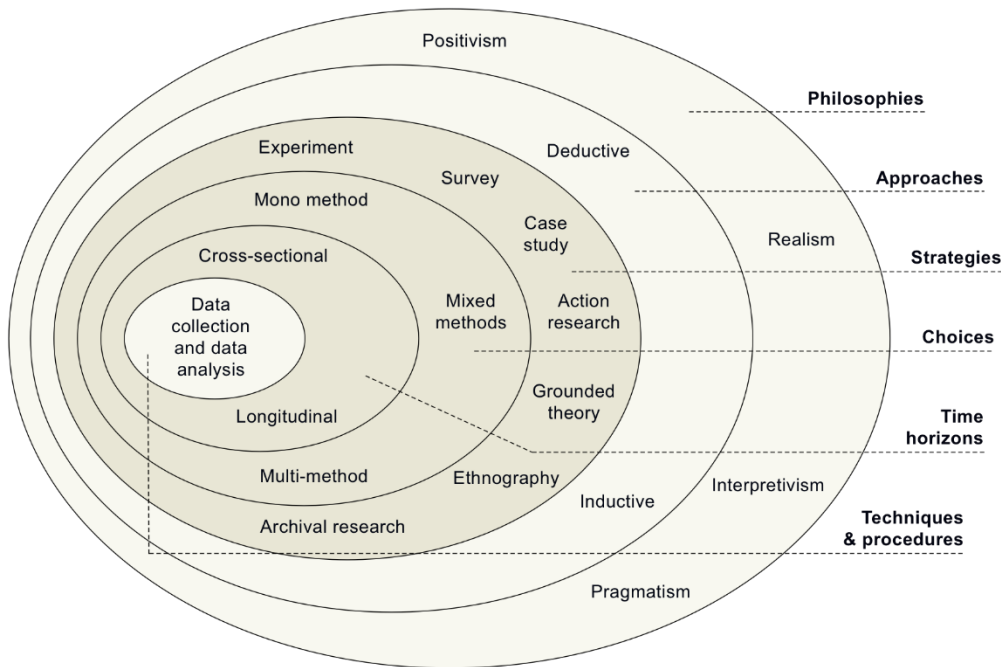


Figure 2 - Research Onion: Overview; Source: Adapted from Saunders et al., 2009

In the following sections, each layer will be thoroughly and further elaborated (Saunders et al., 2009).

However, it can be considered a disadvantage of the research onion the fact that it is somewhat rare that a particular research question fits perfectly into only one of the philosophical domains presented in the approach. Therefore, this model should rather be seen as a structure requiring a flexible adaptation of the research process. In other words, the research onion can be regarded more as a rough guideline of assumptions that helps researchers to get a structure (ibid.).

3.2. Research Philosophy

Research philosophy composes the first layer of the research onion, which will be introduced and further elaborated in the underlying section for this thesis. The motives to select interpretivism as a philosophy will be discussed, as well as social constructivism, as a sub-category. Furthermore, the influence that the research philosophy has on the research approaches and research strategies will also be explained (Saunders et al., 2009).

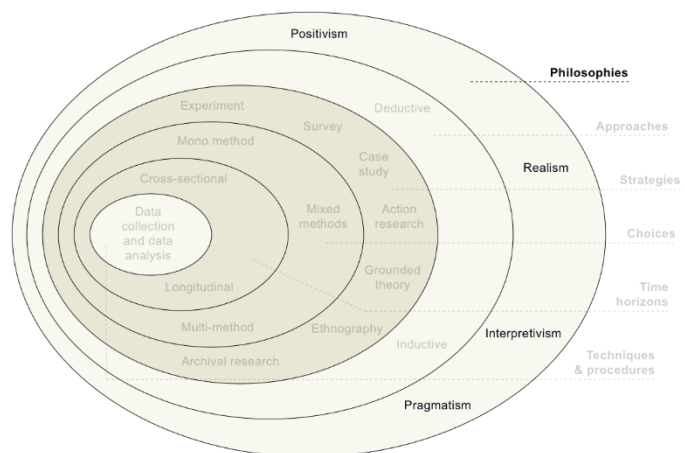


Figure 3 - Research Onion - Philosophies. Source: Adapted from Saunders et al., 2009

The research philosophy encompasses important assumptions about how the world is personally viewed by the authors. These assumptions sustain the research strategy and its chosen methods. As a result, the choice of a research philosophy influences significantly the relationship between knowledge and the way this knowledge is developed (ibid.).

It is important to be aware that the chosen philosophy has an impact not only on the way the research is conducted, but also on the interpretation of the study results (Johnson and Clark, 2006). Thus, in the paragraphs below it will be pointed out how the philosophy of research affects the methodology and later on the analysis.

Two broad attitudes of the research philosophy are ontology and epistemology, which influence the research process. The first of them, ontology deals with the nature of reality in a manner that it intends to question researcher's position regarding their beliefs of how the world operates. Two different focus are considered under ontology, objectivism and subjectivism. The first one withholds the position that entities have a reality external to social actors, whereas the latter views social actors as the ones who, through their perceptions and actions, create the social phenomena (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

The subjectivist view also holds that this process of building the social phenomena through social interaction is a continuous one, implying that the social phenomena is in a perpetual revision. Remenyi *et al.* (1998) emphasize in their study the importance that the understanding of a situation and its details have in order to comprehend the reality. This is associated to constructionism, or more specifically "social constructionism". This term describes and sees reality as being constructed through society. Additionally, following an interpretivist point of view, it is emphasized the necessity for the researcher to understand the subjective meaning behind the actions of social actors, in order to comprehend them (Saunders *et al.*, 2009; Remenyi *et al.*, 1998).

The purpose of this thesis involves topics such as luxury, brand, meanings, values and drivers which have to be comprehended from consumers' point of view, specifically, from the millennial generation. First of all, the departure point of the thesis is the concept of luxury, which is highly subjective and dependable on the individual and social context and their perceptions (Berthon *et al.*, 2009). That is to say, that what some individuals classify as luxury, others will not necessary perceive it as something luxurious and might even consider it as ordinary or irrelevant (Kapferer, 1997; Berthon *et al.*, 2009). Every person has its own standards for what is viewed as expensive or exclusive. Moreover, the opinions and standards will vary in terms of, not only wealth and disposable income, but also on age, social status and cultural differences (Berthon *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, not only the concept of luxury is subjective, but it strongly relies on the culture and social context. Furthermore, this goes in line with the subjectivist idea that social phenomenon is in a constant revision, since with each generation the social context varies and so it does the concept of luxury.

Therefore, in line with the social constructionism, customers' perspective on different social situations is different given their individual view of the world. This influences in turn, their decisions and social behavior

(Saunders *et al.*, 2009; Remenyi *et al.*, 1998). Thus, researchers will have to understand millennial consumers' individual reality in order to obtain a deeper understanding regarding their values of luxury brands in order to interpret them in a meaningful way. Hence, given the previous and the purpose of this paper, social constructivism is found suitable to conduct and address this thesis.

In contrast to ontology, epistemology depicts what can be seen as acceptable knowledge in a certain field of study. Researchers can adopt two main different positions. Under a positivistic position, researchers will rather work with an observable social reality in order to produce law-like generalizations (Remenyi *et al.*, 1998). Thus, only observable phenomena can lead to credible data. However, under an interpretivism, the focus is rather on obtaining insights from the subjective meanings of social actors, than on generating positivistic generalizations. Furthermore, the research focus lays more on individuals than on objects (Saunders *et al.*, 2009; Remenyi *et al.*, 1998).

A key factor when conducting research in the context of interpretivism is to adopt an empathic stand, aiming to understand the world from individuals' point of view. This is mainly due to the fact that, in this research, the data collection situation is seen as a function of a set of circumstances and individuals, more specifically the interviewees, at a specific point of time (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

The thesis' authors have a critical stand towards the positivist research philosophy, arguing that the social world and its interaction are too complex to be generalized according to strict 'laws'. As mentioned above, the topic of the thesis deals with the concepts of luxury, brands and the perceptions, values and meanings of millennial consumers. Following this logic, these are constructed topics which are created through individual and social interaction. These concepts are strongly subjective and its content and meaning will vary depending on the person or the company perceiving or determining them in a context (Wood, 2000; Berthon *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, the authors will need to understand and interpret how these different and complex concepts are conceived in the minds of millennial consumers in at a specific point in time, in order to obtain meaningful insights for the thesis.

Through interpretivism and adopting an empathic stance, the authors will be able to become part of the research and put themselves in the position of the consumers to understand their view. This implies that they will cease, at the same time, to be completely objective. Additionally, this combination provides the possibility for the researchers to enhance the semi-structured interview. This is achieved by adding additional questions adapted according to the development of the individual conversation, that are not present in the semi-structured interview guideline (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Thus, interpretivism becomes then an essential approach to obtain meaningful perceptions and drivers from millennials' regarding luxury brands.

In conclusion, according to the discussed above, the research philosophy adopted is social constructivism within the interpretivism approach, which fits with the beliefs of the authors of and the purpose of the study.

3.3. Research Approach

The second layer of the research onion, hence the second phase constituting the methodology, consists on determining the research approach, which follows from the research philosophy. In the following paragraphs, the research approach of the thesis will be explained more in detail. In addition, arguments for the overall inductive orientation for the thesis are provided, as well as for the parts in which the focus leans more towards deduction (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

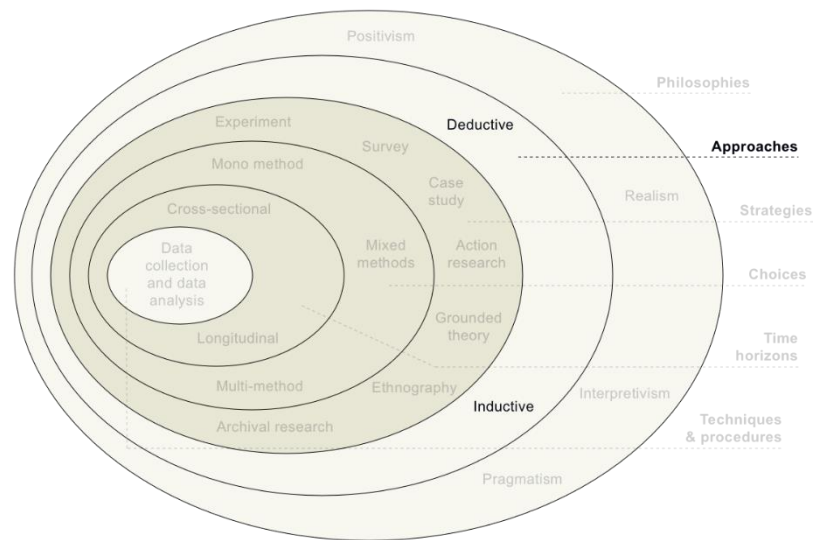


Figure 4 - Research Onion - Approaches. Source: Adapted from Saunders *et al.*, 2009

There are two different forms of research approach, the inductive and the deductive approaches, which differ in their relationship between knowledge and theory. Deduction represents the most ordinary view on the social research and theory relationship. The common procedure under this approach is to first make use of existing knowledge in a particular field and the considerations based on prior research, for which then hypotheses are formulated and subsequently empirically tested. Conversely, under an inductive research approach new knowledge is produced through research (ibid.).

Some researchers prefer an approach for the relationship between theory and research that is primarily inductive. With an inductive stance, theory is the outcome of research. In other words, the process of induction involves drawing generalizable inferences out of observations (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

The overall focus and main reasoning of the research approach of this study is predominantly inductive. Nevertheless, the research approach should be seen as a continuum: while most of the areas are of an inductive nature, other parts lean more towards deduction, since it is unavoidable not to include authors' pre-understanding in the determined area of research.

At the beginning of the paper, a more deductive approach will be present. This is emphasized in the conceptual framework, where, mainly based on secondary data, observations are concluded and areas in the literature in which research has not been conducted yet are detected. However, in the next sections, an inductive approach is used and qualitative semi-structured interviews are conducted in order to address the research question. Thus, based on the data collection, further observations are discussed and concluded, creating then new knowledge.

Moreover, it is more common to associate qualitative research methods with an inductive approach and, conversely, to relate a deductive approach more with quantitative research methods (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, when applied to this study, the choice of a qualitative research method, the effectuate on of semi-structured interviews, fits with its overall inductive approach.

However, it has to be considered that given the small sample size along with the research philosophy applied, a general conclusion cannot be drawn for the whole millennial generation. This is nevertheless not seen as a limitation, since the initial approach is to conduct first research in the area in order to discover and understand trends, perceptions and consumer insights. Furthermore, the generalization of the findings is of greater importance in a deductive approach (*ibid.*).

3.4. Research Strategy

The third layer of the research onion is the research strategy (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). This section focuses on the choice of research strategy, taking then the first step in developing the research design of the thesis. The research design itself is a general plan addressing how the research question of the thesis is going to be answered. In contrast to the research strategy, these are the research tactics concerned with the details of the collection of the data, which compose the center of the research onion. In the following two sections first the purpose of the study is examined further and then it is explained in more detail why a case study strategy was chosen for this research.

3.4.1. Exploratory Research

As the first step of the research strategy, it is key to determine the purpose of the study as being either exploratory, descriptive or explanatory (Saunders *et al.* 2009). This thesis is of exploratory nature, since compared to the alternatives - descriptive and explanatory - the exploratory research fits best with the aim of the study for the following reasons.

An exploratory research is particularly effective when researchers wish to obtain clarification and understand a problem, especially if the nature of this problem is unclear (*ibid.*). Furthermore, the purpose of an exploratory study is to find out about happenings, to gain new insights and to form an opinion about the phenomenon from a new distinct angle (Robson 2002). In the underlying research, it remains unclear how the different value and drivers of luxury are perceived and understood by millennial consumers. Therefore, it is a problem that needs to obtain clarification and understanding in order to gain new and meaningful insights on how it is perceived by the millennial consumers. Moreover, since to authors' knowledge no existing research provides such understanding in this specific area, the primary data collected in this thesis will provide the basis for the required comprehension.

Additionally, the study also takes advantage of the flexible structure an exploratory research offers. This implies that the focus will be broader at the beginning, but will narrow along the progress of the research (Adams and Schvaneveldt, 1991).

As a result, an exploratory research will assist in providing the most valuable insights for this research.

3.4.2. Case Study

After having this paper established on an exploratory study, the following paragraphs will examine the research strategy to be applied. Out of the different strategies proposed by Saunders *et al.* (2009), the case study is the one chosen and found most suitable for this paper.

A case study can be defined as strategy for conducting research involving an empirical investigation of a specific currently phenomenon in the context of its own reality (Robson, 2002). In a case study, the

context in which research is conducted is not as highly controlled as in other strategies, such as in experiments (Yin, 2003). However, this strategy is particularly favorable when researchers aim to obtain a rich understanding of the context of the research, which fits especially well given the key role that luxury branding and the new millennial context play in this thesis (Morris and Wood, 1991). Furthermore, when applied to the purpose of this paper, a case study will also allow the authors to formulate questions of ‘why’, as well as ‘what’ and ‘how’ to the millennial participants, which supports the fact of being so commonly used under exploratory research (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

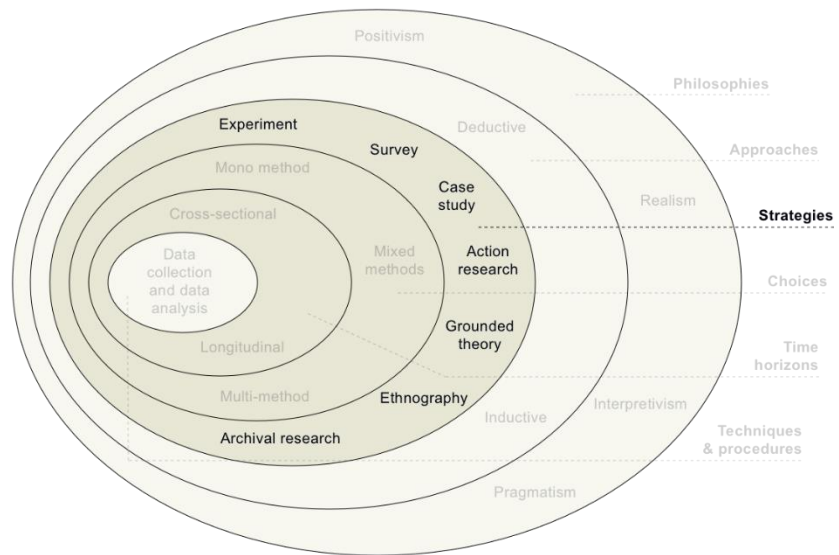


Figure 5 - Research Onion - Strategies. Source: Adapted from Saunders *et al.*, 2009

3.5. Research Methods Choice

Following the research strategy, the next layer is the research methods choice. In the context of the research onion, Saunders *et al.* (2009) refer to the choice of research method as a combination of quantitative or qualitative data collection techniques. The general orientation to conduct a research can be quantitative, qualitative or a mixed methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques (*ibid.*).

A quantitative research puts emphasis on the quantification in the data collection and analysis. The quantitative technique is normally more deductive and aims to quantify data and test theories. The purpose of

conducting this type of research is to measure and examine relationships in a scalable manner and in an objective view (Bryman, 2008). However, it is argued that this study cannot benefit from a quantitative research technique since it seeks a deeper understanding of millennials' perceptions of luxury values and a quantitative technique cannot provide such information. In line with this, one of its main drawbacks is that natural science models, such as the quantitative research, are not suitable for research of the social world due to people's subjective interpretation of their surrounding world (Bryman, 2008).

In contrast, the qualitative research has in general an inductive approach and aims to generate theories and knowledge. This study can benefit from qualitative research strategies from its rigorous methods enabling participants to reflect upon and express their views and behaviors that they are not aware of (Bryman, 2008). in the context of luxury and luxury branding. Due to this, it is argued that a qualitative research strategy will be more suitable to gather the nuances of millennials' perceptions in the context of luxury, fitting thus with the purpose of the study.

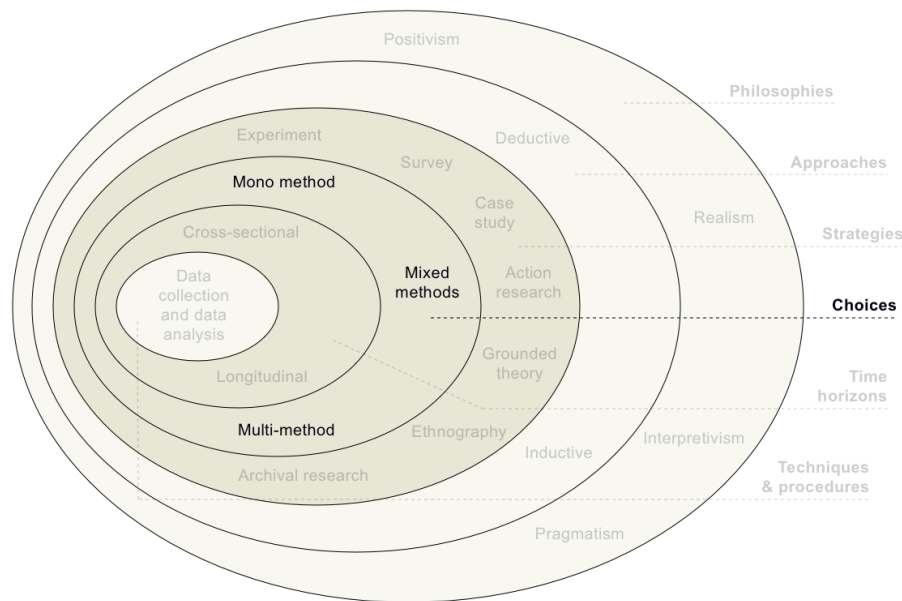


Figure 6 - Research Onion - Choices. Source: Adapted from Saunders *et al.* 2009

Additionally, Saunders *et al.* (2009) define the choice of research method as either mono method or multiple methods. In contrast to a multiple methods approach, this thesis is following a mono method approach since it is using a single data collection technique, the semi-structured interviews.

3.6. Time Horizon

The last layer before reaching the core of the research onion is the time horizon. It has to be considered that the determination of time horizons is independent from both the methodological and strategic approach (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

The time horizon of this study is cross-sectional and therefore intends to identify a specific situation in a particular moment (*ibid.*). This created 'snapshot' seeks to understand the current situation of the value

drivers of future millennial consumers of luxury brands. In this thesis, in the context of the case study, several interviews over a short period of time, throughout several days, were conducted.

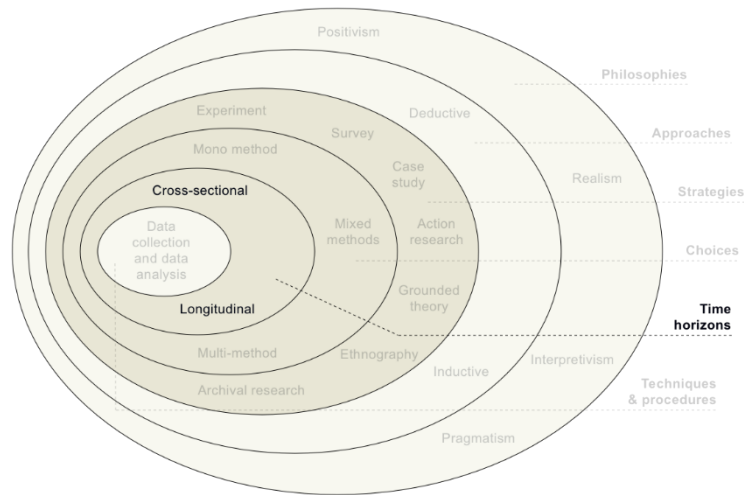


Figure 7 - Research Onion - Time horizons. Source: Adapted from Saunders et al., 2009

3.7 Techniques and procedures

The techniques and procedures constitute the core of the research onion. The data collection techniques and procedures are determined after all the other layers of the model have been evaluated (Saunders *et al.* 2009). As already mentioned before, the technique that is used in this study are qualitative interviews, more specifically semi-structured interviews. In the next chapter, 4. research design, the design of the research will be presented and elaborated in more detail.

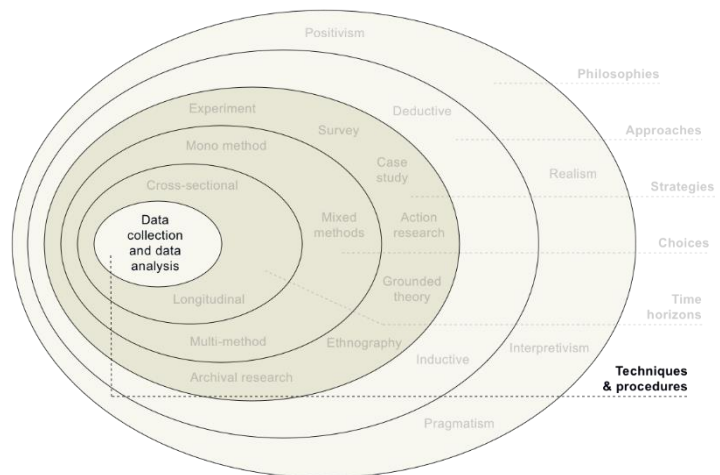


Figure 8 - Research Onion - Techniques & Procedures. Source: Adapted from Saunders et al. 2009

3.8. Sub-conclusion for Methodology

After going through all the different layers of the research onion, it can be summed up that the research philosophy of the thesis follows a social constructivist perspective within the interpretivist approach. This implies that knowledge is created through the interviews, where the reality expressed by the millennial participants is socially constructed and interpreted taking an empathic stance. The research approach lays within the continuum between inductive and deductive, with a stronger focus on inductive research. Following these steps and according to the research purpose of the thesis, an exploratory research strategy was chosen and a case study strategy applied.

Furthermore, a mono-method with the use of qualitative methods were chosen in order to collect deeper insights in the form of semi-structured in-depth interviews. A cross-sectional time horizon is set to create a snapshot of this group of millennials at a determined time.

Through the application of the research onion, a consistent set of choices have been made for this methodology part to achieve a high-quality research (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).



4. Research Design

The data collection belongs to the core of the research onion (Saunders *et al.* 2009). In the study, both secondary data and primary data are conducted. In the following sections both types of collected data and their mode of analysis are thoroughly discussed and presented.

4.1. Secondary data

This study uses secondary data in conjunction with the collected primary data. Secondary data consists of the data collected for a different purpose than the present problem (Malhotra, Nunan, and Birks, 2017). In order to gain a sound research design, Malhotra *et al.* (2017) view the secondary data collection as an essential component. Due to its potential of providing a first insight and rich knowledge about the research topic, secondary data should be collected first and until the resources are exhausted. Then primary data will be collected (*ibid.*).

Secondary data in this paper is used in the section 2 of the conceptual framework. Its purpose is to get a general overview about the two main topics of luxury and millennials as well as to, furthermore, construct a solid basis of the existing academic literature for this study. As presented in section 1.1 the recent developments in the luxury industry hinted that the actual luxury brand literature was not living up to the new generation and context that surrounds nowadays the luxury industry. Therefore, secondary data on the topics was required to gain a further understanding and insights. The topics covered in the framework relate to luxury as a general concept, its historically development and brand management strategies regarding to luxury brands. Moreover, a deeper insight was also obtained from the millennial consumers as a generation and its context. This provides a solid theoretical basis for the primary research to be conducted as well as for the analysis and interpretation of the primary data findings. Thus, in combination with the primary data, the secondary enabled the authors to answer the research question.

Using secondary data provides several advantages; not only it is easy and quick to access, but it also involves less costs when compared to primary data. Nevertheless, is it important to critically evaluate

secondary data before using it, due to limiting factors, such as its relevance and accuracy (Malhotra *et al.* 2017).

The key criteria in order to evaluate this type of data concerns with its set of specifications and its research design, the error and accuracy it presents, its currency, its objective as well as its nature and dependability (ibid.). The main source of secondary data in this study are journal articles related to the topics of luxury and millennials as consumers. The academic papers used were checked accordingly to the criteria. As stressed previously in section 2, especially related to the current status of the secondary data, the existing literature about luxury branding may seem to be outdated in the context of this generation. However, specifically for this reason, these theories are thoroughly detailed, understood and used in the paper to highlight this research gap in the academic literature. It was necessary to obtain these deeper insights related to the time in which those studies were conducted, in order to effectively assess its relevance with the new generation, after obtaining the primary data. Through this critical stance, the quality of the used data could be secured.

4.2. Primary data

In order to be able to solve the research question, it has been necessary to collect primary data, besides making use of secondary data for this study. This is mainly due to the fact that no major research on millennials as consumers in the context of luxury has been conducted to the authors' knowledge. In the paragraphs below, the process of the primary data collection is illustrated.

4.2.1. Interviews

The chosen method of the primary data collection are qualitative semi-structured interviews. To ensure a high quality of the interviews the 'seven stages of interview inquiry' from Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) have been applied. Below, the particular steps are depicted in detail:

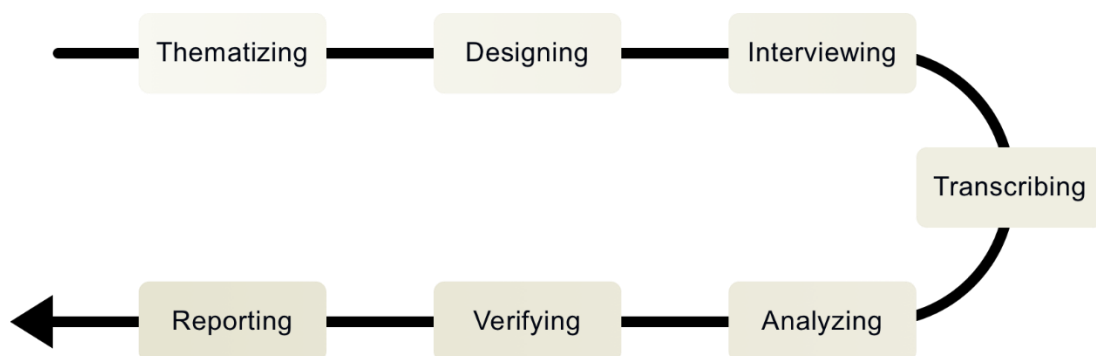


Figure 9 - The seven stages of Interview Inquiry. Source: Adapted from Brinkmann and Kvale (2015)

Stage 1: Thematizing refers to the formulation of the purpose of the research and conception of the research topic prior to the interview itself. It is concerned with the clarification of the ‘why’ and ‘what’.

Stage 2: Designing is the process of planning the design of the interviews.

Stage 3: Interviewing concerns the interview itself. It is based on a prepared interview guide.

Stage 4: Transcribing means the preparation of the interview for the stage of analysis through processing the audio recording into a written text.

Stage 5: Analyzing entails the choice of suitable analysis of the interview in the context of the research.

Stage 6: Verifying concerns the stages related with the securing of valid, reliable data and findings of the interview.

Stage 7: Reporting is the final stage and imparts the results of the research.

There are no standard rules of how to conduct a research interview, but there are standard choices that have to be made about techniques throughout the stages of an interview (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2015). These are described further hereunder.

Stage 1 - Thematizing

The first two stages take place before the actual interviewing part happens. It is crucial before conducting the interviews that the purpose and the conception of the theme is clear and the questions of “why” and “what” are answered. The first question refers to the purpose of the study and the latter to the knowledge that has to be obtained beforehand (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015).

The purpose of this study is to comprehend how the perceived luxury values are seen and understood by millennials. Furthermore, prior to the interview, the conceptual and theoretical framework was developed in order to get a better understanding of the problem formulation. This knowledge provides the groundwork on which the interviews will be based. Hence, through the literature review in chapter 2, the authors could obtain a good overview of luxury as a general concept, its historical development, the different luxury brand mechanisms as well as of the perceived luxury values. Moreover, deeper insights of millennials as a generation were gathered.

Due to the overall exploratory approach of the study, the interviews itself also serve an explorative purpose. The interviews are conceptualized in a less structured format and with an open approach. For this research, only a rough interview guide with flexible conduction was prepared to leave enough space to adapt to the individual interview partners in order gain new and profound insights and angles of luxury and millennials.

Stage 2. Design

After the clarification of the why and what of the interview study, the next stage prior to the interview conduction is to plan the procedure and techniques used in the interview, in order to answer the “how” of the research (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015). The style of the interview in this research is semi-structured. This style of interview was selected since the themes and questions to be covered could be already prepared before conducting the interview, but depending on the conversation flow, variations and adjustments can be added (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, semi-structured interviews offer the possibility to make use of probing questions, particularly when authors require their interviewees to explain or elaborate their responses. This is key in order to understand the meanings that participants give to different phenomena, which is based on the interpretivist and social constructivist philosophies adopted in this research.

In total the number of interviewees is 12. The selected interview partners are millennials, business school students which in foreseeable time will graduate and are expected to access highly paid work positions. In turn this qualifies them as potential future customers of luxury. Nevertheless, this will be further detailed in section 4.2.3.

To get deeper insights from the individuals, the interviews were scheduled to last between 45 and 60 minutes to guarantee enough time to dive more profoundly in the topic of luxury and its perceived values.

Interview guide

As part of this stage, an interview guide to collect data through the semi-structured interviews was designed, as displayed in appendix 2. During the scripting of the questions, the authors paid attention that the questions are encouraging positive interaction and assure the flow of the interview conversation. The interview was divided in three parts: welcome and briefing, questions and debriefing.

A) Welcome and briefing

Welcome and briefing would take place before the interview. Participants are thanked for their time to participate to the interview and are informed about the purpose and the process of the conversation. Additionally, they are informed about their anonymity and asked whether the interview could be recorded. In order to make them feel more comfortable and encourage them to provide their honest and personal opinion, they are told that only their own opinions, thoughts or perceptions are needed. This is reinforced by telling them that there are no right or wrong answers, and that they could feel free to honestly share any thoughts that would come to their mind.

When this information is given and their consent to record the interview is obtained, their background information would be asked: age, gender, nationality and studies enrolled (currently enrolled and termination date).

B) Interview Questions

In this part, 11 core questions were defined in advance, to assure that the basic areas under consideration would be covered. Additionally, at the end, visual pictures of different luxury brand campaigns displaying either new approaches and values, or more traditional ones were displayed (see appendix 3), followed by more questions. These visuals are used in order to enhance the conversation and gain deeper insights that would be harder to obtain otherwise. Therefore, they would lead the researchers to perceive whether new luxury values emerge as well as to obtain their impressions about brands associated with more traditional than modern approaches.

As mentioned, by using a semi-structured interview, more sub-questions can be added and adapted according to their answers. One aspect that is considered is that both the questions predefined and the ones that would be added aim to cover the three basic dimensions of luxury: individual, social and material levels. Thus, for example, according to the answers provided, questions regarding their individual or personal level would be asked, such as “how did you feel when you bought it?” or also about the social dimension, such as, “how would you feel if other people would see you with this product/brand?”. This elicited to talk about their own perceptions regarding the three different areas, which are connected with the three perceived luxury values of the conceptual framework.

The interview questions part was divided into four sections: luxury in general, luxury related to products or services, luxury and brands and the visuals.

Section 1 - Luxury in General

The first section involves questions about luxury in an abstract way. Thus, the interviewees are asked about what is the first thing that comes to their mind when they think about luxury and what luxury means to them. Their answers would be followed by different “W-questions” or open questions, adapted to every participant. These questions would lead to obtain a deeper understanding of why different notions were mentioned according to them.

Section 2 - Luxury Related to Products or Services

In the second section, the questions were related to luxury in connection with products or services. Here, it is aimed to obtain whether they have purchased luxury products or services before. Their answer would be followed by asking why or why not they have purchased a certain luxury good or service and why would they consider it as a luxury. The answers provided would complement their idea of luxury, in connection to the answers given in the first section. In addition, asking why they have purchased it would be the first step towards understanding the motivations and reasons behind it. Again, more sub-questions would be added and adapted according to their answers, leading to obtain more insights from them.

In order to trigger further experiences relating to luxury and products or services, and especially if they have answered negatively to question 3, two more questions are added in this section. For example, they are

asked whether they had a dream to obtain something luxurious in the past, i.e. in their childhood, and also after graduating, when they would earn more money than now.

With the goal of diving deeper towards their drivers and values about luxury products or services, it is asked which are the most important features that they would consider when purchasing a luxury good. Once again, open questions about the reason behind the features mentioned would be asked.

Section 3 - Luxury and Brands

With the intention to gain their perceptions and notions about luxury brands, in this section the questions were linked to the brands. For example, departing from the features answered in question 5, it is asked which brands they think would fulfill these features. This would be followed by questions about why these brands in specific and how they feel or what do they think about them.

Going further on the brand aspect and the values, a situation is also proposed to them. The participants are asked that in the case they would have two identical luxury products and only the brand would differ, what would they make buy one or the other.

Touching subtly on the uniqueness or signaling values, they are also asked whether these brands they would mention allow them to indicate to others the kind of person they are. This would provide a setting in which it would be possible to delve into whether they feel identified personally with certain luxury brands or if it rather allows them to be distinguished to be unique or to belong.

Finally, to assess more thoroughly the social level and the status signaling value, the interviewees are also asked how important it is for them that others would see them with a luxury brand. This question is combined with other sub-questions that would be asked in other parts, since there is the potential that not all of them answer completely honestly.

Section 4 - Visuals

This section aimed to enhance the discussion and to gain insights and perceptions on a deeper level from the millennial participants. The authors provided several visuals from different campaigns of luxury brands (see appendix 3). The ones presented are a mix of visuals from older campaigns (e.g. from Louis Vuitton and Dior) as well as from recent ones illustrating contemporary issues described in section 2 and 1.

On overall, visuals from luxury fashion brands were selected, because when screening for them, where most of the new developments related to this research were most visible, was in this industry. This factor could be related to the higher creativity usually involved in this sector of luxury. Therefore, when examining different visuals, luxury fashion brands seemed to be the first ones to take a step forward and try out different approaches involving topics covered in sections 1 and 2. Thus, it has to be taken into account that even though the thesis covers theories and attempts to answer the research question concerning luxury in general, due to availability reasons, only visuals from the fashion luxury industry were used.

On the one hand, visuals from older campaigns that would display the more traditional notion of luxury, as conceptualized by mainly Kapferer's studies of luxury brands were selected. For example, it can be seen in appendix 3.5. how the visual shows a beautiful luxury background and setting, such as the palace of Versailles, with a famous celebrity dressed in a long dress from Dior. In figure 10 and in appendix 3.2. it can be viewed how another famous actress is presented in addition with the Louis Vuitton handbag as the main focus of the advertisement. These visuals are displayed to the millennials in order to sense what are their attitudes and perceptions to luxury brands associated with these more traditional values.

On the other hand, visuals with other meanings and values were presented. Since the aim is to see how the luxury values are perceived by millennials, this involves also if new values or meanings would arise and how are they perceived. Accordingly, the visuals in Appendix 3.1., 3.3., 3.4., 3.5., 3.6 and 3.7. were chosen to assess this aspect. For example, the visual of appendix 3.6. of Stella McCartney represents a rather unconventional approach for a luxury brand, compared to the conception provided in the existing literature and section 2. This visual concerns with topics about over consumption and pollution. As explained in the appendix, the campaign aimed to raise awareness of this topics and to show that they are committed to become a responsible and sustainable brand.

Another visual shown was part of the new campaign of Virgil Abloh from Louis Vuitton, as represented in figure 11. This advertisement included a rather atypical model: an afro American child presenting the menswear campaign. The new creative director aimed to illustrate a more human and inclusive campaign (Newbold, 2019).

Other visuals included Balenciaga's association with the World Food Programme, or the agreement between Rihanna and LVMH, in order to obtain and understand the different insights and values regarding the new approaches.

Hence, these visuals are shown to the participants and they are told to select which visuals they want to talk about, what is standing out for them and what comes to their mind. This generates conversation and more questions, as shown in the interview guide are asked to obtain their deeper meanings and perceptions about the different approaches. The stories and messages behind the visuals with more modern approaches were told to the participants (appendix 3). Afterwards, it was also asked questions such as how would they evaluate these luxury brands and how would they feel when buying a product from them.



Figure 10 - Louis Vuitton Campaign of 2005. Source: Vogue, 2005



Figure 11 - Louis Vuitton campaign of 2019. Source: Newbold, 2019

C) Debriefing

At the end of each interview the authors also did a short debriefing, summarizing the key aspects and asking if any additional input wanted to be shared or if questions to the interview still remained.

Stage 3: Interviewing

This stage focuses on the direct interviewing process (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2015). As described, an interview guide was prepared beforehand. Due to the semi-structured nature, the guide covered questions firstly about the topic of luxury in general, followed by luxury in terms of products or services and lastly, related to the

brands. These areas were covered from the three different dimensions in which luxury is perceived: material, individual and social level. Some limited questions were formulated and adapted accordingly to the individual course of each interview, complemented with follow up questions tailored to each interview situation.

The interviews were all conducted in the English language. Due to the participants' background and education at the Copenhagen Business School, their level of English was sufficient to feel free and comfortable to speak about a sensitive and subjective topic. The interviews took place at the facilities of the university, to ensure a further comfortability of the participants.

Kvale and Brinkmann (2015) distinguish between several types of interview questions. In general, they should be brief and simple, but the questions depend and vary according to the research.

As already described under the stage 2, the interview guide was designed taking into account that different and additional questions would be asked, depending on the different answers and experiences told. During the interview, besides the open questions explained in the stage 2 and appendix 2, follow up and probing questions were also used. By making use of follow up questions, for example by asking on the last things said or making pauses, as in figure 12, it was aimed to encourage people to talk about a subject (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2015). Additionally, probing questions were also asked when seeking for an explanation in which participant's meaning or answer was not completely clear (Saunders et al., 2009), as for example in figure 13. Consequently, collecting data in the form of a semi-structured interview allowed to add this type of questions, to obtain more meaningful data to analyze and interpret. Hence, the interviews were slightly adapted in order to gain the different perceptions and insights expressed by every individual.

A: Okay. Why do you think it's about status?
B: Because it's like, luxury is something for the richer part of society in my opinion, or just for people who want to have like, sort of show that they accomplished something.
A: Accomplished?
B: Yeah, I think it's a sign of accomplishment. And of course, to like, it's like beauty, but I think most of it is like, logos and status mainly.

Figure 12 - Extracted from respondent 10 interview (appendix 4)

A: Okay, what do you mean that it's "more about me"?
B: Yeah, more about me. This is that I'm the one experiencing it. And when you're wearing something, people see it right. Yeah, but when you're experiencing something, people they're not there, right? So it's an individual experienced basically. So it's not like everyone's going to see what I'm doing. But everyone's going to see what bag I have. You know. So, it's more for myself?

Figure 13 - Extracted from respondent 6 interview (appendix 4)

Stage 4: Transcribing

Transcribing is the first of the remaining post-interview stages. After effectuating the interviews, a transcript of each interview has been created (see appendix 4), since the transcript will be further used for the analysis

of the interviews. During the transcribing process it is important to take in to account factors such as the special nature of material and the purpose of the interview (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015). The focus of the analysis of this paper will not lay only on linguistic features, but during the interview process one of the two interviewers made notes about some of the reactions of the interviewees which will also be incorporated into the analysis. Therefore, due the fact of having two different people transcribing the interviews, it was agreed on the removal of repetitions and vague sounds like “mhm” or “ahm” from the transcript. The interview was conducted in English; therefore, no translation of the transcript is necessary, avoiding then any translation errors.

Stage 5: Analysing

After the transcribing, the next stage in the process is the analysis of the interviews based on the created transcript. There are several approaches on how to analyze an interview. The focus can lay on the meaning, the language or a general approach (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015). In this paper, the focus of the analysis determined is the meaning, more specifically ‘meaning coding’, since with the meaning of the participants, the perceived luxury values are further explored.

Coding interviews can lead to categorization, which implies that the meaning of an interview is structured and narrowed down into categories (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015). The development of the central themes and subcategories will be further described in the analysis chapter 5.

6. Verifying

The stage of verification refers usually to the reliability, validity and generalization of a study (Saunders *et al.* 2009) and they can be seen as different kinds of measurements in regards of the quality of the research (Bryman, 2008).

The first criteria, reliability, refers to how consistent and trustworthy the findings are (Steinman and Kvale, 2015). The aim of semi-structured interviews is to capture a specific situation at a particular moment, and therefore are not intended to be repeated. The topic of luxury is complex and dynamic and the structure of the interview is flexible and oriented on the individual responses of the interviewees. This flexibility is needed in order to explore the topic profoundly (Marshall and Rossman, 1999). Nevertheless, there are several types of bias that can influence the reliability of the collected data in the interview: bias of interviewer and bias through interviewees. The risk of bias from the interviewers can result in an influence of the response of the interviewee. There is also the potential that during the analysis of the data, the interviewer biases the findings (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015). However, during the interview process and the analysis the authors constantly checked for bias in both directions.

Validity can be defined to the extent in which the interviewees’ knowledge could be obtained (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). It also refers to whether the data collected is true and correct and if the chosen method did investigate what it intended to investigate (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015). The study approached millennial

participants that, moreover, stated in their interviews that they either have purchased luxury brands or that could imagine buying them in the future. Thus, the knowledge aimed to be obtained, according to this research purpose was gathered during the data collection process.

Generalizability refers to the possibility to extend and apply the findings of the sample out of the scope of the research (Bryman, 2008). In the context of qualitative research method, the generalization can be referred to whether it is possible to relate the findings of a study to an existing theory. Hence, their broader theoretical significance can be proven (Marshall and Rossman, 1999). The paper does not aim to generalize the findings for the whole generation of millennials, but instead seeks to get a first insight of the relationship of millennials in the context of luxury. Also, the sample size was restricted to a certain type of millennials and therefore it is not possible to draw conclusion on the whole generation.

Stage 7: Report

The interviews will be part of the results of this research. For the analysis of the interviews there will be citations of the participants included in the analysis of the thesis. Therefore, the interviewees have been asked for the permission to record the conversation and to use the obtained knowledge in the study.

4.2.2. Advantages and Disadvantages of qualitative interviews

In relation to this research, the semi-structured interview provides major advantages over the otherwise obvious choices, such as focus groups. Semi-structured interviews will “*add so much more depth and greater insight*” (Malhotra *et al.*, 2017, p. 242), since the interviewees will be able to freely exchange information as they are not affected by social pressure to conform to a group response.

Therefore, the chosen method to collect meaningful data is the qualitative in semi-structured interviews. It is argued that it offers huge advantages over other forms of qualitative models. In comparison to a focus group, the participants will offer a greater insight of information in the topic and are freer to exchange information during the interview without any pressure or influence from a group.

4.2.3. Sampling

In the following the sampling technique as well as the sample frame are going to be discussed in more depth.

Sampling technique

The sampling technique used in the study is purposive sampling. Participants are chosen that from the perspective of the authors fit best within the research and help best to answer the research question (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). For the study a so-called homogeneous group was chosen. Therefore, a specific sub-group of millennials was selected: The sub-group chosen, contain students at Copenhagen Business School, about the

finish their degree with good future perspectives in the job market and therefore possible future consumers. Through the selection of this participants it was possible to study this sub-group in depth.

Sample frame

The sampling frame is defined as a representation of elements of the beforehand outlined target population (Saunders *et al.* 2009). The participants for the conducted interviews of this study are millennials about to finish their studies and thus, are about to start highly paid positions in diverse companies the foreseeable future.

The sample consisted of 12 participants from the students of Copenhagen Business School in Copenhagen. In order to have an overview of the interview participants, see appendix 6. Even though the sample size is rather reduced, Malhotra *et al.* (2017) defend that a qualitative sample size tends to be substantially smaller than in quantitative studies, due to duration of the interviews in combination with their high costs. The students fit in the time frame in which the generation of millennials is defined, as in section 2.3.1. Moreover, they are all surrounded by the same Danish culture in Copenhagen, studying similar bachelor and master degrees related to business. Furthermore, the university has a prestigious reputation and ranks among the 33 best business schools in Europe (The financial times, 2018). By obtaining a degree in the business field of such university, it can be expected that the students are going to achieve good ranked positions in international companies with a high salary. Therefore, it can be assumed that they are going to have sufficient earnings to purchase luxury brands and products. They can be described as possible future consumers of luxury brands and thus, the sampling fits with the purpose of the research.

As a result, the chosen participants can provide an insight in the values and motivations of potential luxury clients. It is worth to mention that the fact that participants must have consumed luxury goods or services in the past was not a requirement. This is given the context of the study, since it broadly engages with the question on how luxury (in general) is perceived and driven by millennials. Luxury is a very subjective concept, so a prior bias would be obtained if the participants had been distinguished by which brand in specific was considered as a luxury one or not.

Even though different nationalities or cultural backgrounds are included in the representative sample, these are of secondary importance for the study. The aim of interviewing students from different nationalities and cultures was to obtain a broader and less biased overview of their insights. Thus, different and broader angles from the millennial generation were obtained. Although there are different studies in the luxury literature showing cultural differences in the luxury context (e.g. Phau and Prendergast, 2000), the focus of the study does not lay on these differences. However, this factor will be indirectly taken into account in the analysis and discussion sections.



5. Analysis

The underlying chapter will analyze and discuss the data collected through the qualitative interviews in order to provide an answer to the research question of the thesis. Millennials' insights and perspectives obtained from the interviews will be analyzed according to the conceptual framework from section 2. Firstly, an introductory section will explain how the qualitative data has been codified and analyzed. Next, the analysis and discussion of the collected data will follow.

5.1. Analysis Approach and Data Codification

As previously mentioned, the focus of the analysis is the meaning coding. In order to support its process, central themes and subcategories encompassing the main topics of interest of the paper have been developed. Central themes related to both the research question and the conceptual framework of the paper have been established in the beginning, in order to guide the initial stages of the coding process. However, a more bottom-up approach follows, since according to the meaningful pieces of data extracted, subcategories are set and specified for each of the broad categories (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015). In appendix 5.1. the overview of the established central themes and subcategories can be found. The complete interview meaning coding is shown in Appendix 5.2. with the central themes, subcategories and their corresponding natural units.

The central themes derive from the research question and conceptual framework, thus, the first theme defined, given its general subjectivity, is the luxury construct. Different subcategories were established, according to the main concepts mentioned by the participants, as shown in appendix 5.2. All the subcategories designated encompass the main meanings and insights millennials ascribe to this concept in general.

These sub-categories set then a main basis of knowledge about millennials and luxury in which to delve into in the analysis of the subsequent themes and subcategories. Moreover, given the use of visual prompts, different perspectives emerged regarding traditional branding, modern branding of luxury. Despite being very related to the construct of luxury, these were set as central themes with their own subcategories, for a more precise analysis. In conjunction with the rest of the findings, these last themes will be explored at the end of the analysis.

The following central themes determined, reflect the three consumers' perceived luxury values, as described in section 2.2. of the theoretical framework: hedonism, status signaling and uniqueness. These themes are then broken down into subcategories which enabled a deeper insight in order to understand how these value dimensions are perceived nowadays and influence millennial consumers towards luxury brands. Additionally, these subcategories will be analyzed from the three levels in which luxury operates: material, individual and social.

Lastly, given the new approaches and values that have been emerging in the millennials' context and society, ethics, sustainability and inclusivity have also been specified as central themes of this analysis. Following the same procedure, different subcategories have been established in order to comprise the different views transmitted by the millennials regarding these topics in combination with luxury branding.

5.2. Luxury as a construct

As already argued before, see section 2, luxury is something very subjective and a social construct. The study furthermore is placed in the context on how nowadays the generation of millennials perceive luxury. Therefore, to get a first impression on what the interviewees think about luxury, in the first part the questions were directed towards their perception of luxury both in an abstract and in the context of products and services.

5.2.1. Luxury construct

The answers of the participants in the abstract part of the interview were detached from any product, service or brand. These were very widespread and mirrored the subjective and very personal context of the concept. As described before in section 2, luxury can be defined as the opposite of functional. This was reflected by some of the participants, mentioning: *"Just having a lot of money to spend on something. Like without that I really need it, but more that I want it"* by Respondent 7, or also by Respondent 12: *"I think about something that is [...] not needed at all"*.

Another notion, related to the already described concept of luxury, is the fact that it is perceived as 'the best', as 'high-end' or also as 'premium'. Respondent 6 mentions luxury is: *"[...] something that is kind of over over the top [...]. [...] I would say it's something really high end. [...] Something kind of premium"* or as respondent 10 formulated: *"[...] like the top of the cake" or: "[...] a better version of something else [...]"* by respondent 2. In this regard, it was also mentioned that luxury can be seen as: *"[...] upgrade from the norm [...]"* by respondent 1. This goes in line with the findings of Hudders (2012), in which consumers tend to associate luxury with the best design and quality.

In a very vague sense some respondents also see it as freedom. For them, a luxurious life is a point where respondent 4: *"can afford to do what [she] want[s] to do"*. or according to respondent 8: *"It's not having*

to worry about anything.”. This is a notion rather not touched upon in the major literature, where it is rather associated to status, brands or products.

Strongly linked with freedom, was also the reference of luxury to happiness in the interviews. In the context of: *“time to relax [...]”, [a] that your family is healthy*” or: *“good relationship with family and friends”* can be luxurious things that then: *“add up to your own happiness”* as respondent 9 said. In the same terms, it can be to just: *“living in the moment”* as respondent 3 thinks.

Related to another feeling besides happiness, luxury was also regarded as a ‘good feeling’ by a proportion of the participants. Respondent 10 mentions: *“And I think about indulgence [...] and [also] something you do just to make yourself feel better.”* Additionally, respondent 2 sees luxury as: *“just a positive, like, good life [...]”*, while respondent 6 says she thinks: *“it's kind of your treat.”*

Luxury was also associated with: *“Probably being rich”* by respondent 10, adding that *“luxury is something for the richer part of society in my opinion”*. Respondent 12 mentions the concept of luxury by noting: *“Things that only rich people can afford”*. Moreover, respondent 11 adds to her association with luxury: *“Money! I guess rich people and that's it. Okay, I mean money wise, like, luxury is not for medium class, right?”* further mentioning social classes with the statement: *“I don't think a medium class person will purchase anything luxurious.”*

The money aspect was also ascribed to luxury as an association by several other interviewees, such as respondent 6: *“Having a lot of money that I can spend on things [...]”*, which also respondent 7 agrees to by claiming: *“Just having a lot of money to spend on something. Like without that I really need it, but more than I want it”*. This refers to the point of having the money by themselves. Further participants mentioned money as a price aspect when talking about luxury goods or experiences. For example, respondent 10 mentions: *“[luxury is] something that's expensive”*. For respondent 3 it is: *“[...] something more like very elegant, classic, of course expensive”* and the first impression of respondent 2 is: *“Luxury in general, first word is expensive.”* The association of luxury with something expensive and wealthy is very connected to the main literature. These notions are one of the main purposes behind the purchase of luxury brands, since as multiple researchers defend, luxury brands are a mean to signal wealth and status. As also described in section 2, high prices also act as a mechanism and as a barrier of access (Kapferer and Bastien, 2009a).

Following the perception of money, another characteristic expressed is exclusiveness. Respondent 1 said: *“Luxury is something exclusive, and it is something like, out of the ordinary.”* A similar statement from respondent 10 states: *“luxury [...] it's like the exclusive, a little bit more.”* This characteristic also goes in line with the described luxury mechanism in section 2.

Respondent 5 sees luxury as something that: *“adds value to my life [...]”* and also respondent 7 states *“I think the most important is that it adds value to my life.”*

Also one of the respondents, respondent 3, mentions that luxury can be seen as: *“something like a dream”* relating to the dream factor of luxury (see Section 2).

One of the key terms linked to luxury and its concept by almost all of the participants were the experiences. One experience mentioned very frequently is going on vacations. As respondent 1 mentioned: *“going on holiday, then it's also going on holiday and being able to have money to stay in a hotel or apartment”*, adding that it is luxury for her because: *“not everyone is able to spend that much money on going wherever in the world.”* Also, respondent 7 has a similar mindset and would: *“[...] go [to] some destinations further away. Maybe for longer periods than just a week”*.

Another experience the interviewees viewed as luxurious is to eat in a restaurant, since they do not frequently go to. Thus, as respondent 12 states: *“[...] affording a good meal or a good piece of meat, that's also luxurious”*. A similar statement came from respondent 7, expressing: *“Or I would eat out more in fancy restaurants and try more things.”*

Additionally, it is worth to highlight that two respondents explained that experiences last longer than possessions in some cases. As respondent 6 claimed: *“I'd rather have like a really amazing experience that I'm going to take with me all my life probably than having a bag in my closet that it's probably not even going with me all my life.”*. Respondent 7 shares this opinion with the statement: *“Probably the bag might last longer. Physically. But I think the experiences I will value more. Because in 50 years. I don't care what kind of bag I have right now.”* These answers emphasize that in some occasions an experience can have longer lasting effects on these millennials than a product, service or brand.

5.2.2. Sub-conclusion luxury as a construct

Summarized, it can be said that in terms of luxury in the abstract sense, the participants had partly very different ideas of what luxury means to themselves. Nevertheless, similarities could be observed not only in the answers, but also in the topics from the conceptual framework, such as premium prices, money exclusiveness and the likes.

This shows how some of the traditional values are still relevant and meaningful for the representation of luxury for millennials. On the other hand also more abstract values such as freedom or happiness or even experiences could be observed, showing a shift in their perception. However, this trend could go in accordance with the characteristics of the millennial generation. As described previously, this generation tends to prefer experiences over possessions.

To provide a clearer overview about the luxury construct, all the different keywords associated to luxury by millennials have been depicted in the following word cloud graph:



Figure 14 - Luxury concept word cloud. Source: Authors' own creation

5.3. Values

When shifting the focus towards the three perceived luxury values - uniqueness, hedonism and status signaling - it could be perceived the high degree of interaction between these three. In most of the luxury consumption cases portrayed by the millennial respondents, at least two of these drivers acted in conjunction. For example, respondent 10 summarized why she likes to buy luxury products: *“Just because you feel like very pretty [...] it looks really beautiful. And I like the uniqueness, I like to own something that many people might not own”*. Moreover, this effect was also present in the material, individual and social levels of luxury. In line with the theory, it seems to be of a certain complexity in the luxury field to delimit the motivation to buy a product, service or experience due to only, for example, the material aspects. As an illustrative example, respondent 11 expresses that she loves Versace and would like to buy one of their dress, since it would make her: *“feel prettier, and you feel like you're wearing something that really fits you. And it's really high quality and that everyone can see that. And you can also feel like oh, it's more like an experience than just the dress itself”*.

This effect has been considered throughout all the process of the analysis. Hence, even though the data is analyzed and reported for every perceived value individually, they are certainly intertwined and altogether explain the attraction and motivations towards luxury brands from millennials.

5.3.1. Status Signaling

In the following section, the status value is further developed and analyzed. In line with the theory, the focus will lay on the external motivations of status and status signaling.

As shown in the conceptual framework, there are several underlying motivations and drivers for the consumption of luxury goods in the context of status signaling. In the interviews, all of the participants touched upon the topic of signaling wealth. However, the majority of the interviewees, with a few exceptions, related to status signaling in a non-positive way. As respondent 2 stated: *“that's not really important to me, to show off that I can afford something”*, showing that it is not of importance to him that other people see his status. Another example came from participant 5, stating: *“I would not buy these things because I want to show off.”*

Showing wealth was also related to negative feelings, as respondent 9 stated: *“I hate showing off. Like I don't like to show other people how much money I can spend on something. [...] even if it was my like my own money, but still, I don't wanna show this perspective, if this perception to other people”* and that she is: *“a bit uncomfortable with it.”* But not only related to oneself, also another respondent 7 referred to other people signaling wealth: *“people [...] are more posh [...]. And I don't see myself as a posh person”*, implying that she cannot identify herself with that kind of status behavior and that she does not participate in that sort of action. Adding on this point of view, respondent 11 associates that this behavior: *“is for rich people, like those new rich people”*.

In contrast for some people it added something to the luxury value, when buying something luxurious. Respondent 6 states: *“Obviously, when you buy something, luxurious, you also want to, to show a bit”* and also respondent 2 agrees when talking about buying a luxurious car, that *“If I paid that much money for something like that, that would be part of it, otherwise it wouldn't be worth it.”* Respondent 6 mentions: “show off” in the context of travelling saying: *“it's obviously it's stupid, but it's obviously nice to post it on Instagram [...]. Obviously to show other people [...].”*

But in none of those cases it was the key driver of luxury consumption. Moreover, anticipating what will be expanded further at the end of this section, respondent 6 and 11 were raised in Southern Europe and have a different cultural background. This could have an impact on their higher emphasis shown, compared to the rest, towards signaling wealth or “showing off”, as quoted before. Consequently, throughout the interviews at some point, their opinions differ significantly from the other interviewees.

It could be perceived, in relation to showing off or signaling wealth, that the overall reaction was rather negative and it does not seem to be a driver for these millennials in terms of purchasing luxury goods, as proposed by other main research. Nevertheless, it should be considered that due to the sensibility of the topic and the perceived discomfort from some of the interviewees, it could be that their attitude is slightly more positive than it is in reality, regarding of “showing off”. But in general, status signaling does seem to be less relevant for the representatives of this generation.

Another motivation in the context of status signaling is the improvement of social status, as referred by Eastman *et al.*, (1999) in section 2. This was reflected with the notion of achievement by the participants. As stated by respondent 10: *“[...] it's a sign of ‘making it’, but not in the logo [way], [...] but just in the way that I can afford to wear better quality”*. Additionally, respondent 2 explained that for him it is: *“[...] part of the success and achievement. To me, at least that includes other people's perception”*. This shows that the focus for those lays more on the achievement and less on the wealth itself. This phenomenon is also linked to the self-expression effect and hedonism, detailed in the upcoming sections.

Another driver for luxury consumption under the concept of status is the recognition from others and therefore also their evaluations. A few participants, such as respondent 12 claimed: *“[...] don't really care what other people think [...]”*. For other participants it is again something nice to have. For example,

respondent 5 stated that: *“it's a nice side effect that you get compliments”* and respondent 7 shares this opinion with the statement *“I have something nice and they acknowledge it. Yeah, I guess it's always nice.”* Thus, neither the recognition by the group seems to be the main driver to purchase luxury for millennials, but rather as an added value.

The driver to belong to a group can be described with the bandwagon effect, as elaborated on in section 2. During the interviews, four of the participants mentioned the need to belong to their group of friends. Interestingly, most of them referred to it to the past experiences. Respondent 10 talked about her high school experience stating: *“[...] me and my friends we were always like wearing big feather stuff and heels and stuff [...]. And only black. Completely black. Everything.”* Furthermore, reflecting on it as *“It was definitely the black trend, we were all wearing black.”* Also, respondent 11 had a similar experience during her high school and stated: *“[...] the way you dress and everything is to feel part of a kind of a group”* and she bought “posh” clothes because she *“[...] wanted to feel part of this, like, posh group of [her] friends.”* The word “trend” is further mentioned by respondent 6, when she explained why she bought a specific handbag once, because: *“[...] it's trendy”*. This shows that a trend originates from the need and feeling of belonging, as explained by the bandwagon effect.

However, respondent 6 argued: *“So I always had people around me that had iPhones. So, I also wanted an iPhone.”* referring to more recently purchased luxury goods. In contrast, in the present respondent 9 answered that *“I don't feel like I have to have it in order to belong to a group for example”*, adding later on that: *“I think I'm self confident enough that I don't need certain things to feel like I have to belong.”*, stating that she does consume luxury “more for herself”, which is related to hedonism and shows the interrelation between the constructs.

As an intercorrelated but opposite to the intention of the need to belong to a group, a differentiation effect arose. The bandwagon effect implies also that in order to belong to one group, individuals automatically must distinguish themselves from other people. This is highlighted by respondent 10 saying: *“That's why [...] I like to buy more expensive things, then you at least have some people who are not able to be in that group. So you're like standing out [...]”* illustrating the interrelation both effects have. That is, on the one hand she belongs to a group which is able to afford more expensive goods, but on the other hand, she aims to stand out and distinguish herself from the other people that do not belong in the same group.

An even motivation behind status identified, was to cause envy in other people. Respondent 6 mentioned this motivation regarding travelling: *“I would definitely post it on Instagram. Obviously to show other people, or maybe to make them a bit jealous”* showing that provoking envy on other people by posting about her experiences in the social media gives her an added good feeling.

As a related topic to wealth signaling, the use and type of signals also emerged during the data collection. As elaborated on before, there are loud and quiet signals, according to the study of Han *et al.* (2010). In line with the results obtained in the subcategory of wealth signaling, there is a negative mindset towards

loud signaling. Respondent 9 stated *"I don't like when the brand name is very disposed on a product."* relating it with *"I don't like to show off [...]"*. Respondent 3 has the same opinion with this statement, *"So I wouldn't like to buy something with the name of the brand on it or where you can see it a lot"*. The logo aspect itself was also not highly valued by respondent 5, saying *"Because for me, it's less about the brand itself and then more about the quality. So you could have the same shoes, and then they just put a fancy logo on it. It doesn't add that much value for me."* In line with the rest, this evidences that the importance for her lays on the quality, leaving the use of a logo as a signal, as a factor which does not provide her any added value. This is due to the fact that for her, as others mentioned, it is not key that other people see and recognize it. These examples of loud signals are congruent with the negative perception found and described previously in terms of wealth signaling.

Furthermore, this negative attitude towards loud signaling is connected with the need for uniqueness and differentiation. Visible logos were also seen as an external statement for participant 2, who claimed *"It's just that whole idea of having some statement on you, it's not really something necessary for me, I would prefer the other way."* This leads again, to the role self-expression played for millennials. By displaying a brand logo, it is important for them that it matches their beliefs, since they only want to signal values they feel identified with. Some of the luxury logos carry wealth associations that participants were reluctant to be identified with and as a consequence, to signal them.

Also, respondent 12 pointed out that for him *"[...] the name of the brand doesn't say too much [...]"* adding that he *"will read reviews, comments, blogs about it and [his] decision will be based on that and not on the name of the brand."* This could also be interpreted as a suggestion of lacking trust in the brand, meaning that the brand alone is not enough to convince him to buy it. Instead he relies more on other people's reviews.

Respondent 11 also relates loud signaling to rich people stating *"I think it is tacky [...]. And it is for rich people, like those new rich people."* This statement is aligned with her statements of the negative association of luxury with rich people.

But not only logos are perceived in a negative way, also a whole brand can be rejected due to loud signaling, such as respondent 10, who explains with the brand Louis Vuitton *"it's very in the whole logo world and it was like a huge thing 10 years ago here everybody really everybody had one, then they sort of got a little bit tired of it"*, suggesting that she does not feel attracted to such a kind of brand.

In summary, these findings show that for most of the participants loud signals are rejected and perceived negatively. In general, such a reaction was due to the associations loud signals entail as well as the type of people they associate with those loud signals.

Again, a different perception was drawn from one of the respondents from Southern Europe. Respondent 6, when asked about what is important when buying a luxury product or service, stated *"the brand, obviously. Which brand [...] I'm buying from, because for me, it's, like I said, it's also about showing off"*. Adding when she would buy something luxurious *"[...] she is also going to go for what everyone knows [...]"*.

Given the negative reaction from most of the respondents to loud signals, several interviewees thus showed more interest in quiet signals or brands that would not be very visible to avoid signaling in the “wrong” way. As an example, respondent 9 said *“I would also buy it if it is like very, for example, with these lean bags it says, like in very small letters. If it says ‘Sabine’ on it, and then I would definitely buy it, but I don’t like those big logo things.”* She adds that in her opinion: *“lots of people [...] don’t have the knowledge about these luxury brands, they would never recognize them.”*, which gives her the confidence to buy such brands. Furthermore is she aware of the fact that only a few people would recognize it by stating *“And very good right now they have this like, special cut and I know that some people know that.”*, but in her opinion would the *“[...]fast fashion buyers [...]never ever recognize that I have these things, you know, like, they don’t see it because they don’t value it”*.

Specifically, due to her statements, respondent 9 could be clearly categorized as a “patrician”, as Han *et al.* (2010) explained in their study. Patricians are the consumers with certain wealth who do not wish to show their wealth externally. Thus, they prefer quiet signals which only have a social symbolic function within their own social group, because the rest of people will not possess the knowledge to recognize those signals (ibid.).

5.3.2. Uniqueness

Regarding uniqueness, most of the respondents linked their perception of luxury as something exclusive and only owned by a few. For example, respondent 1 described her idea as: *“Luxury is something exclusive, and it is something like, out of the ordinary [...] if you have something luxury, you feel a bit more special, or maybe feel a bit more like, fine or better”*, or as respondent 11 reflects: *“I don’t know. I would feel special. [...] Because it’s something that not everyone has. So it would make me feel different to the rest of the people”*.

A main subcategory that emerged from millennials’ input concerning uniqueness and luxury is the differentiation factor. Here, the presence of the social level becomes of a higher relevance, since millennials would feel unique and different compared to the rest of the people around them. For example, respondent 8 expressed her admiration for a Gucci jean jacket because *“if I got the Gucci jean jacket, it would just be like a thing that has a different style that I really wanted, that I really like, and so I would immediately feel very good”*, for which, when reflecting on the possible influence people around her could have, she clearly stated *“I think if everyone around me wore them [Gucci jackets], I did not want it.”* When considering the exclusivity present in luxury brands, respondent 1 also manifested: *“[...]I think also that the way they had these products, but also because it is really hard to get them [...] it’s because it’s unique, there’s not that many. So [...] it’s yeah, just because you’re one of those who would have it, then it’s just really like luxurious, and you can differentiate yourself.”*

Purchasing luxury products to distinguish themselves from the rest derives from the snob effect, as defined in the conceptual framework. Continuing with the respondent 1 perceptions as a representation, she

added a situation about the Nespresso coffee machines. When launched, she thought: *"It was something really like when you headed home, you were like 'Uh this is so fancy', but now everyone [...] has it at home"*. Given this fact, she perceives them: *"not as fancy as before"*, whereas if: *"[...] in the beginning when you had one and it would be like 'oh, yeah, this is really nice', but with everyone has it, so it just becomes the norm. And then it's not that [...] luxurious, fancy anymore"*.

Some other respondents would even lean further towards the uniqueness value than others, as their main driver. For example, respondent 10 described how she feels attracted to luxury products given their higher quality, their colors and their aesthetics, because, compared to her surroundings, where people do not usually wear colorful clothes, it becomes: *"more unique to be colorful [...] I liked that it was a little bit different"*. She added that she *"like[s] the uniqueness, I like to own something that many people might not own yes [...] it gives me some sort of satisfaction [...] I love limited edition stuff."* or even that *"at one point, I was buying from Korean designers, as we don't have a lot of them in here. [...] I liked that it was a little bit different. And just say, 'Oh, you can't get it around the corner'"*. Similarly to other participants, she also expresses *"I hate it I hate when I bought something and I thought like, 'Oh my God, this was amazing!' and the right colors, and it's just unique. And then you see four people walking in with the same thing. That's awful."* and how *"buying expensive things"* becomes then a source of distinction and exclusivity, since: *"then you at least have some people who are not able to be in that group. So you're like standing out."*

This illustrates to which extent the fact of having a unique product or unique experience has an impact for millennials. When too many people wear, use or have it, their perspectives and enthusiasm towards it were diminished.

The fact that millennials luxury consumers aim at differentiating themselves seemed to be highly related to the concept of self-expression. As respondent 3 reflected during his interview: *"I think when you buy luxury clothes, these are not clothes that you can buy anywhere, so it's also a way to differentiate yourself at some point, and show a bit more your personality, you know?"*. A similar statement was formulated by respondent 2, however, in line with what most of the respondents shared - except 6 and 11 - they would prefer not to differentiate themselves by displaying logos or brands. As respondent 2 indicates, *"I think it would prefer it without the print [Balenciaga logo]."*, respondent 9 *"I would rather buy something where it [the brand] maybe says like, very small or is not even on it"* or as respondent 2 argues, *"it's just that whole idea of having some statement on you, it's not really something necessary for me, I would prefer the other way"*. These opinions follow the same idea described previously under status signaling.

Most of the participants pointed out the importance of buying a luxury product or experience: *"for myself"* or: *"because I liked it"*, thus, rather as an intrinsic motivation. However, purchasing luxury products *"because of the brand"* seemed to display and involve associations and meanings already ascribed to the brand. The participants did not feel completely identified with them and therefore, did not match their personality and unique identity. As a result, they showed a more averse attitude towards this type of branded products. For

example, respondent 1 stresses that she does not use: “[these big brands] because it's not really something I would associate myself with” or respondent 11 is reluctant to wear anything from Dior, because: “it's associated with very rich, very beautiful woman [...] as I said, I don't feel very identified with that”.

Therefore, following the same logic and in order to counteract the previous effect, other variables and attributes such as visuals and aesthetics emerged during the interviews. Such variables turned out to play a role in order to feel unique and distinct. Purchasing something that is aligned with their own taste or personality, provided them the feeling of being identified with their luxury products or services, which goes in line with the findings of Tian *et al.*, (2001).

It becomes worth to mention then, the emphasis most of the respondents put in liking or wanting to buy a luxury product because they like its design or because of the designer behind. Respondent 6 shared her experience when buying a handbag from Marc Jacobs because for her: “it's a lot about art. And if you have designer that [...] it's not so extravagant, that looks like someone who's just, he's doing his job. And is an artist basically. That really speaks a lot about the brand”. When comparing two similar products but one being from Gucci and another one from Marc Jacobs, she argues she: “will go for the Marc Jacobs because I identify more with the brand, with their design in general, than with Gucci, [...] although it's the, like, almost the same.”. She expresses how Marc Jacobs “[is] more like my kind of design and what I like more”. Additionally, respondent 11 formulated how, compared to her motivation regarding luxury brands in the past, right now she would buy something because: “when you're buying something from his design it's because you like the designer, and you like the brand and everything” and that, “because the designers like unique designers are very, very well regarded”. In a clearer intention towards differentiation and exclusivity, participant 10 states that “the more complicated the design and shape and difficult it is to imitate from cheap brands, the more I like it”.

This effect became specifically significant when talking about luxury clothes, as respondent 2 revealed: “it also depends on how it looks, that's obvious that it should fit a certain style [...] if we're talking about clothes”, moreover, respondent 11 points it out as a main feature to purchase luxury clothes “because about clothes I would say design”. The reason behind, as illustrated by respondent 3, is that: “the clothes that you wear are also an indicator of your personality too. So I think wearing clothes is a way to express yourself”.

When combining all previously described factors in relation to the need of uniqueness, it becomes tangible the positive effect it has on millennial consumers. For example, respondent 4 describes how much she loves and has been buying the same perfume for 10 years, Chanel Chance, despite being quite expensive for her because “I've smelled other people wearing this perfume around me like a lot of good friends of mine have the same perfume and we all smell different. [...] I feel like with this specific perfume, it's almost like it's only mine. [...] I feel like this perfume allows me to kind of have my own identity.”

5.3.3. Hedonism

As described in the conceptual framework, luxury products consumption is not only related to the status or uniqueness needs, but also driven by its hedonic effects. This was supported in this research, since all the respondents related their actual or potential luxury purchases for themselves, as either a treat to themselves, or as something that yielded positive feelings to themselves.

All the respondents described their experiences with luxury goods, either purchased or wished to be purchased, with positive emotions. For example, in terms of products, respondent 12 was excited to explain that he would feel “[...] *super happy* [...]” if he could drive a Tesla car, because he “[...] *love[s] the brand. [he] love[s] the technology behind that car along what is involved in the development of that car*” or, as respondent 6 formulated regarding a luxury handbag: “*it's a nicer feeling like that you have, once you [...] get out of that stage that I spent so much money, then it's really, it's really nice to look at it.*”. Others even showed an emotional personal attachment to the products, such as interviewee 4 with her Chanel Chance perfume: “*it makes me feel very happy because I really love this perfume*” or respondent 8, with her Gucci jean jacket: “*when I first saw it, and I was like, oh, wow, okay, this is gorgeous [...]. And so I feel an attachment and like, kind of remembrance about something that was good.*” Additionally, some even mentioned that wearing a luxury product would make them feel prettier or more beautiful, such as respondent 10 and 11 expressed, because “[...] *it is a very nice dress, that will probably fit me better than another dress [...]*” or that “[...] *to have a dress from Chanel would be so nice [...] because they are very pretty and the design is so amazing*”, as respondent 11 excitedly revealed. Going slightly beyond this line, respondent 10 even manifested that she “*sort of fall[s] in love with beautiful things*”. In line with Tsai (2005) and Hudders (2012) and the conceptual framework presented in this paper, the participants attributed these positive feelings also to the high quality expected, the design and aesthetics and the sophistication ascribed to the luxury products.

On overall, 10 participants directly linked luxury products as goods of higher quality. As respondent 10 summarizes: “*I sort of believe [...] that luxury items are generally a bit of quality.*”, because “*brands who do like high-end stuff and expensive stuff they have more money to explore and play a little bit. If you think about clothing, it's more like, different textiles, better textiles and so on. [...] where maybe the cheaper stuff is more like, because it needs to look good on the first view, but not the feeling of it and not the rest*”. The same reasoning behind was found with experiences, for example, respondent 12 conceives purchasing a specific brand of coffee as a luxury given its higher quality and taste. As he formulated: “[...] *it's more about the taste of the product itself of the coffee. So I do enjoy drinking good coffee. It gives me some satisfaction [...] And I enjoy the moment when I drink it, when I can I always take a moment to enjoy it.*”

Moreover, higher quality and hedonic benefits were also associated with higher prices. As respondent 7 directly connects, if she wore something from expensive luxury brands, she “*would feel really, really special. Because those things are super expensive [...] so [she...] would just feel very fancy and special wearing it*”.

Additionally, other variables that surrounded the luxury product or service seemed to play a role and contributed to these emotional responses. As one of the luxury mechanisms presented in the conceptual framework, respondents 7, 2 and 5 mentioned the effect the store experience and the presentation of the products had on them. When purchasing a luxury suit, respondent 2 added *“It felt good to wear it [...] Also to be in the store, because the whole store felt a little more luxurious [...] So it was a different experience and a good and positive experience”*. He perceived the store as more luxurious *“because of the interior, the decoration, how everything looks”*. The same perception was expressed by respondent 5, adding also that it is *“[...]the whole presentation, like they just really think about that everything goes in line, and then you have really nice people helping you in the store. [...] I think that really adds up to the experience”* and argued that *“you want to treat yourself if you buy something like that, right? So you want to, you don't just want to grab it and buy it? And then that's it. You just want to have some more around it”*.

Similarly, when talking about experiences and travelling, emotional benefits were especially mentioned. Respondent 6 synthesizes that for her *“[...] it's more about what it makes me feel. [...] it's more like being in a luxurious experience. And then I'm really thrilled and I really enjoying the most and I'm really investing on that”*. Respondent 7 defends that she might *“[not] care what kind of bag [she] ha[s] right now. But [she] might [...] remember like ‘hey, I went to this place’. That was really nice”*. Then she adds: *“So yeah, I think experience are just worth more than items”*.

As another concept described in the conceptual framework, self-indulgence or giving a “treat” to themselves was explicitly mentioned by respondents 5, 6, 8, 9, 11 and 12. In this subcategory, purchasing luxury due to personal motives, thus at a personal level, was more predominant and noticeable. As illustrated by respondent 6: *“[...] for me something luxurious is something that I'm paying for to treat myself”* or as number 9 reflected: *“I think it's more for me knowing that I bought this really nice bag for me with my money that I earned, and that I kind of treat myself with something.”* Respondent 6 added that enjoying a luxury experience can lead her to make her feel more confident: *“[...] like I did treat myself and I am confident and I'm enjoying and I can, I can give this to myself. It's kind of like a present to myself. So I feel a bit more confident.”* Additionally, respondent 8 explained a specific bad time she had been going through and when travelling, decided to stay in a luxury hotel arguing: *“[...] it was a moment that I took for myself that when I'm having a little less good time, I'm going to be able to think back into ‘Oh, well, I did this for myself’, [...] it was a very good time”*. Mirroring the individual and personal level in this value dimension, respondent 6 and 8 mentioned, respectively: *“[...] when you're experiencing something, people they're not there, right? So it's an individual experienced basically”* and that: *“[...] it is like self care, [...] because I wanted it and so I wasn't bragging about it”*. Once again, this illustrates the emotional benefits obtained by purchasing luxury brands, as described in section 2.

Finally, feelings of accomplishment, achievement and satisfaction was also portrayed when consuming luxury brands. Luxury represents a sign of accomplishment and achievement, as mentioned by

respondents 2, 4 and 10; or something to consume as a self-treat when reaching a milestone, as respondent 1 defined. This led to a feeling of satisfaction, fulfilment and even pride on them. As respondent 3 argues: *“[...] it would be a way to show me that all the things that I have done in the past, actually they are worth it and that you’ve earnt that”*.

However, it is worth to mention how some respondents also revealed some negative feelings related to luxury goods. Respondents 7, 9 and 4 mentioned feeling guilty after their expensive purchases. Respondent 4 illustrates this with the acquisition of her Apple computer: *“[...] this computer is almost 2000 euros [...]”* and she felt she did not *“[...] want to be judged by having such a higher range product”*, because she was aware that her *“[...] current financial situation does not support a luxury lifestyle”*. This led her to feel guilty sometimes in relation to this luxurious product: *“[...] because I know, it's not a necessary thing in my life”*. A similar argument was provided by respondent 7, and concluded: *“if I just spend [money] on items, I don't really need, it makes me feel a little bit guilty sometimes”*. Some others, such as respondents 6, 4 and 1 also expressed that after a while, owning a luxury product made them feel less and less special or even less luxurious regarding the product. They argued that it was because *“[...] you kind of get used to it [...]”* and that *“[...] it just becomes the norm of what you are used to [...]”*.

On overall, as reviewed, multiple aspects of luxury brands elicit different positive feelings, gratification and satisfaction of intrinsic needs in millennials. This reflects the importance of hedonism as a value dimension or driver for millennials towards luxury brands. Moreover, it also illustrates how the aim of obtaining such luxury goods or experiences is higher due to the hedonism they are endowed with, than the utility or functionality they provide. As respondent 8 summarizes: *“[luxury is] something you don't actually need and something you do just to make yourself feel better”*.

5.3.4. Sustainability

The next value analyzed is sustainability. It is important to highlight at this point, most of the interviewees brought up the topic during the interview by themselves. Respondent 1 for example stated: *“I think for me personally, it's more about like, that the brand is a sustainable thing, when brands they support, like good values and something with sustainability”* and also later in the last part of the interview through the visuals displayed to them. Nevertheless, only a few commented exclusively on sustainability in the visual part, when the topic was more directly addressed.

During the conversations several participants touched upon the topic of sustainability in their everyday life. As respondent 4 said: *“[...] I really enjoy sustainability.”*, while respondent 12 stated: *“It is important to me because I'm trying to live in a simple style in terms of sustainability.”* Respondent 2 expresses: *“[Sustainability] is something I would pay for, because that is important to me.”* and respondent 3 adds: *“[...] when I purchase something, most of the time, not always, I try to purchase something that is sustainable [...]”* highlighting the consideration of sustainability in their general consumption. This shows that sustainability

plays a role in their life and as already discussed before, shows how millennials have a different mindset about sustainability (Van den Bergh and Behrer, 2016).

From those participants viewing sustainability as something in their everyday life, three also mentioned a willingness to pay more for this value. Thus, respondent 12 mentioned, *"I would go for the more sustainable even if it is a little bit more expensive"* and respondent 4 stated in regards of her newly bought laptop: *"So they got me there you know, they made me pay almost 1000 euros just for this little sustainability thing"*. In addition, respondent 2 reflects on the willingness to pay for a higher price for the future: *"[...] if I made a lot more money than I do now, then I would also be willing to pay more for something like that"*. In contrast to that, respondent 7 does have a different opinion. She states: *"I guess then I would actually feel like I pay also for not only for the quality of the content, but also for the sustainable aspect"*. But later on, she added: *"And then later when I can actually afford it. [...] I can take the sustainable aspect into consideration. So, I wouldn't mind like then to pay extra for it."*

Some interviewees state that they see sustainability in the context of luxury consumption as something 'extra'. As an example, respondent 10 said that: *"it will be an extra nice touch"* and adds that: *"[...] if I could add on the extra positive, like, just make the purchase feel better."* Another interviewee points out another kind of good feeling it gives her, respondent 7 expressed: *"[...] I would feel better. Because it's also something good for the environment, or something not harmful for the environment."* Another different kind of positive feeling was expressed by respondent 4: *"And that was because of the sustainability factor that I completely forgot before. I would be a little more proud."* relating the sustainability value with hedonic effects.

Another interesting aspect several interviewees mentioned is that they see sustainability as a secondary priority. *"Then [sustainability], it's more like a nice to have, it's definitely a plus, but not necessarily something I would pay a lot more money to get. [...] But if it's more or less the same, or little more expensive, then I would buy that option"*. respondent 2 stated during the interview. In a similar way, respondent 12 said: *"[...] I wouldn't mind buying something which is expensive as soon as it offers good quality and is sustainable."* showing that when his first priority, quality, is satisfied, sustainability is the second one. He also added: *"I would consider it for sure, because sustainability overpasses other factors in my criteria when buying products."* pinpointing with the statement that sustainability has higher priority than other values, even if it is not the key one. This is reflected also by respondent 8, who said: *"I mean, unless there's an amazing product that I really want [...] But not enough to make me want to buy products from this brand."* referring to Stella McCartney. This seems to suggest that solely sustainability is not enough for those consumers.

An interesting observation was that two participants during the interviews mentioned signaling in the context of sustainability. They perceived wearing or buying luxury products as a way to *"[...] showing to people that is possible to buy products like that."* and that *"[...] there is a different path"*. Respondent 5 complements in that direction by stating: *"I wouldn't necessarily buy to show others that I'm super sustainable and ethically correct and whatever. But as a side effect, I think it's not bad because probably, I could also*

influence the behavior of others.” Interestingly, sustainability seemed to turn the negative perceptions of “showing off” related to luxury brands, into a more positive direction.

When presenting the visuals in the category of sustainability all the respondents reacted to the campaign photos of Stella McCartney. The reactions were both positive and also negative and also influenced the brand perception in different ways. Respondent 2 reacted with the statement of the brand: *“Yeah, definitely positive towards the brand. Yes, it does. I think that's good, that they're trying to do something like that, in bringing awareness to it.”* and also respondent 3 agrees and adds *“because I think it's nice that you are engaged in thing like sustainable development.”* Others like respondent 5 pointed out that the positive attitude they feel towards the brand through their engagement leads her to *“consider this brand in the future then”*.

In addition, the perception of how other people using a sustainable brand such as Stella McCartney can have a positive impact, or as respondent 8 states: *“[...] if I see someone wearing a Stella McCartney, maybe I'll be less critical of it, then if I see them or something else.”* Indicating that under normal circumstances wearing luxury clothing brands is perceived negatively by her. A related statement came from respondent 11: *“It is all about the branding. So if you want to feel better, you buy the maybe this thing that, you know, it might be more sustainable. But at the same time, you have to know that it is not so sustainable. It is just the way you want to feel when you buy it.”*

There were also negative reactions to the visual that had an influence on how the brand was perceived. For respondent 6 it is evaluated negative that the brand is *“falling in the mainstream”* due to addressing plastic problems and that instead they *“should obviously communicate your values”* and *“stick to that”*.

Other issues arose in the discussion of sustainability and brands and respondent 5 states: *“So I think the whole sustainability, things should be related to the brand and what the brand actually does.”* Also respondent 11 is critical and said: *“[...] it is certainly a trend and they are like, taking advantage of that trend.”* And even goes a step further and claims: *“I feel a little bit like being lied to. I don't know if they actually like, work for that, maybe.”* This shows that for her it is not transparent if the brand keeps what it promises to do in regards to sustainability. Respondent 10 mentioned that she has kind of expectations towards luxury brands: *“I think it's when they're a little bit more expensive, they should sort of [...]”*, implicating that she expects them to act in that direction anyway. Thus, even though most of the respondents reacted positively about the sustainable approach in luxury brands, it could be perceived how they were raising questions regarding the transparency and authenticity of luxury brands using this approach.

5.3.5 Ethics

Similarly to sustainability, ethics was also a topic that emerged during some interviews before the visual prompts were introduced. In contrast, some respondents only talked about ethics related to luxury, after seeing the visuals.

Before the part of the visuals, respondents 9, 3 and 5 mentioned ethical variables and features they take into account when purchasing a luxury good. For example, respondent 9 and 3 mentioned that they would check, as an extra feature, if the products are produced in Europe. Respondent 9 explained that: *“[...]it’s not the main point why I purchase it but it adds up to having a good perception about the brand”*. Respondent 3 added that: *“[...] we all know the working conditions and the workers in China, right? They do not earn a lot of money so, for instance, if I want to purchase a French luxury brand I think I would go to a brand where I could check that the products are made in Europe”* in line with the other respondents, he also mentions that: *“[...] in a way, I would care about the ethical part of the luxury brand and it’s something I would check and that would give me some extra value”*. Respondent 5 agreed and also perceived it as adding extra value and suggested that ethically sourced materials is something that: *“adds to the luxury [...] I mean, you can buy the cheap H&M stuff, where the children are exploited in China...”*. She maintained that she would change her behavior and would purchase goods ethically produced when she had the money. Especially in the case of luxury, since, as she argues, *“[...]you buy things that are unnecessary[...] you feel better about it when you know that at least they are ethically sourced”*, illustrating the hedonic effect such value would also have on the participants.

After the visual part of the interview, eight respondents talked about the visual of Balenciaga and their direct collaboration with the World Food Programme, whose logo was directly added into the designs of their collection. These respondents 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 showed a positive attitude towards this approach. They argued that: *“It does good. And it’s not just for creating revenue for the company, but also like a social aspect behind it”*, as respondent 7 mentioned: *“That makes a pretty big difference. If we just look at two traditional luxury brands, and one of them does something like that. Yeah, immediately stands out or something positive”*. Some mentioned that they would be willing to pay for a luxury company supporting this cause, e.g. respondent 7, or that it would help them to express themselves, as respondent 5 said. In terms of the social context level, respondent 5 added that she would not necessarily buy it to: *“[...] show others that I’m super sustainable and ethically correct [...]. But as a side effect, I think it’s not bad because probably, I could also influence the behavior of others.”* Thus, a similar reception positive reaction on signaling luxury brands with ethical values was perceived, as with sustainability.

However, at the same time they expressed a positive attitude and interest towards ethics, the participants set some conditions and criticisms about the approaches used by these luxury brands. For example, respondent 4 argued: *“But that doesn’t relate to anything Balenciaga does, the company is not forced to feed people, they’re forced to ensure that the quality of work is good”* and respondent 11 illustrates the transparency or authenticity missing in these approaches: *“I don’t know if they actually like, work for that, maybe. But what about other things? Like, maybe they have kids like working in their factories or whatever, but you don’t know what’s behind this”*.

5.3.6 Inclusivity

Inclusivity was, compared to ethics and sustainability, not mentioned before the visuals had been showed. Furthermore, all the respondents did not touch upon the topic due to the free choice of the visuals they wanted to talk about. On overall, the reactions to the campaign were positive after the interviewees heard about the story behind. Respondent 1 mentioned: *"I think this this is a nice, nice campaign."*

Related to the brand, two interviewees mentioned that they do not think that this kind of behavior is any special in a way that respondent 6 states *"if you have all these media buzz around, brands not using, like black models, or Chinese models or whatever, Indian models, they need to respond to that. [...] So it's sometimes not even, it doesn't even feel like they do it for a reason other than we kind of have to do it."* implying that brands use inclusivity to adapt to the industry trends. However, respondent 1 did think that it is something she expects brands to do saying: *"I really think like we should really emphasize this, I mean, this is some values really are some issues that we really should put, like more. More focus on."* Respondent 11 opinion goes even further. She points out the huge impact the industry can have: *"So you can actually change beauty. Like The beauty standards? So I guess in that sense, they are more they can really make a change. And they have to do a change, they really should. So the inclusivity of black people or different people or fatter people. I think it's very, very important. And they can really make a change in that."*

Another perspective on inclusivity was the contribution of the participants. As respondent 7 expressed: *"Because inclusion is really important and I know that the brand focuses on social inclusion and I'm just happy that I can like, I would say, contribute to through my luxury and I can also contribute to like a brand that actually has a deeper cause."* And she added that it *"it would make me feel better because I know like the brand's inclusive as well and includes the social aspect"*. Leading to perceive the hedonic effects the inclusivity value could also provide to millennial consumers. Lastly, participant 8 also perceived it as *"[...] an added plus [...]"*.

Even if the interviewees were positive about the movement of brands, as in the example of Louis Vuitton, the interviewees mentioned that they do not have a personal connection with this topic. Respondent 8 stated: *"[...] that's good. But I don't feel personally connected to it. I'll be happy for everyone that is concerned with this. And it's a good step for the world in general."* And also, respondent 2 has a similar opinion on the issue saying: *"So yeah, it's a positive, it's not really, it's a little difficult for me to relate specifically to that problem, because I'm not black. But still, I like the idea. So it's a positive thing."*

Respondent 5 liked the approach: *"[...] it's a good point that [they] want to raise awareness. And I hope that the campaign is successful in that sense"*. Despite this, she lacks authenticity or transparency from the brand by claiming: *"[it] does not make them any more inclusive"*. So just making a campaign and raising awareness for the good cause does not give her enough meaning.

5.4 Branding

The visuals were chosen to enhance the conversation in order to get deeper understanding on how the interviewees perceive different luxury values. As mentioned in the research design, some of the visuals belonged to older luxury advertisements. These would result in being more typical and match the luxury concept and theories from the early stream of research, from authors such as Kapferer. The reactions towards them were quite similar, as represented by respondent 2: “[...] *just classic, luxury commercial[s] [...]*” and that he: “[...] *didn't really have any strong perception of the brand [...] other than [...] luxury, for being luxury, expensive for being expensive*” and adds an interesting point stating: “*they are luxury because someone has just decided that those brands are luxury, I have no idea if they are higher quality, as I described earlier*”.

Respondent 7 stated: “*I guess it would just be like any other just expensive luxury product. It wouldn't add any extra value.*” Respondent 2 mentions in this context: “[...] *it doesn't make me think of anything else, [...] it doesn't really speak to me.*” Also, respondent 11 does not feel identified with those brands saying “*I don't feel really attracted I feel again, it's like more traditional so it is kind of out of my league.*”

Respondent 8 thinks that: “[...] *you're wearing that, then you're like a queen. Right? That's sort of what they're selling, which is something that I don't care for.*” This reflects her disinterest in those values and she concludes “*But a lot of them are just selling the fact that is luxury. They're selling the fact that they're offering a product that's over the price range of other things.*” A missing meaning or deeper connection is mentioned by respondent 9 “[...] *But I don't think that there's meaning with it. I don't really see any, any story or any meaning with it.*”

Going further, one participant even related one of the brands as “old-fashioned” saying “*I actually consider Louis Vuitton to be more for like the older crowd. It's something like my mom has or my grandparents had. So it's like, I'm not that fascinated about it.*”

However, other different perceptions were mentioned from respondent 11 and 6. Those commercials are timeless and will have the same association, as respondent 11 stated “[...] *like now 20 years from now or 20 years ago*”. Respondent 6 complements it with the statement: “*it's really about kind of their heritage. It speaks a lot for classical.*”

Despite the overall negative or meaningless connection, the participants expressed, there was mainly one interviewee agreeing with the traditional approach of luxury brands. Respondent 6 said: “*It's about something [...] kind of vintage and something that has its values and something that is much more authentic, you know? And they stick with it you know, they're not changing to now like having pictures on plastic or using I don't know, neon colors. For me that's luxury, actually.*”

But also respondent 7 reacts positive to one of the brands: “*Well, [Dior] gives me more of a feeling like pleasure, it's just more satisfying. Because it also like, Dior is also like the brand I associate very expensive, special. So, I would feel like also the environment is more special.*”

The missing value in the traditional luxury brands perceived from the interviewees could be found in the context of the modern branding. As respondent 4 said: “[...] the fact that it doesn't compromise my beliefs in the addition of this quality, kind of gives me a sense of more luxury”. Following this positive perspective, respondent 3 states: “[...] if you can buy two types of brands but you can buy a more expensive one but you can contribute to sustainable developments or other political or social things, yeah I would feel better actually. If everyone could actually do that, I think there could really be a difference.” Showing that he supports this movement of the new directions and meanings from the luxury brands.

Two interviewees pointed out that they think that the brands try to reach younger people with these approaches. Thus, respondent 8 states that “[...] just from looking at this, Balenciaga wants to be more like cool for young people who are rich” and adds: “[...] this is more feeding into what right now, the youth likes” demonstrating a more negative association with the brand following these trends. Also respondent 11 expressed that the brands nowadays are “going for trap music and trying to relate these two industries [...]”. Respondent 6 said that “it's also like a refreshing [...]” seeing such advertisements from the brands, “[...] but only when I know about the story. If I don't, the picture doesn't talk that much to me.”

Even if the statements about the youth approach from respondent 8 can be seen critically, she perceives more positively the other new movements of the luxury brands: “So the fact that the top tier is also moving towards that, is make me think ‘Oh, the world is, you know, politically moving towards a place that I like better’. And so in that sense, it makes me feel more positive about society in general. I see it as a sign of things moving along”.

As a special case, it was included the new brand that is going to be created by Rihanna in cooperation with LVMH. This is a new, and to the authors’ knowledge, unique branding initiative, since up until now, there is no other case of a luxury brand creation between a well-known luxury group and a celebrity. The reactions were largely positive, like the statement from respondent 11: “Because [Rihanna] has the style. And she knows how to combine things. And I think if she's there, she's gonna like kind of make some inputs to the design and, again, it's like the brand Rihanna is herself, she's kind of cool.” A similar reaction came from respondent 8: “[...] but I think as a person, she said some cool like, she stood for some interesting things, that I like” adding “That's why I like her, you know that she's very representative of the youth”, hinting again at the perceived movement towards the younger people. However, different opinions regarding this case were also found. For example, one of the participants, respondent 7, also expressed her disinterest in the new brands: “I'm not influenced by celebrities.” And the only negative reaction came from respondent 6 claiming: “Rihanna is a mainstream commercial singer. And you shouldn't try to be high end. It should be something more commercial more yeah young.” Showing that her idea of luxury or ‘high end’ is not congruent with Rihanna and her new luxurious brand.”

As seen above, there were positive comments on the new campaigns and movements on the brands. However, it is important to emphasize that the interviewees did not agree with the implementation or the way

it was advertised and added new interesting angles. For example, respondent 10 reflects on the modern approaches formulating that *“So I’m lacking like a clear statement or [...] if they had a clear idea or vision of what are we doing to change this or supporting some organization, or we are hiring more people with darker skin color or anything like that. It’s a bit like, we want to raise awareness [...] but they’re not sending a message about what they’re actually doing”*. These perceptions and mindset were found throughout the interviews regarding the new approaches in luxury branding. For example, regarding sustainability, ethics and social issues, respondent 4 commented, *“Balenciaga right now is just trying to make a name for themselves like ‘Oh we’re working with that, the World Food Program or whatever’. They just want attention to be told that they’re doing [that...]”*.

Furthermore, this was also reflected in self-expression concerns. For example, some interviewees mentioned they would feel ‘lied to’, as respondent 11 expressed, or that when purchasing a branded product, they would not feel as if they are transmitting the adequate values, as respondent 2 formulated *“[...] even though I know it, [...] and I bought it because of that story, if it just has Louis Vuitton on it, what I communicate to everyone else I meet is still the classical understanding of Louis Vuitton. That’s what I would think at least. So I wouldn’t want to wear that.”* Indicating then, that he only wants to be associated with the new movement of the brand, but not with the overall “classic” brand meaning in general. Moreover respondent 10 added, *“this is more symbolic, so when you buy something, you’re not necessarily helping. But you are supporting the brand that has this image. So it’s very indirect what you are supporting”*.

Thus, with those concerns, the interviewees shared a lack of transparency, authenticity and meaning from luxury brands moving towards new values and approaches. In a more extreme way, respondent 11 expressed: *“[...] honestly, I think it’s just image. I don’t think they give a damn. I don’t think they are actually doing anything for changing is like, they are just like, going with the trend of sustainability. [...] It is trendy, it really sells, its money.”* or as respondent 5 contemplates *“this doesn’t really change my perspective. I mean, nice that they have a campaign about inclusivity, but that doesn’t change the fact that most of their products are sold to rich white people”*. This type of statements denoted a lack of transparency and clear action into those approaches. For example, respondent 4 was shown hesitant regarding Balenciaga’s and World Food Programme’s alliance: *“[...] I see this as a CSR thing [...]”*, but considered Stella McCartney as a brand that *“breathe[s] and live[s] sustainability [...] if you look at these two different supply chains, this one [Stella McCartney] will be more sustainable than this one [Balenciaga]”* showing a more positive attitude towards Stella McCartney as a consequence.

Furthermore, some respondents went further and questioned whether these well-known luxury brands are actively doing something about those social aspects within their reach, for example in their value chains. As shown in respondent 11 opinions, *“I think this is necessary, but it’s also [...] I don’t know if they actually like, work for that [...]. But what about other things? Like, maybe they have kids like working in their factories or whatever, but you don’t know what’s behind this”* or as respondent 4, and especially 5 contemplate *“[...]*

the whole idea about this sustainability and these things is that you try to change something like because [...] it's a fashion brand, right? So they produce a product [...] these zero hunger things that is completely unrelated in a sense. I mean, it's still something good to do [...] I think the whole sustainability, things should be related to the brand and what the brand actually does”.

Therefore, it could be observed that a more positive attitude towards these new approaches was found in general in millennial participants. However, there was on overall a concern regarding their authenticity, meaning and transparency.

Considerations

As introduced in the research design section 4, it was assumed that these participants would represent an homogeneous group. However, after presenting and analyzing all the findings, it is noticeable how respondents 6 and 11 differed in their answers, compared to the rest of the participants. When looking at the background of these two respondents, they come from Portugal and Spain, while the rest of the participants come from central or northern Europe. Thus, this seems to explain that their different perspectives obtained could have been caused due to cultural differences. For example, as they state in their interviews, respondent 11 mentions, *“I think, it's like in Denmark you don't see that much. I have to say [...] you see classes in terms of people, but in Spain is very related to their image[...]They need to show that they are something and they are part of something that they have this amount of money or that amount of money. And here you don't see that people show off.”* or also shown by respondent 6, whose perspective was also influenced by the culture: *“And also something that I noticed is that in Portugal, it is a lot about cars, and who has a good car. So that might have influenced me. That's why I really wanted to like this specific Mini Cooper [...], because I actually had a friend who had a Mini Cooper and then I had some friends that had other cars, and I really liked, but I didn't have the money to invest on a car. But now that I'm living in Denmark, for example, everyone has a bike, and I don't care. I don't care about cars anymore”.*

Another aspect to consider is that all the participants are students of a business school. This implies that they have a higher knowledge and understanding about brand and marketing related topics. This is something that emerged in the interviews with statements such as from respondent 4: *“I learned something in a marketing class [...]”*. These factors must be taken into account in the discussion of the results obtained.

5.5. Sub-conclusion of values and branding analysis

The different perspectives and insights obtained from millennial consumers have been analyzed and described according to the central themes determined in appendix 5. Their perceptions have been aggregated according to the perceived luxury values, both from the conceptual framework from section 2 and the new approaches discovered in the data collection, mainly through the visuals used. All the presented findings, will be related

and discussed in the next chapter, discussion. Chapter 5 and 6 contribute to provide an answer to the research question.



6. Discussion

In the underlying section, the results found and analyzed will be discussed and aggregated in order to put them into context and finalize the answer to the research question of the thesis. Thus, this section will provide a more thorough explanation about how all the different luxury value dimensions are perceived and interact together to explain millennials' behavior regarding luxury brands.

6.1. Luxury concept

Our analysis departed from luxury as a concept as perceived by the millennials. The concept of luxury, as elaborated at the beginning of the conceptual framework, is a construct that cannot be narrowed down into a single definition. As Berthon *et al.*, (2009) state, luxury is better understood as a concept that depends on the social and individual context and perceptions. This was mirrored in the heterogeneous answers obtained from the participants in the interviews. However, when clustering the respondents' answers, there was a shift from the material and status perspectives, to which the main literature primarily focuses on, towards the more intangible aspects, such as freedom, experiences, i.e. travelling, and also related to feelings, i.e. happiness. The emergence of these new perspectives in relation to luxury could be due to the fact that, as described in the section 2, this is a generation that tends to prefer experiences over possessions. Additionally, an easier access to travelling experiences, than the one that past generations had, could have also had an impact in this aspect. Nevertheless, the idea of luxury being expensive, exclusive and the 'top of the cake' remained present in millennials perception of the concept.

As part of the main focus of the thesis, uniqueness, hedonism and status signaling were perceived as luxury value dimensions, which attract millennials to luxury brands. However, small discrepancies in terms of their meaning and way of functioning were found, compared to the conceptual framework.

Uniqueness

The need for uniqueness seems to be perceived positively by millennial participants. It has to be considered that no questions were explicitly mentioning or addressing the uniqueness or differentiation motivations,

however their answers regarding these areas were obtained when elaborating on their motives for their luxury purchases or potential purchases.

Again, the attitudes in millennials were rather heterogeneous: even though on overall uniqueness acted as a driver for most of the participants towards luxury brands, for some participants, uniqueness was a stronger determinant driver than the other value dimensions. It is worth to mention, that the source for uniqueness seemed to be caused by self-expression motives. Tien *et al.*, (2001) already pointed at this connection in their study, as seen in the conceptual framework, but it was perceived stronger in this research. Moreover, the snob effect also came in to play a role in order to explain the decreased desirability luxury products had, when owned by the majority.

As stated in the analysis, participants were motivated to purchase luxury products if these reflect their own personality and feel identified with them. They expressed rejection towards wearing or buying something with a statement or meaning that would not match their beliefs and personal values. In contrast, they were more eager to purchase something that would allow them to show their own taste, personality and uniqueness in general, compared to their reference groups. At the same time, it would also become less valuable if it was a good owned by their social peers. This was specifically important for millennials in the context of fashion.

In fact, many other perceptions and opinions came up related to this value dimension. For example, the design or the designers behind the branded products were some of the aspects that emerged. Millennial participants unintentionally pointed out the importance of the design, the aesthetics and designers had for them. These factors seemed to play a role in terms of feeling identified with the brand, therefore allowing self-expression. As shown in the analysis table (appendix 5.2.), a participant mentioned that for her it only makes sense to buy a luxury bag if it has a high-level design behind it.

This becomes key for luxury brands, since as mentioned under hedonism and the concept, these brands have been associated with high quality and design characteristics, becoming the “best” available option. At the same time, given the higher prices and controlled distribution, luxury brands are figured to be more exclusive, not owned by the majority, leading to this unique perception.

Hedonism

Similar results were found under the hedonism value, since it was perceived positively by millennials. As stated in the analysis, all millennial participants were attracted to luxury products and experiences due to its hedonic effects. It can be summarized that they would buy luxury because it makes them feel good or special. Additionally, they also did perceive and used it as a treat to themselves or as a sign of achievement, in line with the concepts introduced by Tsai (2005) in section 2. Moreover, luxury was strongly associated with high quality, excellent design, sophistication which, as introduced by Hudders (2012), leads to stronger impact on the hedonic effect.

In this area, the importance of the individual and material levels was highlighted from the participants. This led them to be more attracted to luxury. More particularly, this was found relevant in terms of experiences, such as travels and restaurant meals, since for some people the emotional benefits of these would last longer than of goods. In contrast, for the participants, luxury goods purchased seemed to lose value with time, since they get used to them and they become the norm. Thus, paradoxically, luxury experiences that are intangible and last for a shorter amount of time, remain valuable and memorable over time, whereas a physical luxury product, of high quality and longevity, loses its value and ceases to be special.

Status signaling

In contrast, considerable differences compared to the main luxury theories were found in status signaling as a perceived luxury value. Major research of luxury brands has been built around the idea that luxury is consumed for status and wealth signaling, or conspicuous consumption purposes. However, in this research, status signaling in terms of wealth was not found as a value driver, and perceived rather as something negative for millennial consumers.

During the interviews there was, as described before, a clear tendency towards uniqueness. This factor had a reverse impact towards the belonging or bandwagon effect. As a result, only a few interviewees mentioned that they wanted to belong to a group. However, all these cases were referred to in the past, when they were driven by the so-called bandwagon effect, since they aimed to belong to a group of friends.

Opposed to this need to belong, comes the urge to distinguish oneself from certain people or social groups, known as the snob effect. This was explicitly mentioned only by one of the participants, nevertheless, for the rest of the participants, this could also be indirectly drawn from their answers, which reflected the need for uniqueness. Because when the interviewees described that they aimed to be unique or special, this involves at the same time that they want to be different, compared to others, thus distinguishing themselves from reference groups. This proves that status signaling and uniqueness are to a certain extent interrelated.

In the same line it was found that millennials would prefer quiet rather than loud signals. This is related to the fact that they were averse to “show off”, especially in terms of wealth. Loud signals are more visible and easily recognized, becoming an obvious mean to signal wealth. In contrast, quiet signals are less visible and harder to recognized for non-knowledgeable people, displaying externally less associations ascribed to the brand. This provides more ground for self-expression and differentiation, since millennials can avoid being associated with the images and values of the brand, that they do not feel identified with.

Additionally, despite showing a careless attitude towards the opinion of others, the participants reversely appreciated compliments from others, showing that this adds extra value to them as a side effect. This indicates that the social dimension in terms of recognition by others is not a key driver for these millennials, but it does play a role.

Being even more precise, wealth signaling seems to be perceived by some of the interviewees as something they actively want to avoid, more than just as a factor that does not simply motivate them to purchase luxury goods. Nevertheless, it was taken into account that due to the philosophical stance of the paper, the research is placed under interpretivism and social constructivism approaches. Therefore, the answers of the respondents were critically evaluated and interpreted, since luxury can be a sensitive topic and the authors could observe during the interviews that some of the participants felt slightly uncomfortable to talk about it. This led the authors to question to which extent the participants were willing to admit whether they like to “show off” or not. However, when the participants were asked more indirectly about the topic, they showed some interest in terms of recognition by others, or that it was even perceived as a plus when buying luxury goods. Therefore, the positive comments provided by the interviewees about the recognition from others through compliments, could carry more weight than they actually expressed in the interviews. On the other side, when specifically asking about wealth signaling, except the Spanish and Portuguese participants, the rest did not perceive the value of it and rather dissented.

In essence, it could be assumed that in terms of luxury, status signaling attracts and adds value when the luxury brand fits with their beliefs and identities, leading to a positive recognition by others. This holds as long as signaling wealth does not become visible and is not the main driver, in contrast to the main literature in the field.

Hedonism, Uniqueness and Status Signaling

As described and illustrated in the different sections of the thesis, these three perceived luxury values are interconnected. Thus, when purchasing a luxury brand, more than one of these values can have an impact on the underlying motivation. Therefore, they have to be understood as interrelated rather than individual values.

In summary, when taking into account the three luxury values, it can be perceived how the intrinsic effects, such as uniqueness and hedonism, were stronger determinants of the perceived luxury value, compared to status signaling. When translating this into the three dimensions in which luxury brands act, the individual and material dimensions play a more important role, compared to the social one. In general, these findings suggest that millennial consumers are less driven by status, and purchase luxury goods rather for intrinsic or hedonic purposes. These findings follow the same line proposed by the research of Hudders (2012), in which this shift had been suggested in general, positing that consumers are searching less for status or prestige, but also for hedonic benefits and intrinsic values. Moreover, this shift in the perceived luxury values reflects how highly subjective and context related the concept of luxury is.

New perceived luxury values

These previously shown discrepancies in status signaling were highlighted when talking about some well-known luxury brands, or of some of the visuals introduced, which would fall in the characteristics of the

traditional branding. It caught the authors' attention how the respondents were reacting mostly in a careless attitude towards the traditional values reflected in the visuals. It must be pointed out that the aim was not to judge the visuals, but rather enhance the conversation and reach deeper meanings that would be complex to achieve otherwise. Some participants, as shown in the analysis (appendix 5.2.), did appreciate characteristics such as the "beautiful colors" or that the Versailles Palace, displayed as the background setting for Dior's advertisement, was reflecting what luxury represents in their minds. However, these comments were followed by different reflections.

For instance, they did not feel identified with this idea of luxury, or that these visuals do not allow or reflect who they are or that these brands would "be wearing them, rather than them wearing the brand". Furthermore, comments evidencing that these visuals represented the more traditional concept of luxury were also identified. The participants described them and their brands as being classical, traditional and representing this idea of "*luxury for luxury*" and "*to be expensive just to be expensive*" (respondent 2). When gathering these perceptions, these led to the suggestion that these big luxury brands are lacking some meaning for millennial consumers, point which aimed to be explored with the advertisements that applied modern approaches in the luxury sector.

Among this type of visuals, Balenciaga was perceived as aiming to attract a younger generation, according to the respondents. It also seemed to be perceived as "cooler", but not necessarily more luxurious. The opinions regarding this approach were rather skeptical, questioning how related, authentic or meaningful it is the fact that a high-end luxury brand switches to this "hip" and music related direction, in order to attract younger audiences.

For the case of LVMH and Rihanna, different perceptions arose, but these depended mostly from participants' personal attitude towards Rihanna, or celebrities in general, linked with luxury brands. From the positive evaluations, participants expressed that she represents a strong and defined personality, being already a brand herself. Thus, they would feel more identified, while others were reluctant about this luxury brand creation.

On the other side, additional findings were detected regarding visuals that transmitted social and contemporary issues directly adhered to a luxury brand. Nevertheless, a highly interesting point was the fact that many interviewees talked about sustainability and ethics without having any visual cues or questions leading into this direction. Millennial participants shared a positive attitude and awareness towards these social issues. As a consequence, these became a desirable feature and perceived value when seeking for luxury products. These, in a way, provided additional meaning, value and hedonic effects for them, especially as mentioned, when "paying a lot of money to buy unnecessary things" (respondent 5). However, another standpoint worth to allude to is that inclusivity, for example, in terms of ethnic or beauty standards, was not mentioned until the visuals were shown. This could be due to the fact that none of millennials included in the research belonged to minor or historically discriminated ethnicities and social groups.

On overall, as seen in the analysis, ethics, sustainability and inclusivity have been brought up as values adding attractiveness to luxury brands for millennials. This could be explained by the fact that, as detailed in the conceptual framework, millennials are a more social caring generation. Moreover, they have been growing up in a digitalized world, with abundant options and brands and are more marketing savvy than previous generations. This can lead to the assumption that they have a more critical mindset. Again, in connection to section 2, millennials have a higher ability in filtering out commercial messages and it has become more challenging to create a strong emotional bond between brands and millennials (Van den Bergh and Behrer, 2016). This had a particular impact on the study, since the participants have a significant background marketing and branding knowledge. In addition, the participants also live and study in a country that provides decent social living and economic standards, which may influence the fact that they search for other needs and meanings, other than wealth signaling.

In summary, these careless attitudes towards the traditional luxury values, displayed in some of the visuals, compared to the new-found values, may be related to their aversion to signal wealth. These brands were found to be linked with this “just to be expensive” associations, which did not bring them any additional value neither they felt identified with. Thus, millennials did not want to display these brands, since associations to wealth would be mostly perceived.

In contrast, the new-found values and approaches seemed to touch on topics they are more emotionally attached to in their daily life. Hence, these were perceived more positively due to the congruence between those values and their personal identities. This again shows the interrelation with the different perceived luxury values. Thus, this illustrates the importance the drivers of being unique and obtaining hedonic effects had for millennials, when purchasing luxury brands. This suggests that luxury brands providing these new values add more meaning to millennials, compared to the traditional ones, focused mostly on wealth signaling.

Nevertheless, as mentioned in the analysis, some concerns about the approaches used by the brands arose. At the same time that millennial participants argued that they would appreciate these topics as an additional value that would make them feel better when purchasing these expensive brands, they also showed a critical attitude about it. They questioned to which extent these approaches were authentic, or how transparent these brands are in, for example, their value chains. Furthermore, their comments suggested that their appeal for these brands would increase if they would also do something within their scope. In other words, brands should not incorporate these values without a clear purpose behind, but rather as something specifically related to their business. For example, in the case of clothes manufacturing, they should make sure that they take care of their workers’ conditions, or from where they are sourcing their materials, etc.

6.2. Sub-conclusion

In essence, luxury brands that wish to provide higher value to the millennial consumers by engaging with these values, must provide transparency in their practices, to perpetuate their authenticity perception to consumers. Moreover, this strategy must be applied in an area directly related to their company and business. Only then, millennials will perceive such values as meaningful for them, and will thus, contribute and provide the expected hedonic and self-expression effects.

As anticipated, a positive interaction and influence between the pre-known and the new values, i.e. sustainability, can also be perceived. For example, buying a luxury product that is sustainable, in a meaningful, authentic and transparent way, increases the hedonic effect obtained, providing a good feeling to the individual. In addition, it could also yield to the feeling of achievement, since luxury goods are associated with good quality and high-end design. At the same time, when these values match their personal ones, provide a basis for self-expression, at an individual level. Furthermore, if their individual beliefs match with those of the luxury brand, they are positive to signal them externally and therefore at a social level, because it reflects their own values. Finally, this could lead to obtain positive recognition by others in relation to these values, leaving and pushing wealth signaling to the background.

The findings provided in this thesis regarding all the values involved in luxury, can be explained given the traits of the millennial generation. As mentioned in the conceptual framework, experts suggest that brands need to develop further strategies to build a connection with this generation. Brands are regarded as lifestyle supporters and millennial consumers, as aligned with the findings due to their emphasis on brand experience, authenticity and credibility (Van den Bergh & Behrer, 2016). Hence, luxury brands solely providing wealth signaling values are perceived as lacking in meaning from millennials.

6.3. Discussion data verification

As stated under limitations, at the beginning of the paper, the research was conducted in a group of millennial students from Copenhagen Business School, who are in the last years of their higher education. Even though all the participants belong to the millennial generation and live in Denmark, different cultural backgrounds were included in the research in order to avoid obtaining skewed data from only the Danish millennial citizens.

Moreover, the focus of the paper was not designed to take into account cultural differences. However, when analyzing the data, there seemed to be cultural differences that could have had an impact in the insights provided to the researchers. Particularly, in some aspects, it could be noticed how participants from Southern Europe deviated from the rest of the interviewees. Nevertheless, these discrepancies were taken into account during the analysis and discussion.

In addition, given the inherent subjectivity of luxury as a concept, one can argue that there is a potential of obtaining different results when conducting the research in other countries or cultures. This aspect will be further assessed under the perspectives section.

Furthermore, as argued in section 4.2.1, the research was conducted with a sample of 12 millennial participants and the results obtained cannot be generalized to the whole millennial generation. However, to obtain generalizable results for this generation was not the goal of the paper, instead the research did serve to identify some clear tendencies in the perceived luxury values for this generation. This becomes of value, since to authors' knowledge, there is no previous research covering these specific areas, regarding luxury drivers and values in the millennial generation.

Once new trends and insights have been identified and analyzed, future research will be necessary to broaden the scope and draw generalizable conclusions, but this aspect will be covered in perspectives section.

On the other hand, this research was conducted within the approaches of interpretivism and social constructivism and therefore the social reality is understood from this point of view. This implied that authors became part of the research in order to understand and interpret the subjective perceptions and insights provided by the millennial interviewees. Thus, the authors are aware of the potential bias involved in interpreting the data, however constant controls were established in order to minimize this influence.

Nevertheless, adopting these stances was necessary in order to comprehend and obtain meaningful findings. As stated previously, this is a sensitive topic and thus, the authors are aware that some of the answers provided by the participants might be ambiguous or difficult to decipher. However, the data was analyzed in depth and some data input was contrasted with multiple different questions during the interview.



7. Managerial Implications

According to the results obtained, a shift has been recognized in the way the value and attractiveness of luxury is perceived by millennials. Given the impact this can have for luxury brands, the possible managerial implications will be provided, in connection with the mechanisms and characteristics described in section 2.

As described in the analysis and the discussion, a disconnection between the luxury brands and the millennial consumers was perceived. The interviewees expressed that they did not feel identified with some of their values. They perceive them as classical traditional brands, without a personal connection. Hence, it is key for the luxury brands to find a reconnection with these representatives of the generation, become more attractive and make them feel identified with the brands again. Furthermore, they must uphold the dream factor for millennials.

One proposed strategy to achieve a re-connection with millennials, is to add more meaning to the luxury brands, other than wealth and status. As found in the analysis, millennials seem to feel appealed and perceive value in the luxury brands due to the values such as hedonism and uniqueness, but also when sustainability, ethics or inclusivity values are added. By adding these approaches to their brand, they increase the attractiveness for this age group, given their personal interest in the topics. Consequently, they can feel more identified with the brands.

However, it is important that these values are added in a meaningful, transparent and authentic way. Otherwise, neither it reaches millennials, nor the expected positive reaction might be achieved. Therefore, to gain more meaning, brands must take actions that are seen as authentic and that lay in the scope of the company. This involves for example their whole value chain, where the company can include the values of sustainability and ethics. Brand campaigns implemented with no solid and true purpose behind, such as in this study the example of Balenciaga with the World Food Programme, are perceived as something not related with the brand or the business. Consequently, millennials express some critical concerns about such approaches and would not completely perceive the added value.

Moreover, it is important to communicate those values as transparent as possible. By being transparent, millennials can be more convinced that the brand actually provides what it claims to stand for. Otherwise, the brand cannot achieve trust from the millennial consumers.

As seen in section 2, establishing a unique brand identity is a fundamental characteristic of luxury brands (Kapferer, 1997). Hence, it is key that when implementing new values, these are transmitted as if they are core to the brand, fulfilling in turn the authenticity, transparency and meaningful factors.

As seen in the findings of the paper, the values of uniqueness and hedonism seem to play a stronger role. Therefore, they are more influential value drivers than status signaling, especially in terms of wealth. In relation to this factor, it could be observed in the analysis how quiet signals were favored over loud signals for most of the interviewees. Therefore, brands targeting this type of customer group should put emphasis on small labels or hidden logos, which are not easily identified or visible by other groups. When implementing more quiet symbols, millennial customers can feel comfortable to spend their money on products or services from the brand. By following this approach, as described in the analysis, this aversion of wearing a statement on them to which they do not identify themselves, can be avoided and enables them to express their own values instead.

The findings also have an influence on the relevance of the luxury brand mechanisms, as described in the conceptual framework (see Section 2). Two of the mechanisms, exclusivity and uniqueness, need to be strongly emphasized, due to the importance found for uniqueness among the millennial participants. Thus, luxury brands must foster the feeling of being unique, scarce and distinctive. For example, they must preserve the individualization of experiences, and the uniqueness of their products or services. This will lead to stronger perceived values of uniqueness. In addition, consumers also attributed high levels of quality and design to luxury brands. Consequently, this aspect will also lead to obtain hedonic and emotional benefits, since they will feel more identified, satisfied and special with the luxury brand.

Also the creatives behind the brands and their original design and aesthetics must be put more in the spotlight. They must become more visible for consumers. As seen in the analysis, one of the factors mentioned and that would influence them to purchase a luxury brand is the brands' high level and unique designs. Luxury brands must encourage this aspect, since the more unique and personalized a design seems, the more special and unique they feel. Hence, in line with the stated by Kapferer and Bastien (2009b), when linked to luxury, being unique is key, since it acts as an expression of personal taste, creative identity or of the intrinsic passion of the creator.

In connection to the creators behind the brands, heritage is a mechanism that luxury brands should emphasize. Enhancing the history of the brand and its philosophy seem to have a positive impact and increase the interest and meaning for millennials. In turn, this leads to have a stronger personal connection. The designers or creators behind the stories of the brands have an important influence, since they also play a role in giving a more unique personality and highlight the brands' craftsmanship. By enhancing these values and the creator, millennials perceive that what they are purchasing is more than a product with no meaning, other than for wealth signaling purposes.

Given the frequency in which experiences and travelling were mentioned, the luxury environment and experience is another mechanism to stress. In line with the research about millennials, experiences are important and last longer than physical goods. They also referred to the experiences received in the luxury stores or related environments as providing hedonic effects. Therefore, it can be concluded that this mechanism can have an impact on the hedonic benefits valued by millennials of luxury brands. As a consequence, luxury brands must also switch in the direction of enlarging the brand experiences around the product purchase. Enlarging this aspect also provides the potential to tell their stories to the consumers and their additional values provided (e.g. sustainability or inclusivity). As a result, the authenticity factor will be accomplished and more meaning will be added to the brands.

Nevertheless, the field of luxury brand experience is considerably extensive and encompasses different factors. As stated in the limitations of this paper, this element was not included in the main focus of the research. Due to this reason, only a more superficial direction is pointed in this paper, since this area would require further and specific research.

Regarding premium prices, luxury was associated by consumers as being expensive. Thus, going in line with the conceptual framework and the findings, luxury brands must manage to find ways of creating more value for the customers in order to live up to those prices (Kapferer and Bastien, 2009b).

On overall, in line with the findings explained in analysis, luxury brands must thus implement strategies that elicit a personal connection with consumers, since millennials seem to be driven more by self-oriented purposes than of social or external ones.

In summary, it seems that the traditional values of brands being status and wealth indicators do not seem to speak and add value for millennial consumers. Luxury brands must then become more meaningful, authentic and human in a way, in order to attract and connect with the consumers.



8. Perspective

In this section, the other possible or broader perspectives that could have been implemented in this research are reflected and discussed, leading to future research proposals. However, the meaning and the consequences of the findings are covered under the discussion and managerial implications sections respectively.

8.1. Perspectives of the paper

This research was as described before a first mover investigating and relating these two concepts of perceived luxury values and millennials.

It is argued that for the thesis it would have been beneficial to open the scope of the research. Due to the restrictions of the thesis, section 1.3., in terms of money, time and resources, the aspects discussed in the following would have provided an even deeper and meaningful understanding.

Firstly, a bigger demographic scope could have been applied, in terms of age restrictions. In the study the age was narrowed to only a part of the millennial generation, since the age span is from 1982-1999 as determined in the study. This would include younger and also older people, with different lifestyles as well as with a more financially stable life, thus more likely to purchase luxury more frequently.

Furthermore, a broad geographical scope could have allowed to further understand differences in cultures, since already in the study a differentiation between North and South Europe appeared. It can be expected to find different results in more distant cultures, such as Asia or Africa.

Secondly, this thesis was focused primarily on a qualitative analysis which led to gather meaningful insights and comprehension into a narrow target group. However, this research could benefit in a larger extent from a mixed method approach. That implies, after conducting the exploratory interviews, to carry out subsequently a quantitative research. With this approach, the results of the interviews could have been tested on a broader sample, enabling the results to be generalized in a broader scope in the millennial population. As a consequence, this would increase the validity of the study.

8.2. Further research

Given these circumstances, the authors believe that it would be beneficial to assess some of these aspects in future research.

First of all, as mentioned previously, cultural differences seemed to have an impact in the way luxury is perceived in society. Future research in the field must be conducted accounting directly for cultural differences, in order to understand how they influence the luxury perceived values in millennials. Some values, such as sustainability, arose and were relevant for the millennial participants in this study. However, this could have been influenced given the specific country and cultural aspects in which it was conducted. Consequently, it would be intriguing to explore whether new values would emerge in other countries or cultures, as well as to assess whether the ones found in this study are relevant in other cultures and countries. Additionally, it would also be worth further research whether by broadening and adding millennial participants from other ages, lifestyles and economic conditions would provide additional insights regarding the perceived luxury values.

Moreover, as described in the discussion section, it caught authors' attention how some of the values were mentioned and were relevant for the interviewees, whereas the topic of inclusivity only affected them indirectly. As said, none of the millennial participants belonged to an ethnicity that could have been more sensitive towards inclusivity. Thus, an interesting topic to cover in a future research, given the approach adopted already by some luxury brands, would be to investigate how inclusivity is perceived by millennials in the context of luxury branding.

It was a remarkable finding how status signaling was perceived differently, compared to how literature has traditionally considered it. Due to the highly interdependence between society and status, the reason for the shift could be partly explained through the change of society and its generations. It becomes rather complex to understand in detail the reason of this shift, given the impact demographic and sociology fields have in this construct. Thus, this shift requires of further research to be carried out in order to understand the causes.



9. Conclusion

In conclusion, the study identified that millennials have positive perception of the luxury values of hedonism and the need for uniqueness, and a negative perception of status signaling in the context of signaling wealth. Furthermore, is there a positive perception of luxury values such as sustainability, ethics and less strong of inclusivity as long as they are perceived and transmitted as meaningful, authentic and transparent. Thus, the proposed research question, *How do millennial consumers perceive and understand the perceived luxury values?* was answered.

The thesis departed from the creation of the conceptual framework, in which hedonism, uniqueness and status, based on the main luxury literature, were established and the millennial generation as a important consumer group for luxury was identified and described.

Overall the thesis was placed in the general perspective of social constructivism in the context of interpretivism. The exploratory character chosen for the study and the qualitative data collection of 12 semi-structured interviews, led to identify the perception of millennials' luxury values, in accordance with the conceptual framework. Furthermore, other important value drivers such as sustainability, ethics and inclusivity were identified.

The analysis was based on meaning coding to identify different drivers behind the perception of the perceived luxury values as well as a comparison of modern and traditional branding. Based on this comparison, managerial implications for luxury brands were provided. Hence, how to proportionate the meaning, authenticity and transparency required to be perceived as luxury values were discussed.

Lastly in the perception section, a broader and international scope was revealed and suggestions for future research given.

In conclusion, this paper contributes to fill the gap of literature about millennials and the perceived luxury values, since no other research, to the authors' knowledge, has been conducted in this precise area. Even though the paper does not aim to generalize the findings for the whole millennial generation, it reveals the importance of this topic and the necessity to investigate this area further.



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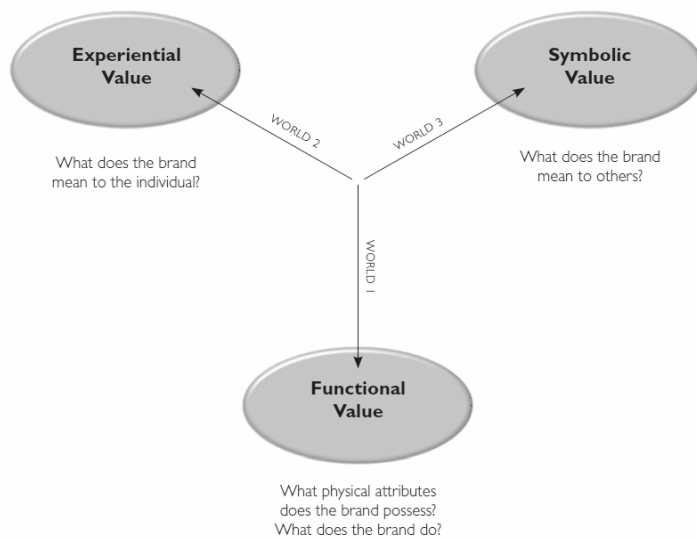
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11. Appendix

Appendix 1 - Existing Frameworks from Literature

Appendix 1.1. - Functional, Experiential and Symbolic Value of Luxury Brands



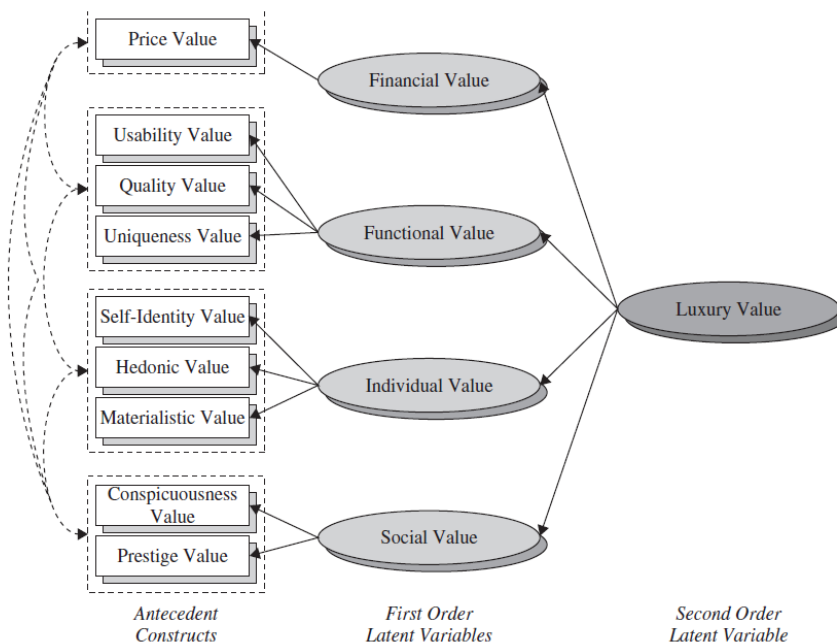
Functional, Experiential and Symbolic Value of Luxury Brands. Source: Berthon P, Pitt L, Parent M, Berthon J. 2009. Aesthetics and Ephemerality. *California Management review* **52**(1): 45–66.

Appendix 1.2. - Interpersonal and personal effects of luxury values

VALUES	MOTIVATIONS
Conspicuous	Veblenian
Unique	Snob
Social	Bandwagon
Emotional	Hedonist
Quality	Perfectionist

Interpersonal and personal effects of luxury values. Source: Vigneron F, Johnson LW. 1999. A Review and a Conceptual Framework of Prestige-Seeking. *Consumer Behavior and Academy of Marketing Science Review* 1(1): 1–15.

Appendix 1.3. - Financial, Functional, Social and Individual Value of Luxury Brands



Financial, Functional, Social and Individual Value of Luxury Brands. Source: Wiedmann K-P, Hennigs N, Siebels A. 2009. Value-Based Segmentation of Luxury Consumption Behavior. *Psychology & Marketing* 26(7): 625–651.

Appendix 2 – Interview Guide

Interview Guide

A- Welcome and Briefing:

- The researchers thank the participants to take the time to participate in their interview.
- The participants are informed about their anonymity, explaining that their names will not be published in the final paper.
- The researchers introduce the participants to the topic of the conversation and inform them that only their own opinions, thoughts, perceptions or personal values will be needed. This is reinforced by telling them that there are no “right” or “wrong” answers and that they can feel free to express their point of view in a total honest manner.
- The researchers ask whether recording the conversation is accepted, since the interviews will need to be transcribed.
- The researchers ask about background information of the participants: age, gender, nationality and studies (currently enrolled and termination date)

B- Interview Questions

Section 1: Luxury in General

- 1) What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you think about luxury?
- 2) Please think for a moment and let us know what does luxury mean to you in an abstract way
(Not related to products or brands).

Section 2: Luxury related to products or services

- 3) Have you ever purchased something that you would consider luxurious?
 - Talk about experience and ask “W”-Questions (What, When, Where, How, Why)
- 4) (specially if negative) Rephrase question and ask about the desire or dream of purchasing something luxurious, e.g. a childhood dream, or/and if plans on purchasing a luxury good or service after graduation.
- 5) If you were to buy a luxury product, what would be the most important features for you?

Section 3: Luxury and brands

- 6) Are there any brands that would fulfill these features that you consider?
Ask “W”-Questions about their answer (e.g. why these brands? How do you feel regarding this brand? Why do you consider them as luxury brands?)

- 7) If you have two identical products from two different brands, what would make the difference that you buy one over the other?
- 8) Could you mention some brands that you would consider as luxury brands? Why do you think they are luxurious?
- 9) Do you pay attention to the brands that you buy or would buy when purchasing a luxury product? Why/why not?
- 10) Do you think owning this luxury brand would allow you to indicate to others the kind of person you are?
- 11) How important would you say it is for you that other people see that you have bought this luxury brand? Why?

Section 4: Visuals

- The researchers introduce the participants to this last part.
- The researchers show the visuals (Appendix 3) to the participants. The participants are asked to look at them and tell what is standing out for them, what are their thoughts and what comes to their mind.
- The researchers ask questions about their thoughts and perceptions:
 - What do you think about it?
 - Why is it standing out for you?
 - Why is it interesting for you?
- After a first small conversation, the researchers tell the story and purpose behind the visual they have mentioned.
- The researchers ask them about their thoughts and perceptions about the explanation given:
 - What do you think about this brand?
 - Why is it interesting or not interesting for you?
 - How do you evaluate such an approach in a luxury brand?
 - How do you evaluate the brand in general?

C- Debriefing

- The researchers asked the participants if they wished to share any last thought.
- The researchers thank the participants for their time

Appendix 3 – Visuals shown in the interviews

Appendix 3.1. - Louis Vuitton Visual 1



Source: Newbold, 2019.

Explanation of the visual:

The visual belongs to Louis Vuitton 2019 menswear campaign. It is created by the new creative director, Virgil Abloh. He wanted to “make [a campaign] that is universal and human at the core. Inclusive and dense, something that has gravity“. So he decided he “was going to focus the campaign on boyhood, not men’s wear.” In this campaign he:

- "investigates ideas of individual perception and evolvement through lenses of inclusivity,"
- the clothing is worn by kids that are meant to "embody the purity of infancy, still unaffected by preordained perceptions of gender, colour and creed"
- thus, in the content, instead of focusing on product, Abloh said he wanted to illustrate the values of his debut collection.

Sources: Vogue.co.uk and Wwd.com

Newbold A. 2019. Virgil Abloh's First Louis Vuitton Campaign Stars A 3-Year-Old, His Studio Team And LA Students. 21 January. <https://www.vogue.co.uk/article/virgil-abloh-louis-vuitton-first-mens-campaign> [27 March 2019].

Diderich J. 2019. EXCLUSIVE: Virgil Abloh Unveils First Men’s Campaign for Louis Vuitton. 21 January. <https://wwd.com/business-news/media/virgil-abloh-unveils-first-louis-vuitton-menswear-campaign-1202978701/> [27 March 2019].

Appendix 3.2. - Louis Vuitton Visual 2



Source: Vogue. 2005. The Thurman time. 02 June. <https://www.vogue.co.uk/article/the-thurman-time> [26 March 2019].

Appendix 3.3. - Balenciaga and World Food Programme visual



Source: Salter, 2018.

<https://i-d.vice.com> Retrieved from: https://i-d.vice.com/en_uk/article/ywqjdj/balenciaga-world-food-programme

Explanation of the visual:

Balenciaga launched a campaign in order to give visibility and exposure about The World Food Programme. Instead of having this commitment with a social cause as something aside from the main business, decided to blend it in their designs, by adding the logo or related messages to the collection.

Each WFP branded product will be sold with information about WFP and its mission. A percentage of the sales value will go to people in hunger-stricken parts of the world. Balenciaga has already been donating money to the WFP and with this campaign.

Source:

Amed I. 2019. Balenciaga CEO on Brand Activism. January 8.

<https://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/professional/balenciaga-ceo-on-brand-activism>. [11 May 2019].

Salter S. 2018. Balenciaga partner with the world food programme to draw attention to the recent spike in global hunger. March 5. https://i-d.vice.com/en_uk/article/ywqjdj/balenciaga-world-food-programme [11 May 2019].

Appendix 3.4. Balenciaga visual 2

Source: The impression, 2019.

The impression. 2019. Balenciaga | Yilmaz Sen CGi 2019 campaign. <https://theimpression.com/balenciaga-artist-yilmaz-sen-cgi-spring-2019-campaign/> [2 April 2019].

Appendix 3.5.- Dior visual



Source: Writer, 2013.

Writer S. 2013. Back inside the Chateau de Versailles Diors Secret Garden Two. 7 June.
<https://www.luxury-insider.com/luxury-news/2013/06/back-inside-the-chateau-de-versailles-diors-secret-garden-two> [3 April 2019].

Appendix 3.6. - Stella McCartney visual

STELLA McCARTNEY



Source: Stella McCartney, 2017.

Explanation of the visual:

The brand expressed with this campaign “Our planet has a waste and overconsumption problem, wreaking havoc to our environment. Single use and disposable items, particularly from plastic are ending up in landfills, with nearly 300 million tons of plastic produced every year.”

“We’re committed to trying to reverse the damage that has been done and we want you to do the same by being mindful of waste and where it ends up.”

“99% of the biosphere is housed in the oceans and humans have explored less than 5% of them.”

“We pledge to continue our mission to become a responsible and sustainable brand and we ask that you do your part in protecting our oceans so that others can enjoy it long after we are gone. We ask for people to pledge to reduce their use of “throw away plastic” and opt for re-usable alternatives.”

The brand also announced that in the “new collection we use innovative and recycled materials such as organic cotton, sustainably-sourced viscose, recycled nylon and cruelty-free Skin-Free-Skin.”

Sources:

Stella McCartney. 2017. Discover the Winter campaign 2017. 18 July.
<https://www.stellamccartney.com/experience/en/discover-the-winter-2017-campaign/> [2 April 2019].

Stella McCartney. 2018. World Water Day. 22 March. https://www.stellamccartney.com/experience/en/world-water-day/?utm_source=Facebook&utm_medium=social_organic&utm_campaign=smc_WorldWaterDay_180322&fbclid=IwAR0W0DVDWoRqPgXBtAa8qwriN3727H7uo09--Arw5h7jTjXj-ft_qEXUE3c [2 April 2019].

Appendix 3.7. - Rihanna and LVMH visual



LVMH
MOËT HENNESSY • LOUIS VUITTON

Source: Own creation to visualize the representation of the collaboration; source photo

Explanation of the visual:

Recently, the american celebrity and singer, Rihanna, concluded an agreement with the largest luxury group, LVMH to develop her own luxury fashion brand. However, there is not that much information available about this development, but it is the first time, except from Christian Lacroix, that LVMH creates a luxury fashion brand from scratch and with someone like Rihanna.

Source:

Friedman V. 2019. Rihanna and LVMH Make a Deal and, Possibly, History. 17 January.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/17/fashion/rihanna-fashion-brand-lvmh.html>. [10 April 2019].

Appendix 4 - Interview Transcripts

Respondent 1

Welcome and Briefing

A: Yeah, so as a start we would talk a little bit about luxury in general. So could you please tell us what's the first thing that comes or pops up in your mind when you hear the word luxury?

B: I see the big brands like, Louis Vuitton and all this and especially bags. I think that's what comes to my mind you say luxury products. Yeah, the things that comes to my mind are definitely the most expensive bags.

A: Okay, that's interesting. And if you I mean, now, you mentioned like the bags and products but if you think about it more in an abstract way, like not product brands, but like more general, what, how would you describe luxury? Or what is luxury for you?

B: Luxury is something exclusive, and it is something like, out of the ordinary. So it's not something like if you have something luxury, you feel a bit more special, or maybe feel a bit more like, fine or better. Like, you know, when you go to a really nice place, and you feel like oh, yeah, this is, this is really nice. You feel like you are kind of in the in the top of them? If you can say that.

A: That's good to know. Yeah. And if you talk about a place do you mean like an event? You go somewhere? Or do you mean the store? Or what do you mean?

B: For example, really nice hotels. Also the stores. Like, automatically when you go into luxurious stores the customer service is always like, on point. Yeah.

A: How does that make you feel?

B: I think it makes me feel more special. Somehow, it can also be a bit like, intimidating. Sometimes when they're really like in your face. And they were like, 'Oh so hello, can I help with anything?' But maybe sometimes you just want to look. So yeah, maybe sometimes can be too much.

A: So what can of experience would you relate when going to a store, on overall?

B: Well, the thing is, like, you know, the budgets for me are... So when you go in, you know, that, you know, sometimes don't buy anything, right. So sometimes you can feel a bit guilty for like, going in and taking the time. And normally when you go to in in these stores, there's not a lot of people. So you just get all the attention, but then you're like, but inside you know, okay, actually, I'm not going to buy anything.

A: Yeah, but that's a good point. Have you ever bought something that you think is luxurious?

B: Oh, yeah. Like I invested in really nice soap actually, it is because I feel like one of the things especially when you go to luxury places is the bathroom when you walk in, right? It's always really nice. The mirrors and the soap there and the small facilities they have. And also, usually they have a matching hand cream. So at home I invested in a in a more luxurious soap and hand cream. So I can bring up a little bit of that.

A: And why do you consider it luxurious? Or what made you recall this?

B: It is from [danish brand] , so it's a bit more expensive. It just makes the bathroom like, this gives it a bit extra. Also, it's the smell this really nice and yeah, yeah. And just the quality and everything you... Yeah, I will say like, it was more expensive, like maybe a competitor product, maybe I can find some but also the brands also have like an influence of course.

A: For example, and how would the brand influence you?

B: And because the image of the brand, is... Yeah, this is what you associate with it, right?. So of course, if it's a brand with like, a nice history and some good values, then you are like automatically .. Yeah, you somehow it just adds to a personal value, it is like something everyone knows. So it also adds to your personal maybe credits. Yeah, and that way. Now I'm just totally honest. I'm just saying everything I think.

A: Of course, that is fine. So the fact that everybody would know that, would also add you more value when you buy this, or?

B: Yeah, yeah, for example like, especially if some products are more like clean I feel like, at least within my friends, when brands they support, like good values and something with sustainability and at the design as well. And you know, we love their minimalistic design and supporting, like, local brands and more clean brands as well. So, I mean, that also adds to your profile as a person then you also know how, how you are as a person.

A: Okay. Yes. But you said that, for example, you would care about like local brands or that support sustainability? So, when you mention that it adds to your profile, it is because you feel identified with it, so it's like a way to show yourself, maybe?

B: Yeah because I, of course, if you pay some extra for something you want, it's because you want to support the good cause of the brand, right? I for example, I have a special one that I am willing to pay more for like, Danish brands for example. Because I want to support the local brand.

A: Okay.

B: That's... what I think, being from Denmark, when you go travel overseas, it's always something that makes you very proud. When you see like, if any brand doing very well, somewhere else, then you're like, 'Oh, yeah, by the way, that's danish..' Yeah like that this is Danish, by the way. So somehow, yeah. That definitely, but I would say like ,with other brands outside of Denmark, I don't feel, like how to say it....

I don't know if it's something I should be proud of. But for example, you know, there are fake goods and all that. Not because I purchased one beforehand. I mean, I've been to China, you know, the silk market. But because I could make myself buy a fake brand of someone like, maybe me from?

.... I don't know. Yeah, if I remember speaker, like, from other countries, but I would never ever buy a fake Danish product. That would be a no, no, I need to support support my own market. But someone like if it's from another country, I will I would do that.

A: Why wouldn't you support it?

B: Because of ethics.. But then at the moment, you're like, Oh, yeah, like it's so cheap and you can get the product and yeah, it's also quite funny because at the silk market, right, in China with I've been there a couple of times now. I don't know if you know it, but yeah, it's basically this market with all the fake fake goods. You can find them all the top range, right? You'd like it's almost only like foreigners inside of there. Which is actually quite interesting. But yeah, I've definitely also purchased some stuff from there. But yeah, at that moment, it feels like oh, yeah, this is good. And I got a really good deal. And no one is going to figure it out. It looks exactly like the real thing. But then like, yeah, you get a bit like, when you really take it back here to Denmark, and you take it out or you use it you would be like, yeah, it's not that cool. Yeah...

A: Okay. Very interesting. And so, you mentioned that you like your soaps, how regularly are you buying the soaps or like luxury products? So could you elaborate on those two different things?

B: Not that, not that much, actually. I mean, I have been working in the in the airport. So that's why I, I ever see this place where you could see more luxury, it's more about skincare. But also because I get the discount. So it makes things a bit better.

But do you mean how regularly I was like so like, per month or?

A: yeah you know like in general or with the soap, how regularly are you buying a new one?

B: Ah okay yeah I buy it when it's over, when I used it. Yeah, and same for skincare. And that's okay.

A: And like for other products, how often do you buy luxury products? maybe like handbags, you mentioned them before?

B: Handbags would be more special. So more for a special occasion, if I think I deserved it.

A: And how often do you have this “special occasion”?

B: I think when you maybe we reach a milestone, and then you're like, Okay, for example, if I finish my bachelor's and be like, Okay, this could be a symbol of me achieving like something. And also, for example, but also, again, the older you are the older I get, I mean I am still young, but I also realize that this thing of the the quality it does just a bit more. Like for example, the Dyson vacuum cleaner. It just, you know, I'm, like, I'm so excited about that vacuum cleaner, it is just very convenient. It's like, even though it's quite expensive, but it's just awesome. Because like, it just adds so much more value, like because you use it so often. Right? And it's really something that you can use for 10 years. Yeah. And it's even though it's expensive, but it's Yeah, it's just so nice. If you just clean everything with it and everything is so clean.

A: Okay, so you just mentioned quality, like what else is an important feature for you when you buy a luxury product?

B: The quality and of course the brand, it would be... Yeah. And what the brand is associated with? I think for me personally, it's more about like, that the brand is a sustainable thing, and I really just enjoy Danish brands in general. And, you know, I just really like, for example, being ‘Oh, it's danish’ because I love everything with would be all because it's danish and I'm like, ‘Oh, yeah, I want to support the local market.’ I really think that's a feature for me.

A: Okay. And then like when you would buy, a luxury product. Would you also tell others? Like would you go home and share it with your friends?

B: No, I don't think so. Actually, no, no. But when it comes to my home, they will see it, right? I wouldn't go...No.

A: Okay. And are there many or like different brands, that would fulfill these features that you just mentioned, that you would consider when buying a luxurious product?

B: There are many. I think the luxurious brands, they do really well with the marketing thing. So I think actually a lot of them fulfill it, right? They really feel like, they are really good at selling the story behind the brand as well. It's really something that... at least I am sold, like yeah, when they tell their stories behind, like the design and the craftsmanship. And I know that. But I think generally generally like all brands does this quite well.

A: Okay. Yeah. And for example, which brands would you buy with all these features that you mentioned?

B: Like, for example, yesterday, I just got introduced to a client we're working with its Lucien go. It's also Danish, with quite expensive jewelry. And something that was like, also for the royal family. So I'm like, a thing that really sold me was for first of all, it was Danish, right. And the design was minimalistic. It was nice, and the craftsmanship, but then also the fact that okay, I'm actually wearing something that the princesses also wear. So the story behind it as well. And I think that's, it's it's good point for like...

A: so these brands, for example, the Danish brands which have all this design features and for example, that support sustainability. How do you then evaluate them? If they are encouraging the sustainability point of view, for example?

B: Oh, yeah, it's of course positive. Because that's the values I look for when I invest in something a bit more expensive, also as gift as well, I think it is really nice when you give a gift at least actually I purchase more products, like for my mom and my dad. So it's really nice when you give the gift and you can actually, like it is a good gift you're proud to show and oh, yeah, look at this is a really nice, cute and from this brand. And it does this and this and this is the story behind, it is much more personal. And it also makes the person that receives the gift something that they associated within somehow. Yeah, because when you give a gift you

really want to make the value of it right? You know and yeah, it was just something about once a week. Oh, yeah, this is really something I found personally for you. Because now you need to use it so good and yeah.

A: And does that also influence your opinion about other brands? that do not have all these values?

B: I think, actually, I think nowadays, most brands, they know how to emphasize these values right? And I really think like all brands now they really emphasize sustainability story. I actually feel like a lot of the brands like really do this, like sale that the at the same, like...

also everything they do, because I also been working in, in the intakes rewrite, I mean mainly selling skincare. And everytime we got the training. It's basically the same thing, like a lot of the same selling points, like that people.... So it's I think it's just about the preference, but in general what these brands sell themselves for - it's all basically the same.

A: Oh that is very interesting.

B: But again, also, you know, like, I said, a lot of these products, like the content a lot of them are the same and they are made in the same places. Maybe just for example, perfume, so maybe just the bottle sets are manufactured differently. So like,....

A: And then what do you think about this?

B: I mean, because I worked with it, I know it this behind the scenes thing, right? But yeah, but I mean, as a customer, it's just so much to brand, I mean that you're really paying for the brand, you can see. And then, of course if the perfume but look nice or something, but I mean, the content or the value is kind of similar, maybe just a bit difference in the smell, and the ingredients. But a lot of these brands actually manufactured at the same places. It's just, yeah, the bottles, the marketing etc.

A: Okay, so like, actually, in the product they do this, but then from the brand perspective, they advertise a lot that that they care.

B: Yeah, they advertise in different ways.

A: And what do you think about that?

B: It's very, it's not very cool for the customer, right? But I mean, it's quite.. it is just the business world. And they they have done something that works, because it's, it's obviously it works, right. I also think like, we humans, we think we are very clever.

And we've think like when we purchase something, we want to be unique, and all the things but into another thing. We actually are quite like animals, we just follow the flock right.

Even though we feel like I have a very, very unique thought, I have a very unique decision making. I in general, it approaches me, I am unique, but in Yeah, I think we have quite following the mainstream. Even though like we try to be hipsters, right. But not everyone is hipster. So we are all going out, like wearing the hoodie and all like that. Even though it was intended to be like unique in the first place, so...

A: But does that mean that you also like to buy things other people buy?

B: Yeah. Yeah, I think like, to be honest, even though I worked within sales, right, but I think it's very easy to sell things to me. If it's like if someone really is like, Oh, yeah, I'm convinced I'm sold.

A: But would you do it more for the uniqueness? Or because a lot of people are having it?

B: Yeah, it's, I think it's, it's the thing. This is how trends are getting created, right? Because I feel like there's something new that comes in Oh, this is unique, or this is the new collection or something, and then I would get it. But then everyone feels that and then it's somehow comes like, everyone has it. it's quite fascinating how trends, they really come and they die. And they come and die again.

A: because I think in the beginning, you have said at the beginning for example, when you brought this up with the soaps, so it was making you feel like special.

B: Yeah. But

A: Okay, so for example in the beginning you brought up that you buy this soups and that they make you special? How is it related?

B: I feel, I think I feel... Yeah, because I feel like it's just an upgrade from the norm maybe. Because normally you have this this cheap soap for 10 Kr. us. And yeah, at home, I think that's, that's what people normally and was I have been using my whole whole life. So like upgrading that to a really nice soap, with a matching hand cream. Just Yeah. But somehow, you know, the joy, just decrease.

Since I mean, I remember like, the first time I've been using it, right? Yes. The first month was like, 'Oh, this is so nice'. But then you kind of get used to it, right? So you don't really pay attention to it anymore. And then maybe sometime you get you get some family that visit you and I say 'Oh, this is so such a nice thing' smelling at the hands like 'Oh, such a nice soap'. And then you 'Oh yeah, it's true' like, it's so nice when you think about it again. But then, but yeah, it's like I think also, when you upgrade, then it just becomes the norm of what you are used to. So like they also decrease then.

A: Okay, yeah. And what you consider then buying at some point, even more expensive, soap like to get again when buying soap next time?

B: Maybe not soap, but maybe like something else. Like constantly upgrading different equipment at home. So maybe if I'm in a nice coffee machine like that makes it you know, especially like, remember the espresso machine right with the capsules? Yes. Like right when they came out. It was something really like when you headed home you were like 'Uh this is so fancy', but now everyone, like almost have it at home.

And you can also see the market price like when it came out. It was very unique. But now like all the supermarket sells it and it's not that expensive, anyway, so the two Yeah. So

A: So would that attract you less knowing that everybody has it?

B: I think maybe if I had one at home, it wouldn't feel as fancy as before. If like, you know, if maybe it was like in the beginning when you had one and it would be like oh, yeah, this is really nice, but with everyone has it, so it just becomes the norm. Yeah. And then it's not that, you know, luxurious, fancy anymore. Yeah, yeah.

A: Okay very interesting. And could you mentioned some brands that you would consider as luxurious brands?

B: And oh, yeah, as I mentioned, I mean, I really think about really the handbag. I feel like, really associated like with Louis Vuitton and Gucci and you know, Prada and all that. I personally don't use this. Like, but it's also just crazy how these brands do it's, like one time I needed to... my friends, really wanted that Gucci belt. I think everyone wanted that Gucci belt worldwide and it was so famous. And it was so famous because they... It was so difficult to get the hands on. And she was like, 'Oh, yeah, you work in the airport, right? Can you go to the Gucci and can you buy it for me or something?' And, and because I can't get my hands on it. And then I went to the shop and I'm like, 'Oh, yeah, I'm looking for this belt. 'And he's like ' yeah, I can put you on the waiting list for like, six months'. And I'm like 'okay, I

even want to pay the money'. But, you know, I really think also that the way they had these products, but also because it is really hard to get them, that I mentioned before, like it's because it's unique, there's not that many. So like it's yeah, just because you're one of those you would have it then it's just really like luxurious and you can differentiate yourself.

A: You also said that you don't, you personally don't use it or you wouldn't like to? Can you elaborate more on that?

B: Yeah, I personally don't. Don't use these. Big brands, right? First of all, because it's expensive and second of all. It's not really something I would associate myself with.

A: Okay. And why do you think you would not associate yourself with them?

B: Okay I am just going to be honest with you. But okay, I feel like...

I don't know. I feel like you also have this stereotype about the girls that we have, like, these brands and it's about a bit deeper, like, yeah, about, you know... I'm a just, I feel like it's more the brand that's wearing me compared to me wearing the brand.

And I feel like, because if you wear a really expensive bag then it's like, almost you like wearing the bag wearing you more than yourself. But I'm like, Yeah, I have the confidence enough to take a regular bag and wear it like expensive. I don't know, but yeah, it's like, some of the brands I really think, that people just stamp you at least some of the them. Like if someone comes in and they are just covered in the whole luxurious brands like, really expensive, then just get this image of this person, it's a person to whom the materials things means a lot. And yeah, I don't know, it's just not something I wanted to be associated with.

A: Something about value?

B: Yes it's about values and because I feel like a lot of the girls do that. I don't know if also you two, but yeah, I feel like maybe also because I'm from the Asian culture, right? And people really spent a lot of money and it is also a bit to show off, right. That they actually that they have the money. And this is just nuts, some of the values and I don't want to like, be associated with... and but of course also because it is super expensive.

A: But if you had the money, would it's also be because of that reason?

B: Yeah, I think so. Especially like, in the, in the Asian culture, it's really about... you can also see like, when people like, these shops is almost Asians only in there, like, almost in the airport, they all have like an agent assistance standing next to them, that they can speak Chinese with or something. Because they, you know, all the customers that buy it now like the the especially Asians and Chinese they have this huge, like purchasing power right now. Right? And it really adds to that personal credit personal values. And also to Yeah, make them like, it just maybe. Maybe not nice to say to show off but somehow it is, it just is like that.

A: So you don't feel like identified with that kind of shopping?

B: Not exactly, no no ...

A: Okay. How important is it for you that that other people see that you have bought a luxury product?

B: I don't think it's that important. Makes it you know yeah, it's...but also again, because I don't really use like that luxurious stuff I really don't have that much I don't use that much. But no, I wouldn't say maybe like if I really had something to... like if I may be but I really nice jewelry that was handcrafted by someone something unique. Then I would be really like 'Oh do you see?' Yeah, no, no, no. No, actually, I don't think it's it's that that important to me.

... maybe it's a short answer, but no that is how it is. [Interviewer feeling uncomfortable]

A: It is more than fine, we already talked a little bit about that you do not prefer to show off so, that is okay.

B: Okay, that's great.

A: Then we can go over to the third part of the interview. And we have some visuals for you. And so we are going to just put them here on the table and then just pick one and tell us what you think or why it caught your eye or what comes to your mind.

B: Okay, this here definitely. [Stella McCartney]

A: And was that interesting for you?

B: Think it's because the basically they are lying in bunch of trash, I mean it's a it's quite unique that's something I haven't seen before okay. Yeah, I never seen something like that.

A: And how does that make you feel seeing those models lying in the trash?

B: I feel like they're not really... I don't really get what the purpose is? because they are also because like look at her she's smiling right? Yes. she is smiling, and so you know just when I see it, it makes me feel uncomfortable. I mean,....

A: why do you think that makes you uncomfortable?

B: because it it just shows like how bad we treat the environment.

A: Okay, so it does not make you feel bad to see the models themselves in the trash but more the trash itself?

B: Yeah. Yeah.

A: Or is it both? he models themselves being in the trash and the trash?

B: It's a bit scary that the girl is like smiling that much while she is like lying in the trash. ...

Oh, yeah. I know why you asking these questions. But oh, yeah, it's something that in the future maybe I should also feel bad for that. But somehow I am feel like I'm a bit like blaming them because I mean, not them as an individual but more because it's the fashion industry. Right? Yeah. It's it's really is bad for the environment, especially textile. It's like one of the most like, yeah, polluting industries out there.

A: Okay.

B: Normally I don't think about it, but then it's sometimes you just get it in there. Oh, yeah. It's true. It's bad.

A: [Brief explanation of the visual, as shown in appendix]

B: So yeah, but yeah .. this is making me think, think of that. I think it's it's great. Yeah, it's a definitely great, this is different and it definitely got my attention. But so they so they say they what they produce is more sustainable?

A: Yes they they are trying to produce in a more sustainable way. But also the aim of the campaign was to raise the awareness of what's going on in our environment, in general, and not only in the fashion industry.

B: Okay.

A: What would you think of like seeing these type of campaigns or these visuals? Compared to for example, these one? [Pointing at Stella McCartney photo].

B: Of course, I support this campaign, right? But I don't think it sells. Okay. From a sales perspective. I because maybe this is, but it wouldn't want me to buy it for example if they're trying to sell this dress, right? Yeah, I wouldn't buy it, I don't want to buy also because no matter ... if I think it's a really good campaign. But I don't think it's a campaign that makes me want to buy something, because it makes me feel uncomfortable right? Maybe if the campaign was more about like, she was wearing this dress running in a green field with trees and be like, oh, because you bought this then you help building this forest or something? Then I would be more likely to purchase it, I think. Because this just don't want me to purchase anything. Or have enough clothes at home? I don't want to purchase. I shouldn't purchase more. Because I actually did really cut down on how much clothes I purchase, because I just realized I have too much. Yeah, since 2018. I have almost not been buying anything. Yeah. But it.

A: But would you keep the brand in mind? Like for example, I mean, if you would like the clothes, when you know that Stella McCartney does a lot of those campaigns. I mean, they also they never use like, fur of animals or leather from animals. Would this make you keep this brand in mind for a point where you would like to buy? Like, I mean, you see the campaign now. But let's talk about in two years, three years, when you're done with your masters, you also earn more money. And then would you when you see then the brand would be like oh, yeah, this one raising awareness.

B: I think maybe at this maybe later on? Yeah, I would definitely be like, 'Oh, yeah, this is a brand I would reach more towards to' yeah.

A: Okay, but for now?

B: For now just like seeing this, I just don't want to purchase anything at all. Because it just makes you feel like, reflect and be uncomfortable.

A: Like, yeah, but then maybe compared to others. How about when you would graduate and have money?

B: Yeah, then I'm gonna, then I think about it, Yeah, I would.

Yeah, I think so. But, now I just don't. I think we leave this when you see this, You just don't want to purchase anything.

A: Okay. Well, that's great. Thanks for the inside. Will do like to talk about any of the other visuals we have. I mean, this was the first one you know, pointed at. But if you look at the others, is there, something that sticks out for you, which was caught or catches your attention.

B: Yeah. Also, this one. [Pointing at Louis Vuitton visual 2] This is too...I mean, this is too typical. Like, it's so typical that I wouldn't pay attention to it.

A: Okay. What do you mean with typical?

B: It's just a good looking model. Showing a bag. And, yeah, it's just a basic. Like, you would have it in front of the store, like really big. And then you will see it and be like, Oh, this is nice. And then you will just walk past, I think.

A: Okay. Yeah. So you wouldn't give an extra look to it?

B: Yeah, I mean it's quite kind in the face. But I don't really, there's not meaning to it. I feel like, I mean, I can see it's kind of like in your face. It's very powerful. But I don't think that there's meaning with it. I don't really see any, any story or any meaning with it. Although then you can associate with 'Are you going to look like a kind of like a actress, right? You can be very powerful with this bag or something. But, but yeah. But I think a lot of brands do something like this. Just having a good looking model showing the product. And with like, because she has beautiful eyes, it is a bit determined, right? So like, and what they want is you to associate you with her right? and be like this with this brand, to know you can be like really powerful. But yeah, I think the first time I see that will be like, 'Oh, yeah', but there's no differentiation from this.

A: So it wouldn't make you feel special in a way?

B: Maybe Yeah, I mean, you would maybe associate a bit with her. But I think there's too many of these kinds of commercials, like it would not been a difference if it would be Louis Vuitton or Gucci or if it was like any other product, like this bag could be like any more typical. I don't see like anything special. But it is powerful. It is this how but there's also like a glimpse at it first, but then it was like, it caught my attention but then I was like mhm

A: Well, would you like to pick any other one of the visuals?

B: mhm this one is interesting. That's really interesting [Louis Vuitton 1 visual]

A: Why is it interesting for you?

B: [Louis Vuitton 1 visual] Because it's, I don't get it. I'm saying this is this is a thing where I would be like, looking at it and remembering it. And thinking about thinking about it. Because I would feel like because it's more unique, right? It's, it's out of the ordinary. It's very black, baby. Yeah.

A: And why is that striking you?

B: Like, it's just I don't see the the connections, I mean, yeah, I-....

A: But you mentioned he is black... and a baby why did you mention that?

B: Because it's just not what you expect to see. Um, maybe at least not in a Louis Vuitton commercial, right.

A: so what impression does this give you of Louis Vuitton? that they put this kind of model in their? in their campaign photo?

B: I, somehow there is also something artistic to this? Like, right? I mean, you kind of want to, you really want to know the story of this. You really want to know what the why the story of the artists why he or she decided to make this picture, this photograph, right?

And just, I think also the contrast from I mean, I mean, the colors also they quite bright and But yeah, I don't. Yeah, but it's something I want to know more about.

A: [Brief explanation of the visual]

B: Hmm. Oh, that's nice.

A: Why do you think it's nice?

B: Yeah, this is also something that the sells me like, I really like that thing. Also, even though like the United colors of Benetton. It's so basic. It is basically the basic of basic focus on a basic policy. But really, that's what the name says like the United colors, right? I really think like we should really emphasize this, I mean, this is some values really are some issues that we really should put, like more. More focus on. So yeah, so I think this this is a nice, nice campaign. This is a nice one. Yeah.

A: And how does it lead you ever the way the brand, that they do campaigns like that?

B: I mean, it makes me, it makes me... it makes it more unique. Yeah. It's, it's more unique, at least from this campaign, compared to this one [Louis Vuitton 1]. Yeah.

Definitely. I will say this is something that sells me much better than this one. Okay. Yeah. Yeah.

A: okay so is there any other visual that was like calling your attention?

B: [Dior visual] This one is maybe also a bit fancy, but this is very typical. Dior I feel like Yeah. Like, really like miss Dior kind of like.

But no, nothing else...

A: Okay that is more than fine. Yeah. Just if you have to say something. Nice. Yeah, I think that was all we had prepared so far. Thank you for all the insights. Do you have anything else you would like to add about what we discussed and talked about?

B: I'm like, I really like I really being honest like, from a bottom up I really being honest. Like Yeah, I hope you don't judge me.

Debriefing the interview and thanking the interviewee

Respondent 2

Welcome and Briefing

A: What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you think about luxury?

B: Luxury in general, first word is expensive. And also just a positive, like, good life, better life? Something like that.

A: So if you would have to describe luxury in general as a concept, how would you do without thinking of products and brands more like the abstract way?

B: I'd say just, like, a better version of something else, whatever it is. So if it's just lifestyle, or if it's physical products, or whatever, then you have one version, and then you have a better version.

A: And what do you mean was better? What does better mean for you?

B: That could be different things, depending on the category, and maybe also, depending on the person, of course.

A: What that's about you, so what is better for you, personally?

B: So good question. Very interesting. But I think that also depends on the category. I think that's difficult for me to describe when we are talking about luxury as a general concept.

Because luxury in one aspect of life would be one thing and then another, it would be something else.

A: Can you give some examples? If you relate to a product or a service or something else you would consider luxurious?

B: If we're talking, try to keep it a little more abstract, just lifestyle in general, or like, work, or also outside of work, just having freedom, flexibility. Could be, that would be for me, luxury.

And if it's more like physical products, then quality of that product if it's clothes, or furniture or whatever, higher quality, meaning it lasts longer, or looks better. It is just produced in a better way. Yeah, something like that. And the same with service, I would say like higher quality. If someone performs the service for you, they could do it in a shitty way or they could do it in a great way and the outcome should be better. That would be a luxury, I think, something like that.

A: Have you ever purchased something you think is luxurious?

B: Yes. I have bought some clothing that I would consider luxurious at least a little bit. Not crazy luxury. But again, if we keep it to like, above something else, then yes, I've had.

I bought a suit. I could have bought the super cheap version. And I think that would have been lower quality - just the fabric and how it was made. And I figured, it's not something I buy very often and that something like that I would like to have something a little better. So that specifically would, in my mind be considered a little more luxurious, than some other options.

A: And why did you say you think it's not super crazy luxurious? What would be crazy luxurious for you then?

I know, it's just I could have bought a suit of 10 times that price. Because the scale is very wide. You could buy the cheapest version just off the rack at H&M or something. And you could step it up a little bit and actually buy a brand you know, but that it's still like affordable.

So that's the difference between a suit for 1000 DKK and then a 5000 DKK and all that stuff. And it could also have been 50,000 Dkk if you really wanted to, but that just wasn't considered in my mind at all.

A: Why?

B: Not worth it? Well, I could afford it. But it would have been a pretty big part of my savings for a suit. So no, that's just not worth it at all to me. I don't care that much about it.

A: And is there anything you would consider luxurious, so it doesn't have to fit any definition, but like that you buy more regularly? Because I think the suit you said was a one time thing? I guess you don't have 10 of those suits?

B: Not really, not something I would consider luxury, not regularly.

It would be something like that, like a one time thing? That I know it should last for a really long time and that it just matters a little more. I would rather see it as an investment and that happens very rarely. On an ongoing basis, not really. The only thing that could come close, but I still wouldn't really consider a luxury is in terms of food, like buying something a little more expensive and going for the organic stuff, fair trade and all of that. And that's something I care a lot about. But maybe not something I can see the luxury and definitely not something I buy because it's luxury. Like I buy something because I think it's the healthiest option. But since it is more expensive. I know, for some people, it is considered a luxury that you can't even afford it. So that could fit, but not really something I think about is luxury.

A: But you did say for example, that luxury for you is something better like a better version.

B: So it could be, could be in that category as well.

A: And when you bought this suit, how did you feel when you bought the expensive one from this brand?

B: It felt good, yeah. Yeah. I think so. It felt good to wear it. To try it on. Also to be in the store, because the whole store felt a little more luxurious than if I had bought it online or in H&M, where I usually buy all my clothes. So it was a different experience and a good and positive experience.

A: Why do you say that for example, the store experience was more luxurious?

B: Because of the interior, the decoration, how everything looks and then also the service along with it. Because when you have to try on the suits, and also have to get it tailored a bit afterwards. Then it just feels like a more luxurious experience. Because there's actually attention to detail into basically attention to the experience

around this more than just go in yourself and pull something off the rack and go and pay and leave the store. Yeah, we're here you actually interact with someone, and then it just seems like it feels like a more luxurious the experience to me.

A: And when you were wearing it, did somebody notice the quality or the brand or the more luxurious suit?

B: Yes and no. What I mean by that is I think I could have worn any suit and my family would have been so excited to see me in a nice suit, they wouldn't tell the difference. So I think to the ones who commented on it, it was more that it was just the suit. They couldn't see the brand and they couldn't see what I paid for.

And so yes, comments, positive comments, but I'm not sure it was because of the most luxurious version of it. I can't really tell.

A: But would that be important for you, that other people notice, like that you bought a more luxurious suit?

B: A little bit. But in that case, and maybe in general, it's more important that it looks good.

So if I thought I could have gotten one that look as good, but was cheaper. Then maybe I would have bought that instead. So it was more about the quality and and how it looked, than about the brand itself. If that makes sense. Yeah, it is important to me that it it looks good and I like when people comment on something like that as well. But I also think that it could be achieved without buying luxury.

Just on this case, with the suit, because then I would have bought it. I think it was necessary with something like a suit to get a proper one that fits you properly, then you have to have something a little more expensive. And you need to be in a store where they actually have some more experience or are experts in that area. So that's why I went for that option.

A: When you were a kid, for example, did you have any dream or something that you would have liked to buy? Like when I have money and when I'm old I will get this or that?

B: Yes, I think it was all of the most common things. Well, at least, I don't know if they are actually common where I grew up. Like buying an expensive car. Yes I love cars, lots of cars, I knew all of the brands and knew some in specific because I would like to own cars, more than one actually. You need a sports car, of course. And then like a bigger car. And so yeah, that was definitely a dream. And then a big fancy house as well. Yeah, I think those were the the most important things.

A: How do you feel about these cars, for example? Or a specific brand or car model? Do you still want those cars?

B: Well, first of all, it has definitely changed. Now it's more like when you ask like, would you like the car? Sure, why not? If you offer me the car I would take it, but it's definitely not high on the list anymore as it was back then. I still, if I see that specific car driving around, I still think it's it's a beautiful car, still my favorite car. So get a little bit jealous when I see someone in it. But now, well, back then I didn't really have a great idea of how my life would be as an adult, of course, yes. Right now I have no need for a car at all. So that doesn't really make sense. I live in Copenhagen and I would like to live in Copenhagen. So a big fancy house doesn't really make sense either. So now it's just more realistic. And in the environment I'm in and my current lifestyle, those things that were the most important as a child like big fancy house, a nice car, private jet. They don't really fit my lifestyle now. So now there may be some other things that would be more important than those.

A: So for example, you will graduate soon, and you will have more money than you have ever had probably. Is there anything that you would buy or any luxury that you would consider as a treat to yourself since now "you've made it". So is there anything like that, that you would consider buying when you have more money?

B: Not really, I'm not really planning on buying anything specific.

A: Not planning, but wanting?

B: Okay. I would like to buy an apartment. Because right now I'm just renting a place. Like SU-friendly price apartment. So that's one thing, I would like to buy my own apartment and that's replacing my dream of a big fancy house, just buying an apartment in Copenhagen.

A: Would you consider that as luxurious?

B: No. I wouldn't.

A: Would you buy something luxurious then? And what would that be?

B: Not anything I consider luxury.

A: Why not luxurious?

B: Because I haven't thought of anything that I want to buy or save up for that I would consider luxury. The only thing I'm thinking about, actually buying saving up for, is the apartment. But I wouldn't consider that luxury because it's basically just having a place to live.

A: So let's imagine you would like to buy a luxury product, or a service or an experience? What would be the most important features for you?

B: That depends. But then it is about the quality as objectively as it can be defined for that specific product or service. So actually something that is measurably better than other options. So this is an important example for me, yeah.

A: But anything else? I mean, there are a lot of features of product can have.

B: True. It still depends a lot on the category of product or service.

A: You can give examples.

B: Then we're, then we're back to the food. For food, for instance, the most important to me is that it's a healthy, sustainable. Yes, both healthy for me and for the planet, as much as possible, and however were involved in the production of that. And that can be a little more expensive, to buy something like that. That is something I would pay for, because that is important to me.

But that's, that's mostly in that specific category, of course. But then specifically for me, something like the sustainability, just to stick to that one, would also be important, but not as important, actually. For some reason I care more about it. When we talk about food, than for instance, clothing. Then it's, it's more like a nice to have, it's definitely a plus, but not necessarily something I would pay a lot more money to get. Like, if I have two T-shirts side by side and one has a label that says something about sustainability or green or good for the environment, but it's five times as expensive. I probably wouldn't buy that. But if it's more or less the same, or little more expensive, then I would buy that option.

A: So you take it into consideration, but it is not the main feature you're looking for?

B: No, not the main feature, but it's definitely definitely part of the consideration. And always a plus.

A: When you buy for example, these special and maybe more luxurious food that fits with all these features and values that you care about. How does that make you feel?

B: It makes me feel good. Yes, it's all positive.

A: Are there any luxury brands that would fulfill these features that you consider?

B: Aston Martin, great luxury brand.

A: Can you tell us why you think that?

B: They just make a really nice cars, good looking, good quality, I would assume. I've never really owned one, never driven one either. And they're crazy expensive., so that's part of it. **A: Okay, you said you “assume the quality”?**

B: I've heard about the quality.

A: How do you feel regard regarding this brand? or also maybe how do you feel about buying it in the future maybe?

B: It would make me feel successful, owning it. Like an achievement.

A: And if you would drive it, probably people will notice?

B: Yeah, I think that's, that's part of the, successful and achievement. To me, at least that includes other people's perception. So for something like that, a car like that, of course, is not just because of how it, like that it's good to drive or comfortable to sit in, because you can get that with a lot less money. So that's part of it, at least when we're talking about something like that. That's actually visible to other people. That is important as well, for that, specifically. So that's the emotions I relate to I like that.

A: Why do you think it would make you feel successful? In terms of what?

B: I think when people look at someone buying a car like that, driving a car like that, they consider that person to be more successful, at least as defined by our capitalistic society.

Yes, that's when I think when I look at someone driving a car like that.

A: So it would also be important for you if you would buy such a car, to have this feeling of other people looking at you and thinking: "oh, this guy is successful"?

B: What I think is, it is not at all a priority for me to buy a car like that. So those feelings of being seen as more successful in that way. That kind of successful is not important to me. So, what I think is, if I bought a car like that, if I actually spent the money on a car like that, definitely yeah, I would like people to notice it and see me as more successful. If I paid that much money for something like that, that would be part of it, otherwise it wouldn't be worth it. I hope that made sense.

A: Okay, so in this case, it kind of adds up on value if you would buy the car?

B: Yes.

A: Oh, in general, could you mention some brands that you would consider luxury brands? And why do you think so?

B: Maybe from other product categories, I don't know a lot of them. But the product category that comes up first, and it actually came up before cars and everything else as well as just clothes. To me this the product category that has the most luxury, or is defined the most as luxury.

A: Why?

B: I think because, it's just an important product category for everyone. Like, we all buy clothes and we have to decide on some brands. Whereas if we're talking about cars or something else, is more like you can choose to, you may not, and most people in here in Copenhagen don't own a car at all. And clothes, there's also a big opportunity for some self expression. I think you show more through what you wear, than through what you drive. (Unless you're driving an Aston Martin, or something else crazy expensive). Everything below that, is just more or less the same.

So I think that's part of it. And yeah, I think there are a lot of different luxury brands in that category of clothing. For example, like Gucci, Dolce Gabbana, some of those. Don't own any of them, but I've heard about them. Yeah, I think those are the ones I consider traditional, classic luxury brands.

A: Why classic and traditional?

B: Just because they are old and have been considered luxury for several decades for like, as long as they have existed. And I think maybe you're gonna have a different perception of what luxury is, and I'm not really sure how they would define themselves, those classic luxury brands, like in my mind, they are luxury because someone has just decided that those brands are luxury, I have no idea if they are higher quality, as I described earlier. Quality would be important to me. But I don't know if those brands are that, or if they actually just brands and known as those brands.

A: So you don't own any of those brands, but if you could, would you buy something from those brands?

B: No

A: Why not?

B: It's not important to me owning those brands. If I knew they were like, of a higher quality, for instance, like objectively higher quality and the clothes were better. And if they could prove, like that was the other trait I've only mentioned to you, like the objective quality, and something like sustainability, green environment-

whatever. If that was the main thing, and I paid extra for that, and they could actually prove it, then it could be worth it. And if I made a lot more money than I do now, then I would also be willing to pay more for something like that. But as it is right now, as I know those brands, they're not attractive to me.

A: Why not attractive, because they are not having these values...?

B: Yeah, from what I know, I don't consider those brands in those terms. At least that's not what those brands are, to me. They're just well known brands, and they are expensive, because they are those brands.

A: And if you would buy it, in the way they are right now, would they make you feel in any specific way or not really?

B: I'm not sure. But what I think is, my immediate thought is that I would think about how would other people look at me if I was wearing those brand. So it's not really what those brands themselves make me feel. What they make me think other people think about me. And yes, those brands would definitely make a difference, I think. Everyone because those brands so well known - we're talking about Gucci or Dolce Gabbana something along those lines - they're very well known brands so some people will have a perception of those brands. So if someone sees me wearing those brands, they would see me in a certain way. And the way I look at those brands, it's mostly about something, someone having more money, because they are expensive. And that's basically it. Just expensive brands, but I can't really assign any other important, important characteristics to them.

A: so would you think that there's something missing, then?

B: To me? That definitely is, because I don't see any reason to buy them. So there must be something missing.

A: But would there be something you could think about what they could do or change? Or to make "your mind" change?

B: Yes. There could be, not completely sure it would work for those established brands already. But if for instance, going back to the quality and the sustainability part, if those were the main characteristics, then it would be a different situation.

A: Because then it's not just buying something expensive, because it is expensive - that's not really important to me, to show off that I can afford something. So yeah, something like that would make a difference. But then it would mostly be my own immediate feeling, because, of course, if there is like a big brands logo on the T-shirt, or whatever you're wearing, and if everyone knows that brand as something sustainable, for instance, then of course, it does give a certain perception to other people as well. And so that would also be part of it, but it would mostly be intrinsically motivated, that I actually know for myself, that it is something specific, that it supports something.

A: So we have covered all our interview questions, so we would like to come to the last part of this interview. We're going to show you some visuals. We would like you to look at them. And if some of them catches your attention, because of some reason, just let us know what you think about them?

B: So just to get the first one out of the way because I don't think it's that important [Balenciaga WFP]. This one caught my attention because of the color. It stood out a bit because of the color only, and then I noticed what was actually on it. Which I like way better than the color [World Food Programme logo], well, the World Food Program. So that sounds like a positive, like a good cause. I just said I like that better than the color itself. So if they made it in black or something, I would like it.

A: Okay, but you said that this is like a positive attribute for you?

B: Yeah.

A: Because they launched a collection supporting the world food programme [Brief Explanation about the visual]

How do you evaluate the brand, regarding this story?

B: I think that's really good. That makes a pretty big difference. If we just look at two traditional luxury brands, and one of them does something like that. Yeah, immediately stands out or something positive. But did they actually make these clothes? Could you buy this with the print on it?

A: Yes.

B: I think it would prefer it without the print.

No, but actually, yeah, both visually, like, I like something a little more playing. But also, just now that I look at it in, it's just that whole idea of having some statement on you, it's not really something necessary for me, I would prefer the other way. So it's like back to the intrinsic, even if I just know it myself, that it support a good cause, that would be sufficient for me and actually better than showing off to everyone on the street, that I'm supporting some good cause and trying to convince everybody that they should as well. So that's why I would prefer it without the print, not only because of the visual.

B: I also looked at this one with the plastic bottles [Stella McCartney] and I'm not really sure of what is this? If it's just water? trash?

A: Yes it is trash.

B: Yeah, that's what I thought is it is just trash or if it's supposed to be something else? But yeah, that that caught my eye as well. Because they usually don't fit and yeah, they stand out from the others here, which I'm all just traditional focused on the, on the clothes and the beautiful people wearing it [Louis Vuitton 2] and the beautiful surroundings, like over here. [Dior] Yes, those stood out as well.

A: And how do you perceive this picture [Stella McCartney] if you look at them? Does it give you a kind of feeling?

B: Well, I don't know the story behind it, of course. But I would imagine that they're probably not promoting waste and small plastic and all of that. So I, I would guess that, that they are trying to do something positive, in one way or another, but I have no idea if they making clothes from the trash, or they're just supporting a good cause, or just trying to bring awareness to an issue. That's, I guess that's also a way of supporting a good cause. So yeah, in a way, something positive, at least related to the brands and negative emotions related to the context with all the plastic and, and the landfill trash all of that. So positive and negative, I guess.

A: Brief explanation about the visual.

How would this make you feel towards the luxury brand, you said negative and positive?

B: Yeah, definitely positive towards the brand. Yes, it does. I think that's good, that they're trying to do something like that, in bringing awareness to it. And yeah, use a sustainable material or donate to the cause. Something like that. That's definitely a positive towards the brand. I like Stella McCartney a little bit better now, yeah I do. I think before, I mean I knew. Stella McCartney, but I didn't really have any strong perception of the brand, other than just like I described before, luxury, for being luxury, expensive for being expensive. Nothing else than that. And that gives me zero motivation to buy something like that. But, this helps.

A: So and would you say that the positive feelings you have outweigh the negative because you also said this also gives you kind of a negative feeling looking at it?

B: it's just looking at these pictures of trash and plastic. But no, the positive definitely outweighs the negative, the negative is only about the the larger context, just about the problem they actually trying to solve. So, it's not towards the brand, not at all.

A: We also wanted to ask you, because you mentioned that [Dior] this is just a beautiful setting. How do you, for example, compared to this one [Balenciaga]? Because this is like, the same idea structure, in terms of having just a model in it with a setting? And how would you evaluate this compared to the other [Dior and Balenciaga]?

B: Good question. Well, for both of them, I still think more or less the same in terms of luxury: Well known brands and expensive. Mostly expensive, just because it's an expensive brand. And I think when I see something like this one [Balenciaga] and the whole setting, and that, because it looks, yeah, it looks cheaper

in a way, like more rough and is just in some backyard with some graffiti and some old walls with bricks and stuff like that. So it doesn't look luxurious in that way. But just because I see the brands in the corner, then I think something like this it's just an ad. They could do whatever and then just put the brand in the in the corner, and then it's more or less the same. So then it's just the advertising marketing, and then it doesn't really matter that much. If it's in an expensive house building, whatever this is all if it's in an old backyard. Still a luxury brand.

A: Would you say that this is somehow influencing your perception of the brand, to see like Dior with this or Balenciaga with this?

B: I think it's still just the luxury brands. I think it makes a little difference in terms of, I think something like this [Balenciaga] seems a little more young, in a way. Like at least trying to be a little more young and hip and cool, than something like this, which is a little more classic, old school, traditional. I mean, I don't want to buy either of them, but I have slightly different perceptions like that, and I would slightly prefer [Balenciaga] over the other one.

A: Do you want to mention any other thing that caught your attention?

B: I looked at the Louis Vuitton one, both of them, but the top one is the most interesting. Just because it, it also stands out.

A: Why does that stand out for you?

B: Because this little kid is not the one I would usually imagine wearing Louis Vuitton. I don't think I've seen that kid in a Louis vuitton commercial before. And I'm not really sure why, what they're trying to say here. So I think that's probably why it catches my attention, that I don't really understand it. Whereas this one [Louis Vuitton 2] is just classic, luxury, commercial.

A: How would you feel about this one, why do you think it's classic?

B: Just because we got the products, and it's also like the classic branded products with Louis Vuitton. And we got the beautiful lady. I don't remember her name. But I know her.

So yeah, we got the products in focus and it's a recognizable product as well, and she's recognizable, and she's beautiful, and that's it. So I kind of feel that this is why it's classic also, because it doesn't make me think of anything else, I think here we just purely see the luxury brand on display, and then I can move on, because it doesn't really speak to me.

A: But compared to this [Louis Vuitton 1], you said you don't understand this, but this [Louis Vuitton 2] seems to be clear to you.

B: I think so.

A: Brief Explanation of the visual.

Does that make you feel or think in a specific way?

B: It does make my brains spin a little bit. I think, no, I always liked hearing something like that, that someone sees something that he perceives as an issue. And I can see why it's an issue and then try to do something about it. I think that's a positive, that's a good thing for a brand, like Louis Vuitton. So yeah, it's a positive, it's not really, it's a little difficult for me to relate specifically to that problem, because I'm not black. But still, I like the idea. So it's a positive thing.

A: So how would you evaluate, although you've seen the other Louis Vuitton that you think it's more kind of classic, how would evaluate when a brand adds these kind of meanings to it?

B: I would definitely evaluate it as something more positive, definitely. But then you just need to get rid of all this branding [Louis Vuitton 2].

A: Actually, this is an older ad, from a few years back and this is new. How would you feel if you would then now buy something from Louis Vuitton? Before you said that this "gives you 0 motivation to buy", would this change anything?

B: Yeah, I think I'm more motivated to buy something like that [Louis Vuitton 1], but it depends on the price. And then it also depends on how it looks, that's obvious that it should fit a certain style and I would want to buy it, if we're talking about clothes. But then also, like I said, with the branding, I said I would remove the branding from the front of one of the others. And not just because of the visual, but because I think everyone knows Louis Vuitton or whatever brand it is. And very few people know about this "new angle" that they are trying to put on it. And the same for the other ones we talked about, where they have some positive spin and sustainability and actually supporting a good cause. So if they just put their own brand on it, like Louis Vuitton. And even though I know it, because I've heard that story, and I bought it because of that story, if it just has Louis Vuitton on it, what I communicate to everyone else I meet is still the classical understanding of Louis Vuitton. That's what I would think at least. So I wouldn't want to wear that.

A: Okay, so would prefer than it doesn't have the logo on it?

B: It shouldn't be the Louis Vuitton one at least. Then it should be some other sub-label or something, or they could remove it completely. That would be better.

I think the the actual brands, if we just stick to Louis Vuitton, most people have such a strong perception, they know it so well. Yeah, well, I don't know. I'm no branding expert. I could imagine that's very difficult to change. Would be also just, even in my own mind, after hearing that story...I mean, I like the brand better, but I still see this as a small small attempt in a huge organization, a huge brand to make something different. And even though I know that if I buy a T-shirt or something, and that T-shirt was completely sustainably produced, and they had this spin and it's designed by this new creative director or whatever, who wants to make a positive change, even with that whole story, it still has the brand and all that package that comes with it. So if I were that in public, I would still imagine that everyone just thinks of the traditional Louis Vuitton and buying something expensive, because it is expensive. So if it's only myself, if only I know that it is Louis Vuitton and it's that small part of Louis Vuitton that has this new spin on things, then it's a good thing. I just don't want to showcase Louis Vuitton to anyone around

Debriefing the interview and thanking the interviewee

Respondent 3

Welcome and Briefing

A: What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you think about luxury?

B: I think about famous brands such as Chanel, Dior, Louis Vuitton Balmain and things like that.

A: Okay, so you mentioned the brands, but if you think about luxury more in an abstract way, how would you describe it?

B: I think like something more like very elegant, classic, of course expensive and I think it has something like, it's something that you want, but you can't afford. So, not a myth but something like a dream, at some point.

A: And have you ever purchased something that you think is luxurious?

B: No, I don't think so. I mean, because it happened that I bought some clothes which were expensive, but not expensive like Dior, Chanel or Louis Vuitton, so I would say no.

A: Okay. But have you ever dreamt of for instance, when you were younger, or even at the moment, is there something you would like to purchase in the future which is luxurious to you?

B: Yes, I mean, for instance, when I want to buy new clothes, I go to some websites to check what they have and if I can find sort of the same things, but cheaper, you know, so for instance like shirts, T-shirts but also jumpers... Yeah. I try to go to luxury websites to get some ideas.

A: And why did you say, for example, that you bought some more expensive clothes, but you wouldn't consider them really luxury for you?

B: Because I mean, for me luxury is something kind of unique, so I think that most of the people buy clothes from H&M, Zara and stores like that, so I cannot consider this as something expensive. But when I buy clothes, for instance, I don't like to buy a lot of clothes, but I like to buy less but to be like a little bit more expensive and better, so I like to buy at COS, Arket or places like that. But I wouldn't consider those shops as luxury brands actually, because I mean, they are not known for that and then their price is also not that expensive, as Louis Vuitton or Chanel or things like that.

A: Ok so do you think that for you the price is an indicator if it is luxurious or not?

B: Yes, I would say so.

A: Why would you also say that these brands are luxury brands?

B: Well I think also because they are really elegant, well that's the idea I have about luxury brands

A: Okay, so when you said that you wanted to buy something luxurious, you talked more about the present. How about when you were a child? Was there something you were dreaming of? Like, one day when I'm older and have enough money, I want to purchase this or that?

B: Actually I think it was mostly clothes, I mean, yeah, I'm not so much into cars or things like that, so I think it was mostly clothes and travelling, for instance. Staying in really nice hotels and all that.

A: Okay and soon you will graduate, you will start to work full time and probably earn more money than now. Is there something that you would like to buy (product or service) and is luxurious?

B: Mmh, yes I would say travels for sure, clothes as well, but not jewelry, for instance, it's not that I don't like it, but it's something I don't really wear. So I wouldn't buy something like that... Yeah, I think it's mostly travels and clothes, but also IT stuff, like a new iPhone or something like that too.

A: And if you would purchase one of these luxury things, how do you think that would make you feel?

B: I mean, of course, I would be like happier at the moment, but maybe like, better in a way that maybe I would feel more confident I would say.

A: And why more confident?

B: Because, I'm not sure, I mean, I came to Denmark a few years ago, I have also travelled a bit and I'm graduating in June and things like that. So it would be a way to show me that all the things that I have done in the past, actually they are worth it and that you've earned that, finally.

A: So that would make you feel like you personally more confident. But how about when people would see you wearing these new luxury things, for example? How would that make you feel?

B: I mean, I don't know because honestly, I don't use Instagram. I have an account, but I just have one picture of me. It isn't something that I check every day. I don't use Snapchat. So actually, I'm not so into these things of looking at people and following people. And I mean, of course, I think I do it, but maybe unconsciously, you know? I think that's, yeah I actually wouldn't care about what people think. I mean, it's mostly for me, right? So, it wouldn't be to look better for others, I don't think so. Actually, maybe something would be different if I was single, or I don't know. But I don't know, because I think it's when you're single that you try to be more like, I mean, make sure you always are looking good and stuff like that. And once you are with someone, of course you always want to look good or you try to, but you don't always try to be on the top, let's say.

A: And you mentioned that, like, Instagram, social media, and that you don't use that too often. But what about when you go outside on the streets? And then people see you, like wearing your clothes?

B: Yeah, I mean, when I go out I always like to look nice. I mean, to be kind of well dressed, outfits and do my hair and stuff. So yeah, I mean, I like to look good, let's say, but it's to look good for me. And of course, when I'm walking on the street I know people would probably be just like: "oh, look at that guy, he looks a bit weird or he doesn't have a good style" or things like that, but I don't think about it all the time, is more for myself, actually, than to give a good impression to people.

A: And when, for example you said you would like to dress up and look better and all that, but how do you think luxury clothes would impact in that part of you?

B: I think when you buy luxury clothes, these are not clothes that you can buy anywhere, so it's also a way to differentiate yourself at some point, and show a bit more your personality, you know? But I think it's also changing because actually there are many brands, so you can also find different type of clothes, so you don't have to buy only luxury clothes to differentiate yourself.

A: And if you have to buy a luxury product, what would be the most important features for you?

B: I would say the material, so where the product is made, because if you buy something really expensive, maybe you don't want it to be manufactured in China or something like that. For example the quality that it is made and also, I would say the price.

A: In which sense would the price influence you?

B: Because I mean, sometimes, when you're looking at some luxury websites, you can see that they have a product, but actually, you can find kind of the same, but cheaper on another website. So I mean, if I can get the same thing, but for a cheaper price and I will get the cheapest one, right? It doesn't make sense to buy something expensive, if you can have the same for a lower price. I mean, the quality of the product has to be relevant compared to the price.

A: Another thing that you mentioned is that you wouldn't like it to be manufactured in China for example. Why do you think that is important for you?

B: Because we all know the working conditions and the workers in China, right?

They do not earn a lot of money so, for instance, if I want to purchase a French luxury brand I think I would go to a brand where I could check that the products are made in Europe, that the quality is really good, and that people weren't working too much in the factory and that they are earning enough money and things like that. So in a way, I would care about the ethical part of the luxury brand and it's something I would check and that would give me some extra value, because as I said, you can get similar things but at a cheaper price sometimes...

A: Ok, and are there any different brands that would fulfill these features that you consider and just mentioned?

B: Honestly, all of the luxury fashion brands that I know, I don't know enough if they completely fulfill my beliefs, so I wouldn't say a name right now because I think I would be wrong. Actually I don't have a name in my mind right now...

I think some of the things like that are hard, I mean for example Hermès or Louis Vuitton, should be able to fulfill everything, you know, because they are also like so big and have so many suppliers, I think it's tough to track everything. But actually, it was two months ago, I watch a documentary about Louis Vuitton and about their leather pollution and some people find out that actually Louis Vuitton, they were doing something weird with their suppliers in Eastern Europe regarding to leather. And then they talked about that, but actually I don't know if it was actually true. I mean, that was a little bit what people were saying, so, I mean, I don't know exactly what you think. But I think that's been with most of the brands, like Chanel and Louis Vuitton and that they are trying to actually improve their supply chain.

A: And what do you think about these changes? How do you evaluate that?

B: I think it's very important that they do that. And I think it also do that, because now with the new generations, if they want to purchase a product they have to trust the brands so I think that's why most of the brands are trying to change in a good way.

A: And if you had, for example, two identical products from two different brands, what would make the difference that you buy one over the other?

B: I mean, it depends on the product, but I think, for instance, it could be when I do my groceries, I would look at the price, but also if the product has an organic label or something like that. So actually, when I purchase something, most of the time, not always, I try to purchase something that is sustainable, I would say. So if the product has some features regarding to that, I would try to purchase that one instead.

A: Would that also apply if you're thinking about luxury products, because now you mentioned groceries, but what about if you think about a luxury product?

B: Yeah, for instance I know there are brands that make some sneakers that are made with materials from the ocean or that they are using recycled material for their shoes. So I think it's pretty cool to do that. So yeah, I think that I will prefer to buy a product from a brand like that, than doesn't harm the environment.

A: And how would you feel if you then would be wearing a product from a brand that is doing this initiative, that you just mentioned?

B: I think it would be, I don't know if "proud" is maybe too strong to say, but I really think it would be nice to have it, because I mean... we have to change our costumes and how we buy things, I think it's important that people take care of the earth and that when we buy things we also think about that too.

I mean, is not that I'm fighting for something, but at that I'm showing to people that is possible to buy products like that.

It would also make me feel rich to, not to influence but if maybe my friends would ask 'oh, where did you buy this jacket? Or this shirt?' it would be also a way to spread the good cause, let's say.

A: So then you would explain them about it?

B: Yeah, yeah.

A: And what would you think or feel when they would know about all of this?

B: Well, I mean...good. For instance, I don't eat meat. I mean, sometimes I choose, but I don't like, beef, or pork or chicken etc. And so when I meet someone new, and they asked me about that, I'm really happy to explain them why I'm doing that. But I'm not saying that most of people, they have to stop eating meat. But I'm just saying that maybe you should try to reduce or try to buy organic meat or things like that. It's also about showing them that there is a different path, right? And that maybe the one that we grew up with it, that's not the right one, and that we can change things. It's also a way - because some people sometimes they don't understand things and they think that we are all vegan, there are maybe some misunderstandings - so it's also a way to try to fight things and just to give them some info actually.

So going back to buy a luxury product, that would support all these thoughts, I would be happy to support a brand that cares about the environment.

A: If you would buy a luxury product, would you pay attention to the brand? Would you consider the brand name or more other type of things?

B: Yes, because I think behind every luxury brand there is a story, so I would also be interested to know about that.

A: Why would it be interesting to know about the story of the brand?

B: As I said in the beginning like, luxury brands are also a myth for many people, so it would be interesting to know the story behind. I don't know if it's because, for instance Yves Saint Laurent, Chanel, Jean Paul Gaultier they are luxury brands and I know their history and things like that, so maybe that's why I think it's interesting

or maybe because they are actually also French brands, so maybe it's easier for me to know that and maybe that's why I have this idea of their history behind.

A: Would you think the fact they are French could influence your perspective towards them in a way?

B: Well regarding these ones yes, I would say yes.

A: Would there be a difference if they weren't French but from another country?

B: Mmh, I don't know, maybe not because there are also famous Italian luxury brands, so I don't think so, but then of course I know less about them than from the French ones.

A: Okay, so it's more that the background information you have of the French brands that leads you to know more about them than the other ones, then?

B: Yes, I would say that

A: About the history and the myth, what does that actually mean to you? So for example, if you would purchase something from these brands?

B: I don't know, I think it's nice when you buy something that you know somehow. I mean, I don't know if it makes sense, because when you buy something from H&M or Zara, you don't think about that, but we you think about luxury brands, then you think about a myth or something like that, and I think it's nice to know what is behind. I don't know, I think it's just

fascinating to know what's happening to the brand and all that. Because for example Coco Chanel, she started from nothing and how she managed to get her brand running and all that or the stories during the World War II and the same for Yves Saint Laurent or Karl Lagerfeld. So I don't know, I'm also maybe a bit fascinated by this period of time, like 60 or 50 years ago, when they were all in Paris working hard, but also going out, drinking or everything they were doing. So yeah, I think it's nice to have this part of the story about the brand.

A: Do you think owning this luxury brands or something from this luxury brands would allow you to indicate to others that kind of person that you are?

B: Yeah, I think so. Because I mean, the clothes that you wear are also an indicator of your personality too. So I think wearing clothes is a way to express yourself, so I would say yes. I don't think you need to buy luxury brands to express yourself actually.

A: Why do you think so about the luxury brands?

B: I don't think it's adding too much to myself. Because if you buy something expensive, you can just get a better image of yourself, but it doesn't have to be expensive. I don't know, you can find something that you like in a lot of shops, you know? So seriously, I don't think luxury brands add anything especial.

A: How important is it for you that other people would see you that you bought this luxury brand, if you had for example?

B: But, I don't know, for instance, it's not that I won't ever wear a jacket or a T-shirt with the name of the brand written on the T-shirt, for example like 'Gucci' or something like really big. I don't know, I wouldn't feel comfortable to wear something like that, because I think it would be more to show off than anything else. So it would be more about the design of the clothes and the quality of the material or something like that. So I wouldn't like to buy something with the name of the brand on it or where you can see it a lot.

Visuals Part - Explanation.

B: I think the first one with the black baby is a bit strange [Louis Vuitton 1].

A: Why is it strange?

B: I don't know. Maybe because the baby doesn't look so happy... You have a baby on the floor like that... I think I don't really like the picture and also we have some small boats there, right? I mean, I don't if it makes sense, but it reminds me of refugees? Because the baby doesn't look happy, there are just these small boats as well. So I don't know...

A: Explanation of the visual

B: Well, it's nice to do that, but I think maybe it would have been better to take a different picture with this baby, in a different position and different clothes? Maybe if the baby would look to the front instead of just looking at the right. And maybe because the sweater the baby is wearing is a pullover for a man, so it's not supposed to be baby clothes.

A: But on overall, from the brand, what do you think when you hear this story behind and what they wanted to illustrate?

B: I think that's really cool to do that. And that's actually true that there are not enough black people in the luxury fashion industry. But that is something that, things are changing now. And I think you can see more diverse people. So and I think that's a really really good thing.

A: What do you think about the brand when you check the other ad and also compared to this one? [Louis Vuitton 2]

B: I mean, I really don't know what to think about the second ad. But I think I would pick the one with the baby. Because I think we have already seen many many pictures like that with the same type of woman, with that bag or some luxury products. So I think I prefer the one with the baby, because I think that's nice and also, when you are looking at advertisements, you have people but actually their skin is lighter, but it's sometimes also not the real skin. I think the skin of the baby it's really really dark, but actually I think that's also nice to have someone with the skin like that. Because it's not so frequent that we can see that in advertising.

A: And what do you think about a brand that is showing to support these values? How do you feel about this concept?

B: I think it's positive, I would be more into buying the products, than maybe with other ads like that [Louis Vuitton 2]. I mean, I obviously wouldn't buy a bag like that, for myself, but I mean, why not? So yeah, I would prefer the other one, with the baby.

B: So I also really like the one with the plastic things [Stella McCartney].

A: What do you like about them?

B: So the one with the plastic bottles, I like it, because it shows actually increased amount of pollution in the sea. So I think that's completely two opposite things, right? You have someone wearing luxury products in the middle of plastic bottles. So I like this contrast.

And then the other one from Balenciaga with the World Food Programme, what is the story behind?

A: Brief explanation about the visual [Balenciaga WFP]

B: Because when I look at the advertising from Dior, of course, is a real nice one. But for instance, I would prefer to buy something from Balenciaga than from Dior, if I had to choose now, because I think it's nice that you are engaged in thing like sustainable development. I think that's cool, it's nice. Because it's nice to buy something that you like, but I think it's also important to buy something that can have more impact than just the fact of buying something new.

A: In general, I also want to ask you, if for all these brands you also mentioned that are supporting these different initiatives or causes, what is your perception if you would then purchase something from this collection or this brand, knowing this? How would you feel?

B: I mean, again Balenciaga, I think it would be, depends on the product (T-shirt, jumper or a shirt...) but I think I would feel good to buy something which can contribute to like, more people, let's say.

A: And what do you think, after this, because before you were saying for example "they wouldn't add anything extra, luxury brands" because there are other ways to show your personality?

B: I wouldn't pay extra for a luxury product if I could find the same type of product with a similar quality or same design at a cheaper price. But I think these different initiatives, I mean, if you can buy two types of brand but you can buy a more expensive one but you can contribute to sustainable developments or other political or social things, yeah I would be better actually. If everyone could actually do that, I think there could really be a difference.

Debriefing the interview and thanking the interviewee

Respondent 4

Welcome and Briefing

A: First of all, we would like to talk about luxury in general. So what comes to your mind when you think about luxury?

B: If I just think about the word... I think about like, the best and nicest hotels or not necessarily what's like in an apartment or just a destination. Everything is just calm and there is a lot of like, water surrounding me. So like an island... That's, yeah, so like, I think when I think about it closer, I think about traveling and luxury together, let's say.

A: and could you to be a little bit more specific when you say the 'best', what does that mean to you?

B: The best for me would be something that makes me not have to, in terms of this travelling thing, something that makes me not think about anything else besides living in the moment, which means I don't have to worry about and cleaning my clothes or cleaning my room or spending too much money or too little money, because I'm going to luxury place, which means I can afford luxury stuff.

A: Okay, and how you would describe luxury as a concept? How would you put it in words?

B: Expensive with hopes that the quality resembles the price tag. So basically, I don't think first of quality when I think of luxury, I think more of price and then hoping that the quality matches the price.

A: Let's move over to a little bit more concrete question. Have you ever purchased something you consider as luxury?

B: Yes.

A: Can you tell us more about that?

A: My perfume, Chanel Chance. And I see my iPhone and my MacBook as luxury items, for example. And I think when I travel far away, I find that quite luxurious, because I know that most people might not be able to our age, travel for a month somewhere or, you know, go to the other side of the world and be able to afford it, let's say. So I see a trip to America, for example, as something luxurious.

A: And so how, when going back to the perfume or also your abroad travels, how often would you say you buy this perfume? Is it regularly or was it more one-time thing?

B: Usually once a year, because I always try to get the biggest bottle. So I don't have to get it more often. But I must say I usually get it actually when I travel overseas to get it in Duty Free or if I see a sale somewhere. So I would say once a year, technically speaking is when I do an investment or something a little more luxurious than I would otherwise.

A: And why would you consider this perfume luxury?

B: Because of the price tag, that is the first factor I think when I think of luxury. I think a perfume is alcohol based usually, which means it's not that the product is super luxurious on its own is something that can be created in a lab. It's more the work that goes behind it that I would think brings the luxury to this specific item, the perfume. So I think the price determines that usually.

A: And how do you feel when you manage to buy such a luxury product and you're wearing it?

B: It makes me feel very happy because I really love this this perfume. I can try any other perfume luxurious or not. But this specific one I just love it.

A: Why is it so much?

B: The smell... I think it fits me very well. But also, it's a perfume that I've been using for almost 10 years. And I've smelled other people wearing this perfume around me like a lot of good friends of mine have the same perfume and we all smell different. Does that make sense? So I find it very, I feel like with this specific perfume, it's almost like it's only mine. Because I've tried like a typical vanilla spray at a shop or something and smells like a freaking vanilla spray. In this case, I feel like this perfume allows me to kind of have my own identity.

Another product is glasses, expensive glasses. I find them luxurious.

A: So do you buy a lot of luxurious glasses?

B: Yes, but only glasses to see, not so much the sunglasses, but glasses to see, I've had before Ray Bans and now Tom Ford. So they're definitely higher range. And that's something that I associate also to durability in this case with luxury brand.

A: Why do you think or why do you consider these brands higher range?

B: The price again. And also, I'm kind of influenced I think by the people around me. So my family, for example, when I purchased my first pair of glasses, I was 12. So I was in make, I was making decisions may be based on looks, but my family guided me like, look at these brands, because they might be more durable, or they have a better or just more quality.

So I think these brands are of more quality, yes. So it's definitely by also what people around me might say something.

A: and when you wear the glasses, or you use the perfume, and people around you see you with these products, how do you feel or what do you think about it?

B: I don't really care that much about what people think. If it's, for example, my computer, since I have a newer computer right now, I almost feel guilty for having it, because I'm so young, and this computer is almost 2000 euros and but it's coming from my own, like, it's me deciding, like an idiot to purchase this computer because I want it. So I feel a little bit and I don't want to be judged by having such a higher range product.

Or same with my glasses, because they're Tom Ford. But for me, I feel like I respect the product more because it costed me so much money. So I don't care as much about what people think about it. I care more about, I treat these items with much more respect than other items that I own. My glasses, I would make sure that I'm not sitting on them, for example, or for getting them somewhere. Yeah, or I wear them less often than I should, maybe in order to not damage them or my computer like I'm cleaning it like constantly...

A: And then how do you feel when people make you compliments about your glasses, your perfume or your computer?

B: A little bit of shame sometimes...

A: But why a shame, because of this guilt you mentioned?

B: Because...part of me, I really enjoy sustainability I really enjoy... I don't think we need personal luxury, a lot of luxury items or a lot of items period, in order to be happy luxury or not. And since I know my current financial situation does not support a luxury lifestyle, I feel sometimes guilty. Like oh, when there's a friend of mine saying a comment about this, we're most likely in the same financial range. So if you told me 'Wow, nice computer' I will be like, 'yeah, like, you know, mind broke, so I had to get a new one'. I wouldn't ever say 'oh, I chose this one. My rose gold apple computer because I really wanted a rose gold apple computer'.

A: Did you have like a dream when you were kid for example saying, when I have money and I can afford it, I'm going to buy this luxury thing?

B: Yes, I wanted to have an apartment in New York City and a house in California. Because I was going to be a singer. But my dream in general was to be able to afford to do anything I want, anytime I want, luxury or not

luxury. That was the goal once I understood that I couldn't be a singer. But in general, I would say my dreams were related to in a way like things that you can only purchase with money. It wasn't like, I want to be a doctor and save people. It was like, okay, I want to be able to live the life I want however I wanted, which for me, meant having a nice apartment in the center of a city. Which that I think is luxury.

A: Why? Why would you think that is luxury?

B: Because I always had this feeling that if you live in the middle of the city, you're kind of better off you can go anywhere you want right now in Copenhagen I am 10 to 15 minutes away from every single point of the city, right. And it makes me feel luxurious in a way because I can basically like, my life becomes easier for being closer to the main cities and main streets of the city I live, you're more connected with things you think you might need. Like, in my street, I have five different food stores. But where I used to live, which was in the outskirts of the city, I had one food store five minutes away. And then to have big food stores, I had to go by bike, I could not go walking for example. So location, since location, depending on where you live the price range per se it's different. I would also say, again, price determines luxury for me. So if you pay a little more to live closer to the center, I feel more luxurious, that if I pay a little less to live further away. Even if the apartment looks more or less luxurious.

A: And for example, because you were saying that now with your financial status, and you're also student and all that, but soon you will graduate and you will get a job and probably you will earn more money than before. Is there something that you would buy like is there any luxury thing that you would buy then?

B: If I think of luxurious items that I would say definitely five, like five of my perfumes, different sizes [laughs]. No, but I would probably get good furniture for example, like for me, if I have a job in Copenhagen in most likely means that I will stay in Copenhagen for a little while. So I would like to invest in furniture that is, I mean, it could be from IKEA, but that just is more something I would consider more luxurious, something I would really want to have maybe like a nice white couch, you know, or something that otherwise I would never get right now because I know my lifestyle, I know also I cannot afford a nice white couch. I would also if not travel, which again, I see as the most luxurious thing.

A: Why do you think traveling is such a luxurious thing?

B: Because it costs a lot of money. You can travel cheaply for sure, but even when you travel cheaply means that you have savings, right? And as a student is hard to have savings. So if I can think about traveling long distances, and be able to not worry about money for six months. You know, that for me is a luxury: I've reached the point where I live a luxurious life because I can afford to do what I want to do.

A: How would you feel when for example, you could afford to do some traveling?

B: I hope I'll feel happy and accomplished. Accomplished, like yeah, because it would mean that I have reached the goal in my life. I will feel like okay, I can take this off of the list. I traveled to Indonesia, for example. But I'm also a little bit afraid of being never, like always wanting more. And the things I want might not bring me happiness. Because it's like, I know that if I have the best apartment in Copenhagen, it doesn't mean I'm going to be having, it just means I have the best I've ever been in Copenhagen. So it's also when you think about really like your feelings, it will make me happy to have the best apartment in Copenhagen for a month I will be crazy about it having parties all the time and then you will just be normal, you know becomes routinely. So I'm not sure if I would be happy long term, I know you would instantly be happier. If I buy a new car, a BMW with no roof top, I will be so happy. But maybe in three years and that car won't bring me happiness because I will just see it as my means of transport.

A: So your prospect, might change?

B: Exactly. I think luxury can be changed, like yeah, the perspective can change. When you think of luxury because something with anything, something that makes me happy today might not make me happy tomorrow something that I find luxurious today. If I'm way richer, and if the definition of luxury to me is the same: it's a

price indicator. Maybe a Chanel perfume won't have anything to do with the perfume level that costs me 300,000 euros a bottle. So I think it could also change.

A: But for example, on the other hand, you said you buy the perfume since 10 years so that your feelings about this perfume have not changed then?

B: The feelings have not changed. And I think they will never change but my perception of it as a luxury might change. Because if for me spending 100 euros a year on this perfume means nothing. I want to see it as an item as a luxury item. Because when I think luxury, I think of something that is usually not really occurrent. Something that I mean, this perfume is very current I buy it once a year. But because I know it takes me like some time to put the money aside to get this perfume. But if I don't have this issue maybe for me luxury wouldn't be having five cars like Kylie Jenner, instead of just bothering about this one perfume, because at that point, maybe I'll have 10 luxury perfumes.

A: I'm curious to know how would you feel when others would see you with like this nice apartment, or these cars and these perfumes and all these things?

B: At this moment, if I had all of this at age 25 in a way, I will feel ashamed, because I was not born in this kind of mentality. If I think of my family, my mother was born in a luxurious environment, my dad as well. To the point in which my mother used to wear like maybe she had a Gucci jacket at age 14. So for me, since I've never had those things and that age, I see it as something not to really be proud of because I know it's not something necessary. If that makes sense. So for me, I never see a luxury as something that I need in my life, I see it as like an extra. My mother now that she has no money, I think she will definitely miss having this luxurious lifestyle because you've been accommodated to this lifestyle is your just your she probably didn't call it luxury lifestyle. She just was in it, though. So for me to think of me having this lifestyle is almost a little bit shameful, because I know, it's not a necessary thing in my life. But I would also be happy at specific times throughout this lifestyle.

A: And do you think that this feeling of being guilty would change if you then have your job that pays great? Like you are not a student anymore, you have the money and therefore you spend it?

B: I think it will, I will feel less ashamed. Because if I'm not 25, when this happens, of course, I don't have to like explain why I have this money, blah, blah. But I would also think as someone that really, I feel a lot of pain for people around me all the time. If someone is sad, I feel sad, those kinds of things, like if I were to have a financial situation that was very high, I do believe I wouldn't have kept it all to myself.

And in order to do that, I will feel less guilty. So I could get a private jet, ultimate level of luxury, right? But if I know that with this private jet, first of all, I might give away like, let it be used for free for families in need or something, then I don't mind going to the Maldives for the weekend with this private jet. But if I'm just using it for selfish purposes, I know it's not a need for me to have this. So I don't think I would ever spend the money on it.

A: I think you said if you would achieve this, it would make you feel like it would give you a feeling of accomplishment somehow?

B: In a way Yes. Because as I said, my mother had a different lifestyle, which means my grandparents also had a different lifestyle. And they had to fight to keep this lifestyle because they were raised in North Africa, and then were kicked out of North Africa. So they started from zero again. And I know how hard they worked to give their kids money to give us a better life. So I would kind of want to reproduce that circle. And the only way to do that sometimes is through making money, thus being able to have some luxury stuff like going to private schools or private education that can also be seen as luxury..., so I would feel accomplished if I reach financial point that my family has achieved in the past. Because it would be like a sense of pride almost.

A: And how would luxury products interact in that?

B: It would be I think, very much related to lifestyle. So apartment or home, basically. Being able to spend whatever I want on food for my kids, if I have kids. So if I want to buy a product like a tomato that costed 15

DKK more per item, because I know it's better for someone's health, I'd rather buy that, you know, so that for me would also be luxurious. And I think also I would have less things but better-quality ones. So I will not have 10 knives, I would have three knives that are amazing knives that costed maybe 3000 euros a knife, but still. So I would see that as luxury. I don't think my lifestyle would change. I will just think what I have now will just get better. I don't think I will have now a wall filled with mirrors and crazy things that cost 400 [euros]... It's not in my interest right now. So I think I would just my life will not change much, but the quality of the things surrounding my life would change. And I would feel good. But as I said, I think it will just be for a little bit. As I said, right after purchasing this item you would like wow, I'm cutting this bread with a Japanese knife. Right? Wow. But then after one week, you'll be like, I just need to cut bread. You wouldn't add value to this product just by the price tag basically. But then this product does the same thing as one that is cheaper just may be better or more adorable or better quality...

A: Okay, if you were to buy a luxury product, what would be the most important features for you?

B: Well, quality if its purchasing something material.... Because if not, I don't see the point of luxury. And if it's an experience, like the hotel or something like that, I would think the service, like the quality of the service again, so I think for me, really, it's everything it's about quality.

If I buy this Chanel perfume that I find it's very luxurious, but I know that the quality of it or the products they're using actually hurts me, health wise, then I might not see it as a luxurious product anymore. So if the quality I know is good, and I know maybe it's not tested on animals, maybe this maybe that maybe the chemicals used? Or very, they selected that I think wow, this quality is definitely worth it. For me that is already a more luxurious product. So I think quality is the biggest factor for.

A: How is your relationship to price because you mentioned before that for you, price indicates that something is luxurious. So yeah, how about it when you would buy a luxury product?

B: I would think usually the more expensive it is, generally speaking, the better the quality is, which means that for me, I see it as a higher product. Like, you can go to the same store, even a low brand like Zara. For example, you may go to Zara and find a pair of boots for 20 euros and a pair of boots for 150 euros. Unconsciously my brain already says 150 euros. Wow, that's expensive. But there must be a reason. Right? What is that reason? Quality? That was the first thing that would come into my mind.

A: So would it be more likely if you have different products with a different price that you would buy the more expensive one? Or how would you evaluate that?

B: I learned something in a marketing class, that was very interesting to me, it was very unrelated, but it's very related at the same time. When you have to give the tips in marketing, they found that it works way better if you give like four numbers of percentages that you can give, and then you say others, so the consumer can choose if they want to give a different percentage. And usually they found that the most used percentage is the third one, not the most expensive one and not the second cheap one. And then compare that with the prices of wine and how they price wines at restaurants and what wines are usually the most used. And it's the same kind of thing, that third tier, it's never the fourth is never the second and unless you're real on a budget and then it will never be the first. So I don't think the most expensive is always the best quality. I just think the more expensive a product is, I would expect more quality. I don't think I would purchase with this kind of feeling because I was educated on this basis. I'm not sure if I would take the most expensive because I would think is this really worth it? But if I see the same similar pair of boots without a little detail for a 120 euros and maybe I'll choose that one because I'll be like it doesn't really seem that different. And that became this extra. But the quality would still be the same because it's over 100 years, right?

A: Are there any or different brands that would fulfill these features that you consider, that you just mentioned?

B: Chanel, for example with perfumes. I would only be able to say with beauty items because I'm really not, I don't think like an apple computer is a luxury thing. I think the Apple Computer I chose within Apple is a

luxurious one. So if I just had to think about a luxury brand, I would say all the brands that are regarded as the most fashionable brands to have that most people don't have access to so like fashion brands like Gucci, Prada, Chanel... You know that are marketing only a certain group of people that can only afford these kinds of products. I would say they are the most luxurious, I haven't tested their quality for anything else besides the perfume. But through what as a consumer has been sold to me, I would say those kinds of brands are the most fashionable brands that are shown in newspapers like magazine like fashion magazines or things like that are the most luxurious ones, even within makeup. Like in makeup, these brands are still the most expensive makeup brands even though they are not only brands that do makeup, so Mac which is a brand that only does makeup is considered cheaper than Chanel or Tom Ford or any of those, but they're still considered like more quality based, even though it's not the one thing the company does. So it's very interesting, I don't know.

A: So you're mentioning these brands because of the quality that you think they have or?

B: Because of what I've learned, like because of the quality that has been connected to these brands, you know, through newspapers magazines, through basically the conditioning I've had from the society that we live in.

A: And if you think besides that, like would you consider like more from your own perspective, do you have any brands that you consider as luxurious even if like the society doesn't see or if it's not so well known as a society that they think they are luxury?

B: By the definition of quality through luxury, yes. For example, I use I did get it for free but it's not a very expensive product. It's this cream brand called... I don't remember the name now, but it's a Korean and French brand. And they're vegan and they're very nice on my skin for example and for me I have a very sensitive skin I get rashes and eczema and things like that are easily so that quality of a product that doesn't cause me these things to me is very important, much more than a Chanel makeup remover that contains alcohol that makes my skin, for example breakout or be more sensitive. So if we think quality like, if it's just in my own opinion about what I think is luxurious in my life right now, I would say this brand. Which is again, the range I think for makeup remover is 10 euros, which is pricier than Maybelline and L'Oréal, but so that's why I see it as more luxurious as well. But I see it has more of a quality than a more expensive brand, because I trust this brand, but also because I've seen the quality of the brand. Like my cousin work that Kiehl's, so I got free products, which are quite expensive. And then speaking about quality, I am way happier with this cheaper brand than the more expensive one. I wouldn't ever purchase on my own the Kiehl's stuff, but I would have purchased on my own again, things from this brand. Which I usually never do since I just get free stuff. So it's a that to me is also a way of saying, do I like the product and I had I attribute at some quality to it, right?

A: Okay. What do you think about this brand like when you're using it and when you buy it?

B: I feel like I don't have to compromise my beliefs for example, in animal testing or things like that in order to have a quality product. There is that aspect of you know, consciousness that is the thing with Lush, like I haven't bought a shampoo in a container for almost three years now. So I think and the product actually works much better without a packaging than whatever other shampoo I might have tried. So I would also think that because of the environmental friendliness of it, I also attribute it a more luxurious field, which usually like for someone if there is no packaging, there isn't luxury. But I actually find them that first of all, the product itself looks better is not just the white soap, it's like something with glitter and orange and bright blue and something a bit more fun. But also, I know that my money goes directly to the product, not to the packaging. So I attribute more quality. Because when I buy my Chanel perfume, I know what's inside is not much different than Pacha perfume or then the little spray in the store. I know that what I'm paying for is also the look of the bottle. When you take up the look of it. What do you pay for? So again, quality.

A: Because you just said that you don't feel like you're compromising any of your beliefs. And that makes you feel like, you think that this is also more luxurious?

B: Yeah. Because if it's not, the fact that it doesn't compromise my beliefs is the addition of this quality, kind of gives me a sense of more luxury, because then I know that if the price tag of the shampoo is a little more expensive than one that is bottled, the quality, then the price reflects the quality. So it's kind of weird connection of like, since I believe price and quality are related. If you take away the packaging, which I believe from my marketing background, it's the price the most pricey things in the process of creating the product, then the quality of that product would be higher.

A: But because you said also you care about things like that it's not tested on animals and it doesn't harm the environment...Because I think you also said that you attribute this to more being more luxurious?

B: Yes, but because again, like, since I see luxury as quality, okay? If the price attributed to that quality is higher in my head, it's like okay, then it's more luxurious, because I know that all that money that I'm paying went to the product creation, which means that that product is at a higher level than a cheaper one that I can get at the store with plastic packaging or crystal packaging.

A: But how is this sustainability and the animal testing playing in this connection?

B: Animal testing, not so much I think, but sustainability is definitely a factor because when you see when you go to Lush, or you see any sort of store that sells something not packaged, it already feels a little less luxurious, just by the looks, because luxury I think is something that you see, it's I cannot feel luxury, personally. I mean, maybe if I touch something with Cashmere, but I don't own anything with Cashmere, so I don't know how it feels. But in this case of a perfume or a shampoo, the feel of it won't tell me this is a luxury or not but the looks of it will. So if I get this beautiful little potion, looking like a bottle. That is made of glass, I'll be like, 'Uuuuh' at first, but then if I paid 30 euros for it, I know 20 of them went to the packaging minimum. But if I buy a product that does the same thing that this product that I just mentioned us for me, that costed 20 euros and there's no packaging, my brain is going to think: there was more than went into this product than the other one. So I find it more luxurious.

A: Now if you like have to buy or you want to buy a luxurious product, what are your priorities? Like if you compare those two things, quality and price and your beliefs and sustainability?

B: I think my priority right now at my current age is to be a little more conscious, at this exact moment. That is conditioned through my studies, because I also did a minor in sustainable business and this is conditioned also by what I like about this world, like what I want to work etc. If I have to take the Chanel example, it would be hard for me to say: I won't buy the Chanel perfume because it's not sustainable, because it's something I love. But if Chanel finds a way, for example, to use a packaging, which is already, glass is already kind of sustainable, because you can break it and remake it. But if I can, if I see that the entire process is sustainable, let's say so, not only environmentally speaking but also socially speaking, and all these things for me, I'm going to regard this brand way higher, then just by looking at the packaging and saying, 'Oh, this bottle is gorgeous'. So for me, I do believe that, it might not be hand in hand with luxury and might just be my personal opinion towards a brand. But I would regard a brand, like I would see them as a better brand, if they encompass sustainability, because I know it's hard to do it in business. So if they did it, it means that once they care about the consumer, they care about the world, and they want to financially be able to produce their product for 30 or 40 more years. So if a product is sustainable, I kind of see it as something that won't damage my life.

A: But that's more if you compare two brands to another.

B: Yes

A: But like if you just think about the luxurious product, and so what would be your first incentive, like 'oh high quality, this is a great price' or more the sustainability?

B: High quality, because again, with traveling, for example, sustainability and traveling don't really go hand in hand, at least at this point in time. So I would say quality would go first. Like I said, the Chanel thing, even if it wasn't sustainable, I was still purchase it right now. Unless they find a solution, then I will purchase the

solution. So I would say through the pricing, I can find what is luxurious and I defined luxurious as the best quality product I can afford or I can purchase.

A: I have one last question about this, if you for example, Chanel would develop this new sustainable solution and offers the same price and quality, how would you feel if you would buy this product?

B: I would feel pride, actually. And it's kind of in a way what I feel with this computer because even though this computer is flashy, was made 100% with recyclable aluminum, which is the first computer that has ever been made with that. To be honest, it was the reason also why I bought it. But basically, the first thing when I saw this computer was not sustainability. It was like, wow, fuck it's expensive. And then it was 'Oh, the color' again, packaging. It's all then wait, it says it sustainable. And when I saw that I before I saw that I was considering Should I buy the older MacBook Air? Which is the typical that everyone has? For almost 1000 euros less? Or should I get this one? And then I thought okay, well, this one is newer. So the quality makes sense to get now instead of getting an older computer that will crash in three years. But also it's made with sustainable products. So I feel a little more enticed to buy this product. So I would always pick, if I have the choice and the quality is the same, I would pick sustainable over not, because in my head, why would I not pick the sustainable alternative?

A: And did you tell someone when you bought this computer about all of this?

B: Well, first I told my roommates because they laughed at me for the color, they could not believe I bought a pink computer even though it's rose gold. But then I told them, and they couldn't care less about this. And for me, it was kind of like, in a way, something that made me not feel ashamed about these computers. So it was kind of like a, 'you did good'. You got something that actually is made from recycled computers or aluminum which means even though you're still producing waste, you're producing waste from a recyclable waste. Or like it's more a little bit more circular, let's say than the current linear economy we have

A: Yeah, that's great. You also bought this computer because it was like align with your own?

B: Yes, it wasn't the main factor. Because it wasn't the first thing I saw. But I can tell you for sure, that that definitely made me want to spend my savings more in that from here than in another computer. And that's the reason I paid the full price. If not, I would not have paid the extra price. Like I know I needed a computer and I found the most sustainable solution out of the computers I wanted to buy. I didn't want to buy a Windows computer wanted an Apple Computer and it turned out that this new computer that had just been really is that I had no idea about was made out of elements like recycled aluminum. So they got me there you know, they made me pay almost 1000 euros just for this little sustainability thing.

A: And that's why you also think it's luxury because you may find it more...?

B: Yeah, like maybe the process of recycling never seems luxurious to people when you talk about it right? But I think it's where they will be the most amount of benefit financially speaking that someone can make in the future 20-30 years. So to me I don't see it as something un-luxurious, because I know the big impact it can have financially speaking like you can make a lot of money. Think about brands like H&M, Weekday made so much money by having instead of what was the Black Friday they had a Green Friday. Only that H&M brand, which meant every product that is the most like that is made of recycled products are sustainable cotton or something was 30 to 40% off. Something like that to me, I would purchase something there and before I purchase something in H&M, even though it is the same exact company, because I see it and I perceive this company Weekday, again same as H&M, as more sustainable. So I didn't go to Black Friday well technically speaking I didn't buy anything because I was broke, but I would have when I saw that, I literally took a picture and sent it to my roommates, like 'wow guys'. Same thing when I went to H&M like I don't know last year and they gave me a used plastic bag and they made me pay for it and I was like...I left happy that store guys okay for paying more. So if I say again luxury means higher prices means quality blah blah. I would pay happily more if I think luxury fits my standards and, in this case, buying this disgusting plastic bag fit my luxury standards because it was more costly as well.

A: Interesting... One last question. So when people would see you with this like new laptop or new sustainable luxury things, how would you feel?

B: I feel a little more proud. Yeah, because I actually not I was like, wait, but I remember I wasn't, that ashamed I bought this computer. And that was because of the sustainability factor that I completely forgot before. I wouldn't be a little more proud. I would still maybe feel again, not ashamed, but a little bit uncomfortable because again, my age, purchasing something that I think is very expensive, or very luxurious, but it makes me feel like I had a reason to purchase this, right? More so than just my own personal selfish reason, which is you need a new computer, which no one needs a new computer you can go to the library and use a computer. So that's the reason why I felt bad, like you don't need it, but then oh, it also stating this, and it's more expensive while it states this. We don't know why, but it is. So I'll buy it. Because I find it that the quality must be better then.

A: I would like to just quickly come back to simply as talked about before... So if you have two products from different brands, but like with the more or less the same feature, you said that you would choose like, for example, the sustainable option over the other one? Is there any other feature of a product that you would also consider, if you buy one or the other? Besides sustainability?

B: If I do not know the product, let's say I'm going shopping for Japanese knives. I don't know which one is better, but I know I wanted a Japanese knife at some point in my life. So I will just look at them. And honestly the one that looks more appealing to me physically just from appearance will be the one that will get, like I did with this big computer at first.

First thing I see is the first thing I want and then I learned more about the product and then I'll make a maybe a better decision about it. So the first thing that would attract me to this product would be 'Wow, this knife is all silver shiny', and the other one has a little bit of black. Maybe I'll look at the silver one. And then when I asked someone that works there, because of course if I'm going to buy something expensive, I am taking the person who works there for 30 minutes and talk to them about the product. And I would tell them like tell me more about these characteristics and tell me which one is the best and if I learned that the black one is better maybe I will reconsider. Quality still plays an important part. So even if I don't see the product, like if I've never seen this probably before I used it, I would first go by looks but then I would probably investigate a little more. If it's something of luxury that it's not like buying a pair of leggings at H&M that you can do every day of your life, you know this is like a Japanese knife, guys!

A: Would the brand change anything so if you to buy a Japanese knife?

B: Yes, of course. I mean probably if you look at different knives you would also look at different brands. Reputation for sure. [sw9] The same thing with Apple, the reasons why I have had Apple for the last 10 years, it started because of reputation, if not I would not have known of Apple right? With the Japanese knives, as someone that loves cooking and that spends a lot of time watching cooking videos and stuff, I might know already a few brands so I would look at them. But I still think that when I first enter a store, unless it if it's the brand store for sure it has to do with reputation. If I go to Apple it's because I know about it, but if I go to El Giganten, then I will look for sure first by what I feel like it's appealing. So there is this idea of reputation as well. If I am just purchasing a knife and not in a said brand and it's just their store, I would just first look at visual stuff, which is why marketing exists. And then I would look at the quality and the reputation. But it should go hand in hand with quality usually the reputation or one would hope so at least.

A: Do you pay attention to the brands that when you would purchase a luxury product?

B: I don't think I don't personally as I said before, I do think that quality in terms of my perfumes, Chanel will always be it, but it doesn't mean that because I like this perfume from Chanel, I will want their coat or I will want their shoes. Because I still think that brands that produce many different things, like for example I cannot trust their shoes because they have a good water bottle, right? I should be able to, but I'm not sure because I will trust once I see the quality.

A: How important it is for you that other people see that you bought this luxury thing?

B: I couldn't care less. Honestly, because it gives me more trouble like for people to know that I have a luxury item, it makes me feel weird, like I don't deserve this, you know?

A: Okay, so we move to the last part of the interview. [Explanation about the visual part]

B: Oh! her! [excited]

A: Okay, we wanted to ask you why?

B: I already know, because Stella McCartney is the only like luxury brand that is sustainable out of the ones that you're showing me right now that I know

B: Okay, why is it striking you so much?

B: To be honest, I didn't even see the picture, I just saw the name and I already knew but because I know, from background knowledge let's say.

I don't know acne studios, to be honest, this is Dior, Louis Vuitton...

The Stella McCartney thing, as without even seeing the picture, which is two people filled with plastic, I already know I would trust them more, but because I've seen interviews of her talking about how she's vegan from like years and years and how she is the only high fashion brand that does this.

About Balenciaga [Balenciaga WFP visual] I see this as a CSR thing, I don't see this like... Basically, I see this as corporate citizenship which means this company understands the needs of humanity so they're changing everything from within [referring to Stella McCartney] But Balenciaga right now is just trying to make a name for themselves like us 'Oh they're working with that, the World Food Program or whatever'. They just want attention to be told that they're doing well because I can tell you that this coat [Balenciaga visual 2] is most likely not done from sustainable materials nor their supply chain is done with, you know, with sustainable thought behind it.

And this I just learned very recently this difference between Corporate Social Responsibility, which is kind of more philanthropic 'I want to look good, so I will do something' but it doesn't mean you're changing your work practices, right? And Stella McCartney, I know they breathe and live sustainability meaning I'm sure that, well I'm trusting them a lot saying this I haven't done my research of course, but I will tell you that if you look at these two different supply chains, this one [Stella McCartney] will be more sustainable than this one [Balenciaga]. At least from the reputation they have.

Now I can say from the other pictures I do not see really like, when I look at the Louis Vuitton one [Louis Vuitton 1], I really don't see a connection with sustainability whatsoever. So in that sense, I wouldn't say anything I don't really understand that would be to one. What the heck is happening here? [confused] I just see an oversized very dark baby wearing like yeah, like you know, a small black baby wearing an oversized sweater. I don't really understand why.

The Dior one with I think it's with Charlize Theron, or something like that. It definitely looks like the most luxurious from a French side of things, let's say it looks like it's in Versailles. So it definitely shows that you know, they had to book this place in order to get only this shot. Meanwhile, the Stella McCartney one, they just went to a place with trash. This one you barely can see what's happening. Like, it's just you can take this picture in my house, you know? [Balenciaga 2] And this one, they're trying to appear like a street like but you'd obviously it's not working when you have a coat that cost \$4,000 [Balenciaga 1]

A: I wanted to ask you, if you would purchase something from Stella McCartney how would you feel?

B: I will not feel ashamed for spending the money because I would know that the quality matches also my second criteria, which is the environment or sustainability of something. But with everything here like with Balenciaga just by looking at them I would feel ashamed but because I know that they're just doing this for policy, which is good because they're still helping people, but they're still not helping the right people they should be helping within their organization, which would be ensuring that there is no child labor entering you know, the, of course here they're saying wow World Food Program. But that doesn't relate to anything

Balenciaga does, the company is not forced to feed people, they're forced to ensure that the quality of work is good. So Stella McCartney is like, I don't know if the quality of people's life is good, but I know that they're fixing a problem through all of their clothing not through just a yellow t-shirt that costed them five euros to make, that just says Balenciaga and the icon of the company, basically.

A: So how would you evaluate these brands based on it?

B: Right now, just by this picture, I really don't even want to go into a store from them [Balenciaga].

A: [Explanation about Louis Vuitton visual 1]

I think the point is good, but I don't think putting a kid with adult clothing is going to showcase that a black kid can be wearing Louis Vuitton, it actually kind of showcases that this to me when I saw the boats on the side and stuff that, I thought this kid is a refugee wearing an oversized coat with black silhouettes on it. So I kind of feel like okay, again, the black, with the black references and but saying, having said that, I'm sure if it was a video would be different, because right here he's trying to depict a story, is not as easy as this [Stella McCartney] where you know, there is an issue with plastic. Here is tougher. I don't think he did a good job representing his values in this picture. That's just my personal opinion.

A: But and based on what you just said, how would you then evaluate the brand based on that? What would be your perception of it?

I would think that they have no idea honestly, like, how to be tangible to if you want to combat social inequality, for example, why don't you have these kids dressed with the same clothes a little white kid would be wearing and during a photoshoot. Why are you dressing him with something that is not made for him as it like, because then it kind of like, it might take away kind of from the story that he's trying to say. If you had three little kids of all sorts of colors playing dressing with the Louis Vuitton clothes. It would, I think it would be more impactful as a picture, which is again, something that you just quickly see once it's not a video where you hear and I would think it would have been a little more, it would have depicted his idea more because I would never have thought that this was made by him and I know his work, or well, I've heard of his work.

But compared to this picture [Louis Vuitton 2], it seems like more normal for Louis Vuitton of here you see what a luxury brand is trying to sell you: a product with an actress with a nice dress. Now, if you want to show that kids can also like you know that parents should buy for their kids that we don't close then have little kids in their families playing dress like that, you know, not a little kid playing with paper boat. Like literally, if you're if you can afford to wear your dad sweater. You're not playing with paper boats?

That's just my very critical eyes.

A: How would you think about the brand? If you know this and without judging the image?

B: That it's a horrible coat, seriously, that's the truth. When I wouldn't before you ask me the questions, I really gave you the first thought I had and everything like this to me, I will not understand the purpose of that picture.

B: [Pointing at Balenciaga 2 again] I would think that the youth might be more appealed to this one, for example, because they're trying to be a little more 'street', you know?

A: When you say the youth...?

B: Like yeah, like I would say anyone that it's maybe until like their 30s you know, like, let's say anything below 30 you might feel like this represents you more than this, right? That's what they're trying. But I also believe that if you're a luxury brand, your market is not street, your market is people that... like my grandmother, for example, will never buy this coat if she saw this in this. Because for her luxury means this [Dior] And now for me, luxury means exactly, you know, quality and or sustainability, right? If there is that option. I cannot see that there is quality from this place [Balenciaga 2], because I actually know how much money this people must be making [Balenciaga 2]. And they're putting their clothes on this context that I know if I was wearing this coat, I would never be able to be like someone that sleeps on the streets. You know what I mean?

Like it makes the context to me here it's almost like insulting [Balenciaga 2]. Okay, like why are you like of course you can wear a coat and it doesn't matter where or you can be whoever you want to be. But why are you trying to sell it as something street when the price tag does not match that?

A: I think we're done. I mean, it was very interesting. Would you like to add anything at the end?

B: Well, I would like to add that I perceive that luxury for us, for me, for younger people, is more like a day to day thing. Like, we are like, when my grandparents were buying something luxurious, right, no one else was going to have it. But if I buy a business class ticket, they would be 10 more people in that same business class. You know, like it's like now for us luxury is just like an additional step because there is so much consumerism is so huge for like every single business is like every single target market whether there is Fotex, Irma, all these places right there trying to show you that there are more luxurious than Netto by having more brands, by having more expensive prices. And then on your daily life you're making luxurious decisions, then is not only for specific item is also like this person telling you she's spending a little more money for tomatoes and avocados every day. That for her is luxury because now for us, like we want to feel like we're I don't know like I don't know how to say this maybe you're just maybe I mean when you interesting thing to chat right now but yeah, it's just like it's like a way of making yourself like a bit unique.

Yeah, compared to you can also like, if you feel like you're doing the responsible choice usually or the ethical choice you feel happier, right? Like you feel like, if I had the choice of working for Greenpeace or working for Maersk, if I can work for Greenpeace, I'm going to feel way more ethical way more responsible for the world we live in. So it's kind of like a tab on your shoulders, you know. So if you buy the organic stuff, even though literally you can buy the organic stuff the soil is the same. Even if you don't put a pesticide on that thing the water has some residue is Indian is all bullshit, but somehow, I still value it as better meaning more luxurious, right?

Debriefing the interview and thanking the interviewee

Respondent 5

Welcome and Briefing

A: Let's start with luxury in general. When you hear the word luxury, what is the first thing that comes to your mind?

B: About luxury? Well, some very expensive clothes brands, ships like these yachts? That's luxury. Private planes. That's luxury.

But also, I think in general, just having a lot more than you actually need. Like luxury things are things that really don't have any like you could buy them cheaper, and it would not make any difference in terms of the usage. It's just about having a very fancy product.

A: Okay. Sounds good. Interesting. So if you think about it, what would you say luxury means in general to you, personally?

B: Well, that's a good question, because I'm a student, so I obviously don't have that much money to spend on luxurious things. So I think luxury, for me would be like, yeah, if I want to do something very good for myself. And I have a fancy dinner for example, that is for me luxury that you would not grant for yourself every day

because you obviously don't have the money. Or if I don't know, it's my birthday and I buy one piece of very expensive clothes. which I usually would not buy because it's very expensive, but it's my birthday. And I want to treat myself.

A: so you would say it's something for special occasions?

B: Yes.

A: And to like go over to a more hands on approach. Have you ever purchased something you consider as luxurious?

B: I have a horse. Does that count?

A: If that's a luxury for you. It's about your personal opinion, we are not talking about the perception of other people.

B: I think some, on some occasions, I bought, like, for example, shoes that were expensive, which I did not need, but I wanted to have them. So I would say that was probably luxury. And I mean, my horse is also kind of a luxury. It is just expensive, and doesn't give me that much. Because it's in Germany and I'm here. But I really love my horse. So yeah.

A: Okay. And so when we go back for the shoe example shoes example. Well do you remember why you bought them? Or was it was it also for a special occasion?

B: Well, sometimes I tend to buy things that I don't really need, because I'm having like a really rough week, for example. And then I just want to do something good for myself. Because the rest kind of sucks and then I kind of do something for yourself and buy some nice shoes. You don't really need to, but I am going to buy them to make me feel better, I guess.

A: I wanted to ask you, when you buy these things like this, luxurious expensive things as you said, How does that make you feel?

B: Um, I mean, I would say generally, when you go shopping, especially for clothes, and stuff like that, it gives you a good feeling afterwards, because you have something physical to take home. And I think it's even better than having like an expensive meal or something. Because it's like something physically that you can still look at afterwards.

A: Okay. So if you buy a luxurious product, it gives you a good feeling long term.

B: No, I wouldn't say it's long term, it's maybe for a couple of days. Or if it's clothes or something, it's for the first couple of times you wear it, and then you could use it and then you want something new, right? So

A: So it stops feeling special?

B: No, it doesn't stop feeling special it's just less special than at the beginning.

A: Okay. But why does luxury or buying luxury shoes, for example, make you feel more special or good?

B: Then opposed to what?

A: Well, why does it make me feel special, in general? Or does it make you feel special?

B: I don't know. It's just not an everyday thing. It just adds value to your life.

A: Okay. When you were a child, do you remember a time when you really dreamt of purchasing something when you're older when you have money?

B: A horse.

A: Okay.

B: That's, that's the only thing I remember.

A: Okay. So and it seems like you fulfilled that dream. So how did that feel?

B: Very well. Like I'm feeling very good with it. Fulfilling a childhood dream is a nice thing, right?

A: Mm. Why do you think your horses is luxurious?

B: Because it's not an everyday thing. I mean, not everybody has a horse. And that's just my favorite hobby to ride horses. And as long as I can remember, I wanted to have a horse. And I have a horse, so this is great. Yeah. It is kind of a luxury because it's expensive, and it's not really necessary. But it adds value to my life again, so.

A: Okay. And how do you feel when other people see you like with your horse or with your luxury shoes, or something luxurious?

B: I mean, here, I got the question a lot. So you have a horse. You're the first person I've met that has a horse. Apparently. So in Denmark it is very expensive. In Germany, it's okay expensive. So they're like, so you are rich or what? I'm like, No, but I just I think I just invest money that I could invest in something else, rather than the horse. And then a couple of other things that maybe other people would prefer. I think it's also about having preferences, like what you want to invest your money in. I think some people might prefer to have a lot of fancy clothes, but then the in a city apartment because it is their personal preference.

A: Okay. And what about the shoes? Like when you wear the shoes? How does? Do you care what others think? Or maybe say about the shoes when you wear them?

B: I mean, of course, it's nice to get compliments for, I'd like to get a compliments for new clothes and new shoes. Obviously, everyone likes to get compliments. So we have that's a nice side effect I would say, of course, you want to have something new and nobody recognizes you are kind of like, Uh huh. Yeah, it's the same if you go to the hairdresser, and you have a nice new color and nobody notices it. So I would, I would think it also. Yeah, that's also another reason why. I mean, it's not the reason why I bought the shoes in the first place because I bought them for myself. Not because of other seeing them. But it's a nice side effect that you get compliments. If that makes sense.

A: Yes, for sure. Ok. So now, we talked already about your childhood. And you already fulfilled that dream. So that's right. And what about looking into the future? And if you think I mean, you're going to graduate soon and then you're going to have a good job with a good salary. One day, you will earn a lot of money, is there something that I would like to have in the future.

B: Second horse.

A: Okay.

B: I mean, yeah, I think a lot of people would probably say they want to buy a house and nice car and stuff, I don't really care that much about these things. But obviously I want to have a certain standard of life. Like, for me, it's probably more about that I can, like travel to wherever I want to travel to. So that is also a luxury to just say, I can go on vacation to say, Mexico or wherever. It is also luxury. So that is something that I want to be sure of in my future that I can like afford that. Yeah.

A: And why would you think that, for example, having these freedom to or these ability to travel whenever you want to wherever you want is luxurious?

B: Oh, because there's a lot of places I want to see. And I mean, I know a lot of people who cannot just say I'm gonna go to South America for four weeks, and do whatever. So it's just something. I mean, I'm, I don't think it's a luxury because somebody else can not do it. But just because I have the possibility to have these experiences for myself.

A: Okay. And how would you feel if you could be able to do all of this?

B: How would I feel? Happy I guess, fulfilled. I think experiences make you feel fulfilled, because probably just staying somewhere and working all of your life will not make you fulfilled. And I so I think a lot of people would say I want to have a family it makes me feel complete. And I am more like I want to have my experiences. Yeah, to feel that way.

A: Yeah, yeah. Okay, I think we can move on to the next question. So if you were about to buy on a luxurious product, service, or also an experience? What would be the most important features for you?

B: In terms of what, can you be more precise?

A: Like, what characteristics would you evaluate? And would help you to the determine, if you would buy that product or not?

B: Okay, I think we have to distinguish between the kind of product because if it's, if it's a material product, then it's a lot about the presentation of the product, I think. And also, like, if you, for example, buy a very

expensive piece of clothes, then you want a certain level of like, it's, if it's in a like in a dark place, like hidden somewhere in a last row, and nobody really helps you find it and stuff. It's not a nice experience. And I think the experience around the product is something very important for a luxurious product. It's also about the presentation of the product, about the salesperson about even the packaging, maybe it's just a lot of superficial things that you don't really need, because it doesn't add that much value to the product itself. Because the product is still the same, right? It just increases your experience, it's a nice experience..

A: And in this increased experience that also adds value for you then to the product you're going to buy?

B: Yes. I would say so.

A: Okay, and why would the superficial and more their presentation, the visual design would attract you for example?

B: That's a good question. I never thought about that. It just makes, I think it makes the whole thing feel more special. Like, you want to treat yourself if you buy something like that, right? So you want to, you don't just want to grab it and buy it? And then that's it. You just want to have some more around it. I don't really know how to explain it.

A: And if it's an experience or a service? What would then be the features or the characteristics you care about?

B: I mean, obviously, so the quality of the service received or the experience, like when I, ok, let's say with a travel, maybe. And, like now as I'm a student, and I go traveling to a very low cost. So not going to fancy restaurants or not, like try not to spend too much money. But when I'm graduate I mean, obviously, then you work the whole time. And then you go on vacation, you want to again, treat yourself. And then you will probably also want to spend a little more money on making you if you could go to the same place, or let's say with Mexico, already been to Mexico, but I did a very low cost. And then you could go again and get a nicer hotel and the nicer service because then the people also are nicer to you, even though they might not want to be nice to you. But they have to anyway, because they get paid for it. And then yeah, just do things that you would normally not do in your everyday life. Like nice restaurants and go to the spa.

A: Okay, so well, if I understood that correctly, for you, like the quality is very important, or also, if it's about a product, like the experience to buy it is important to you? Are you aware of any luxury brands that fulfill these features?

B: Okay, I have to admit I'm very bad with brands. Because for me, it's less about the brand itself and then more about the quality. So you could have the same shoes, and then they just put a fancy logo on it. It doesn't add that much value for me. I know that it does for some people just because they like to wear certain products with the brand name on it somewhere. But it doesn't necessarily increase the quality, which is the defining feature. For me. And I think in terms of the presentation, yeah, some of the brands are, that's a good thing about them. They know how to present their products. So I don't know, if I really have brand names I can give you.

A: And it's just if you have examples where you feel this is a luxury brand that could fulfill what you just mentioned, then yes, but if you don't have I mean, it's also a matter of perspective. I mean, you have to think they are luxurious... and for example, the shoes that you said in the beginning that you bought?

B: Yeah. I mean, it's not that much about the brand again. But it also not about like, was it not like super expensive shoes, but more about the fact that I didn't really needed them?

A: Okay.

B: I don't know, I sometimes like to go to Tommy Hilfiger and buy things there. Because if you like the sales, like the whole sales experiences is really good, because you really feel like they're taking care of you and try to help you find something that you really like.

A: Okay. And how do you feel regarding towards this brand Tommy Hilfiger, for example?

B: I don't know, again, it doesn't really add any value for me that it says Tommy Hilfiger, but I mean, I know that they have a high quality product. So for instance, it's like, fair sourced cotton. That's that's also something

that adds to the luxury, kind of, I mean, you can buy the cheap H&M stuff, where the children are exploited in China.

So yeah, I think that the quality is a big point for that brand. And then also, I mean, the whole presentation, like they just really think about that everything goes in line, and then you have really nice people helping you in the store. So yeah, I think that really adds up to the experience.

A: Okay. That's great. So for example, you mentioned that you could buy things at H&M that exploit labor.

B: Well I do that as well, but makes me feel less good.

A: Okay. And why does that make you feel less good?

B: Because I mean, so as a student, as I said, I don't have that much money. So I am not always thinking about the things that [are] ethically correctly sourced and everything, although I might want to, but there are some restrictions on what you can afford. And then on the same side of you, you want to buy certain things. So you might end up buying things even though you know that they're not, essentially, ethically aligned with your personal opinions.

A: And what that change, like, in the future, or could you imagine that that would change in the future when you have the money?

B: I think that will probably change in the future when I have the money.

A: Okay, so you would consider ethics, as you said, in your choice?

B: Yes.

A: And how does that make you feel? if you would buy some that supports this?

B: I think it would make me feel better about my own consumption choices, knowing that I have more choices that people somewhere else. And that I buy things that are unnecessary, probably because you don't need that many clothes anyway. But you feel better about it when you know that at least they are ethically sourced.

A: Okay, and is it important for you that other people would notice that you pay attention to those features?

B: Not really. Okay.

A: And also in the beginning, you said that it's not really the brand that would drive you to buy one thing or the other? Why? Why do you think is that? Like in terms of luxury?

B: I mean, of course, you know, all the luxurious brands it's not that I don't, I'm not aware. I just tend to buy things, because I like them, like the brand it's just a secondary thing, like the first I see the product, and then I might check the brand, but it's not, that I go to a store with a certain brand, and then I find something that I like there. It is the other way around. You know what I'm saying?

A: Yeah. Okay, so you said something about first product second, other features like the brand? So if you would have two more or less identical products from different brands. What would make a difference that you buy one brand over the other?

B: And it's the same product, more or less? Yeah, all the features?

A: Yes

B: I mean, it's always a price thing, right? At least now, I will probably go for the cheaper one.

A: Mm hmm. And if price will be an issue?

B: if price won't be an issue, then I would ask which brands? And I would probably buy the brand that I know if it's two brands, and I know one of them. And the other I don't, I will probably go for the one I know. Just because it makes you feel more comfortable when you kind of know the brand, and maybe also the philosophy behind the brand.

A: And why do you think this would make you more comfortable?

B: I can't really say, it just makes me feel more comfortable. Because it's always nicer to know stuff. It's about the personal. It's not that you do not buy something unknown where you're not fully aware of maybe, if you I

mean, you see that the products are more or less identical, and the quality is probably also more or less identical. But if you know, one of the brands, you're more certain than that will live up to expectations.

A: Okay. And what would happen, let's say if you would not know, or if you would know, both brands, or you won't know none of the two brands? How would that change your evaluation?

B: I don't know.

A: But let's say you go into a store and you're let's say find a nice product...

B: But I mean, the price is the same. I don't know any of the two brands, the quality is the same. I didn't know it was just randomly pick.

A: Or would you ask maybe for information about the brands? If you care about their philosophy?

B: Well, that depends on the price level. If it's something cheap, I wouldn't bother.

A: And if it is about a luxury product?

B: Well if that's a luxury product. Yeah. Many then, then in the store like, if it's a good store, they would come help me anyway. They would ask me, if I need help, and then I would be like, okay, so like these two products? And I don't know, any of these brands, what would be your recommendation? Probably.

A: Okay.

B: Because I assume that the people working in the store know more than me? Because that's why they work there. And I don't.

A: Okay. Could you mentioned some brands that you would consider as luxurious brands?

B: So brands that I think that are luxurious? Okay like Prada, Versace and others like that.

A: And why would you consider them as luxurious?

B: Because they're very expensive and very exclusive.

A: Do you think they would have any impact on you, these brands? If you would buy something from these brands?

B: Impact in which sense?

A: On your life? Would you feel attracted to buy something from these brands? If you had the money?

B: Well, if I had the money, I will probably buy something from there. Because they are nice products obviously. But then again, even if I had the money, I would probably still ask myself, is this really necessary? Because they're like, you pay the most of the price for the name and not for the item itself. And I don't like that philosophy in general. So I think I would still consider if I like it enough to just pay for the name.

A: About the philosophy that you mentioned, how do you mean that?

B: Oh, no, I don't like the whole, like, I don't know. So I really don't like the fashion industry itself. Because you pay for the name of the brand rather than the product. So like the whole philosophy, I was talking about the whole philosophy of the whole industry. I don't like this concept.

A: And what if you think about other categories, I mean, luxury, and fashion is one part. But I mean, you can buy almost anything, any category, something luxurious.

B: You asked me if I would buy these products if I had the money?

A: Yeah more about if you can maybe think about other brands, luxury brands in other categories?

B: Oh, cars, cars, so like, Ferrari, Porsche or Lamborghini, whatever. Would I buy one for myself? Probably not. I am not that much into cars. Cars have a specific purpose, which is bringing me from point A to point B. Yes. It's nice. If it's I think even if I had a lot of money that I would still stay with a like not super expensive, but lets say still a secure and fast car, like somewhere in the middle like a Mercedes. I don't know.

A: Would you then consider a Mercedes a luxurious brand?

B: It is a matter of definition.

A: Yeah. But I'm asking about your opinion. Yeah.

B: I think a car in general is a luxury because it's unnecessary.

A: Okay that is an interesting point.

B: So, yes, that is kind of a luxury.

A: Okay.

B: Also, if it is a Mercedes, I'm just saying I would not necessarily just because I have the money always go for the most expensive and prestigious option.

A: Okay. But for example, if you would buy the shoes, or I'm going to see this or I don't know what other things we mentioned. So something that will be luxury for you. Would the fact that others would see you with those products or those experiences, for example, that travels and all that have an impact on you like. Would that influence you?

B: So you are basically asking if I'm, if I like others to be like, Oh, my God, she has all these fancy things. She must be very rich,

A: Yes for example, that could be one option. That's one example that could happen.

B: Yeah, or they're like, you're such a snob. I mean, everyone kind of cares about the opinion of others, even though they say they don't. Yeah, so of course, in the sense I care about what others think. But again, I would not buy these things because I want to show off. Or because I... and I would also not hide them just because I think others could be jealous. Because at the end of the day, I bought it for myself and not for anyone else. so I mean, of course it kind of sad if you're come back from your lets say holidays and then everyone else is just be like, "Oh you snob you went on holiday. Third time this year. And you're like, oh I just wanted to show some pictures. But... so yes, of course, you you tend to think about others people's opinions, but cant do too much about it. Right?

A: So it's more like a side effect, if I understand that correctly?

B: Yeah, I would say so.

A: Okay. Um, okay, so you said you don't pay much or no, not at all attention normally to the brand if buying a luxury product.

B: Not that much, yes.

A: So why would you think that? If you think about it? What is missing for you? Or would you like to have those brands that make you care more about them?

B: What I like to have a brand that I care so much about that I will only buy that one?

A: No, I mean, in a sense of like, not that extreme, but more in a sense. So what should a brand have or what has a brand to have that you would consider buying the brand over another brand?

B: Yeah, okay. So...

A: So that they would come into the equation into the site? So yeah, or the brand gets more important in your chart, yeah, more attractive in the context of a luxury product.

B: Because it's a combination between quality and price, and also the ethics that I already mentioned. So I think if there was a brand where I can completely, well, because most of the brands, they all have their fancy corporate responsibility, whatever and so forth, and so on. But it's sometimes very hard to know if they're really that sustainable as they claim they are. Because it's not very transparent in terms of their value chains. And I think if there was a company where that was very transparent in these terms, and then I also really liked the product itself, because in many occasions, there are sustainable products but I just think they are super ugly unfortunately.

B: So I think it's a combination of the quality of the price of these ethical considerations.

A: Okay. Do you think that only these like luxury brands that would support for example, ethics, and all these values that you mentioned? Would this allow yourself to indicate to others that kind of person that you are?

B: Mhm, to certain extent, I would say so. I mean, again, I wouldn't necessarily buy to show others that I'm super sustainable and ethically correct and whatever. But as a side effect, I think it's not bad because probably, I could also influence the behavior of others.

So I think that is the positive side effect, if you can influence probably other people to buy a brand where you believe in and they are just better and all.

A: So do you think it would align with how you are in would allow you to express?

B: Yeah, I think it would help me to express myself.

A: Okay, very interesting. Then I think we can go over to the last part of the interviews, to the visuals. So we have here some visuals for you. If you could just have a look, so just look at them and then if something catches your attention, let us know what and why.

B: what the fuck? [pointing at Louis Vuitton 1 visual]

A: Why did you just say "what the fuck"?

B: Sorry, that was inappropriate. I can elaborate on that.

A: Yes, please.

B: So LV is a very expensive brand. And apparently, they decided that it was a good idea to have an advertisement with a black child, and an oversized pullover. First of all, I don't really see the point, how that's gonna make this pullover sell if that's the intention, or what is the intention of this picture at all? It's just a very weird picture for a brand.

A: How do you think about it when you maybe compare it to the other advertising [Louis Vuitton 1], for example?

B: I mean, the other so you compared to the other LV picture. The other one is what you would expect LV-advertisement to look like: it's a beautiful woman with a bag. They are really famous for their bags. Everybody wants to have one. So that's like the standard picture. It's what you see a lot, whereas the other one is just kind of out of out of line I would say.

A: And do you think the other one would attract you?

B: No, because I think it's just I don't I don't even know what the what the message of this picture is? Yeah.

A: But and the other one? The one below?

B: Yeah, like, I mean, I'm not a big fan of LV. I think their things are quite ugly. But yeah, I mean, it's an attractive model with a nice bag. So of course, it's kind of a attractive. But I have to admit that I'm not really I don't see advertising that much. So might be there. I'm just not very observant. So I don't usually don't buy things because I've seen them somewhere.

A: [Brief explanation about the visual Louis Vuitton 1]

B: This doesn't really change my perspective. I mean, nice that they have a campaign about inclusivity, but that doesn't change the fact that most of their products are sold to rich white people.

A: Okay. Interesting point.

B: So, and, I mean, yes, it's good that I like of course, it's a good point that I want to raise awareness. And I hope that the campaign is successful in that sense. But that does not make them any more inclusive.

A: Okay, do you want to say anything else about the other pictures?

B: Well, I mean, I don't know all of the brands.

A: That is not a problem, you can just also mentioned something about the pictures.

B: I mean, this is kind of interesting with the trash [Stella McCartney]. I know that that one? That one? That one. Okay. A little that bit one. [Pointing at different ads].

A: Okay, what catches your attention on those pictures?

B: Well, again, Stella McCartney is a quite expensive brand. As far as I'm concerned. And since you're talking about luxury, I'm guessing that this are only luxury brands.

A: Correct.

B: I guess their aim is to raise awareness about overconsumption and trash. And then I would assume that their clothes are hopefully very sustainable. If not, this would be a really stupid campaign to have.

A: Okay, yeah. Fair point. Yeah.

B: So I guess they want to say that we are not contributing to polluting our oceans and producing more trash because we source sustainably?

A: Yes, how would you then evaluate a brand that, for example, is trying to raise awareness and trying to something in this field? And it's a luxury brand?

B: Well, I mean, that's very positive. I think it would... but again, since I'm a poor student I would still not buy the product but I would probably have a positive image about them altogether about the brand. I think that I would consider this brand in the future then...

A: How about compared to a more known traditional or classical luxury brand?

B: Yeah, I think definitely, I would probably rather consider buying Stella McCartney, as I'm aware of their ethical codes in terms of sustainability.

A: So than it would become part of their, for example, your decisions, as you said, for example, and brands wouldn't be that important.

B: Yes I think so.

A: Okay.

B: Oh The World Food Program! [Balenciaga WFP] I am doing an internship for the United Nations at the moment.

A: Oh, really? Okay. How does it make you feel to see the World Food Program on those clothes?

B: I guess this brand tries to raise awareness about that there about the hunger in the world, and then we have to do something against it. And fulfill the STGs to get to zero hunger by 2030. And they partnered? Well, I guess they partnered up with the World Food Program, because they're really cautious and control about who can use the logos So I know that.

A: okay. Interesting.

B: Oh, and in general, what you can do with the logo, especially the STG logos, you have to, there is a whole style guide book that you have to follow. Anyway. And so yeah, interesting point for luxury label again. But I would not say that, that attracts me that much more, to be honest.

A: And why do you think that?

B: Because the whole, so the whole idea about this sustainability and these things is that you try to change something like because it's a it's a fashion brand, right? So they produce a product. And they should try to do something that is related to the product. So for example, have fair work conditions or sustainably things like that. Whereas these zero hunger things that is completely unrelated in a sense. I mean, it's still something good to do. But it's nothing that is inherent in the brand itself, I would say, so...

A: Interesting.

B: So I think the whole sustainability, things should be related to the brand and what the brand actually does.

A: So and how does this influence your opinion about the brand then?

B: Well, I mean, it's kind of unrelated. I find it quite random, to be honest. I mean, it's, again, it's nice that they do that, it is a good thing to do. But I would not buy the brand more just because they partnered up with the World Food Program.

A: And like, in general out there, for example, that we comment on, all these different cases now with sustainability, World Food Program, with inclusivity and all that, if you think about like zooming out a bit, what do you think about luxury brands as they are trying to add those causes or issues to their campaigns.

B: So I, I still question the whole reason behind having these super luxury brands, because again, you just pay for the name and then and before they think it's a lot of unnecessary stuff that they sell, right? So I really wanted to be sustainable and save our planet, and they should just stop existing altogether.

A: Okay, that's a very interesting point.

B: My thought is that, yes, that's value to their brand. And would probably make me consider buying them more. Yet, I question that you need these super luxury super expensive brands all together.

A: Okay. But according to what you mentioned, do you think maybe that would make you feel more identified, than for example as you were saying before, and like, it's only super expensive brands? and that it's just about money? So would you feel more identified maybe with these brands that are moving towards this direction?

B: Yeah, I think I could rather identify with the brand that has this consideration.

Debriefing the interview and thanking the interviewee

Respondent 6

Welcome and Briefing

A: Okay. So first questions going to be around about looks really in general. So what is the first thing that comes to your mind when you think about luxury, in an abstract away?

B: I think about high end design, I think about price. I think about quality. I think about.. yeah that's pretty much it.

A: okay. And what would you think luxury means for you? What would you say?

B: Luxurious? I think it's something that is kind of over over the top meaning something that is probably a higher price than I would usually buy. So it's kind of like a treat for me. luxurious thing. It's something that maybe not a lot of people have. Something kind of premium. Like, special for like I would say like an investment, something luxurious. And I would say it's something really high end that you buy and it's really expensive. But it's kind of your treat. So it's very like good quality. That's why you would buy it.

A: So when you mean that it's something over the top, would you relate it to price and quality?

B: Yeah, like I said quality and price.

A: And why do you think it would be like a treat?

B: A treat because something luxurious, at least for me, because I don't have... Yeah, it's not that I'm a billionaire. So yeah, for me something luxurious is something that I'm paying for to treat myself. So I'm doing a luxury thing as in, I'm doing something that I can't do that often buying something luxurious, which I can only have one thing maybe in my wardrobe that is the luxurious, or I can do a trip that is luxurious. But that's not something I do often. So it's a treat.

A: Yeah. And how would that make you feel to purchase something that is luxurious and it's a treat to yourself?

B: Yeah, I think it's kind of a self enhancement thing. So you maybe you feel more confident, if it's something that you're wearing, and maybe you just, it just elevates you kind of not just to show other people, but also a bit. You always like to show off, a bit if you buy I don't know, like a Gucci bag or whatever. But also for myself to make myself feel like I did treat myself and I am confident and I'm enjoying and I can, I can give this to myself. It's kind of like a present to myself. So I feel a bit more confident.

A: Okay. And when you were mentioning the others, do you think you would pay attention to what other people would say when they would see you with something luxurious?

B: Yeah, I think it's, it's a lie to say no. Obviously, when you buy something, luxurious, you also want to, to show a bit, It's it's kind of like the, I don't know, it's like a wolf pack and you want to show a bit of your alpha

part, you know. And I don't know, it's just, it's because it kind of shows that you are able to buy it. And it also shows when it's something like design, for example. It shows you that you have like high standards, I would say and that you are able with maybe your work, or whatever you do in life to buy it. So it kind of shows off of it.

A: Have you ever purchased something that you would consider as luxurious?

B: Yeah, a Marc Jacobs bag. But I don't think that because that was that was when my parents were paying for myself. So it's not really that I can say that I invested on it. Because now I'm a bit more careful with my money. And back then maybe I wasn't so much so. But, I mean, it still was a treat, because I could still spend it on another thing. Although it was my parents, they just give me money at the end of the month. And I decide what to do with it. Right. So yeah, so like investing on it. But yeah, I bought it.

A: And why did you buy it?

B: Because, first of all, it was a trend, back then. And also because I don't know from my mom, I always heard that okay, if you're going to buy a bag, it should have real quality. And the Marc Jacobs. It's not like it's good quality, it's good. Like, it's trendy. So it's also something you show off, because it's a Marc Jacobs. And yeah, and it's quality. And it's also not extravagant. So it could, I could still use it for a long time, you know, so it's because for me, if I buy something luxurious, it can be extravagant because maybe next year, I won't wear it. So it has to be something that has a bigger lifetime. So yeah, that's why I bought the Marc Jacobs.

A: And all those features you just mentioned. This is the reason why you would considered as bag you bought as luxurious?

B: Yeah. It has, it can be an extravagant luxurious as in. It's something that's not a lot of people can have, it's something with high quality high price and yeah, that's pretty much it for me, but good design still, but yeah, not so extravagant.

A: Okay. And did you tell someone when you bought the bag?

B: Yeah, I did. All my flatmates. Just when I arrived home. I told them, obviously, because I was living with them. And I was like, wuh I did my first investment guys [excited]. There were also guys so they didn't care much about it. But then, I mean, I didn't tell people I was just walking around with it. And then if people asked I said, 'Yeah, I did buy it'. But I didn't call anyone and say I bought my Marc Jacobs. But yeah, when I arrived home, I was very happy about it.

A: Okay. How did you feel about that coming home showing of your just freshly bought, luxurious bag? How did that feel?

B: Yeah, pretty good. I guess. I think it's a mixed feeling, because I felt like I was pretty happy about it, obviously and it was my Marc Jacobs and I obviously wanted to wear it right away. And it was an investment. But on the other hand, obviously, you kind of have that feeling like, but it's so expensive. Do I actually really want this? At least, if you don't have a lot of money to spend. Then you have to make sure it's the right buy. So I, I didn't even take the tag off right away. Because I was like, well, I want to show my mom and my flatmates and see if there's any reason I should return it. But still, I felt like, well, that was the first time I invested on a nicer thing, because I'm all Zara and h&m. So, yeah, it's, it's a nicer feeling like that you have, once you, once you get out of that stage that I spent so much money, then it's really, it's really nice to look at it. And then yeah, next month, you will have some money back in.

A: Okay. And do you still have this bag? Or do you still use it?

B: Yeah, actually, it's in Portugal, I didn't bring it. I don't use it that much anymore. But I think, for me, at least, my, my way of dressing up and using accessories. It's very like, sometimes, I swear I this bag, I had it for four years. I never used it. And then this Christmas, I went home, and I thought oh, I could actually use this for my computer. I brought it and now I use it every day. So I know that I'm definitely going to use it more. But because it's a it's a bigger bag. But it's it's not big enough for my computer. So it's I'm in that Limbo where I usually either were very small bags, or the big one for my computer. But the second I'm out of like the smaller

bags, then I'm going to go back to that one, you know? Yeah. So it's kind of a trendy thing. But it's still like it's pretty, it's pretty neat. It's black... and yeah pretty.

A: Okay, and if you think about that bag, and if you want to use it at some point again, how do you feel about this bag? Like, if you compare it to when you bought it and now?

B: It's still good? Because I haven't invested on anything else. So because it's still one of it's still the only bag I've ever bought that was much more expensive than all the other clothes that I have. So it's still so when I when I worried I still feel a bit more like, pompierious But I've I'm quite sure that if the moment I buy another one, maybe that won't have as much. I don't know. That won't give me that much of a feeling of that luxurious maybe, it's probably going to be my old one.

A: So interesting. When you were a kid, was there anything that you're thinking like when I'm older and I have money I would like to buy or I would like to buy this? Or do this it? Was there any a dream like that you would relate to luxurious?

B: actually not that much. I don't think I thought much about that. Only... Obviously, the way you think about luxury when you're a kid is different. For me luxurious, maybe would be to have some for example now luxurious for me, is maybe LV or Gucci or things like that. But back then it would be because I was always very Zara, H&M. A luxury thing when I was younger would be maybe to have, I don't know, those sneakers from Adidas that everyone is wearing. Because it's a luxury for me because I didn't want to ask my parents and I didn't have money. So that would be a luxury for me. Yeah, I think it's it's kind of a subjective concept, depending on your age. So I did want to have like those sneakers, but not exactly something really big. Like, oh, when I'm older, I want to have this car or this. I never really had it. I mean, maybe yeah, about a car that I would like, but it's still not like a dream, luxury dream or anything. I thought about 'Oh, I'd like to have a Mini Cooper' now I don't anymore. But yeah, that's a luxurious thing. Why would you have...? It's a luxurious thing, because I mean a car has to be functional. Right? So why would you have a Mini Cooper specifically? I think that's luxury as well. So you want something that is more than the functionality of it.

A: Okay, and how about like after graduating? And soon you will be earning a lot of money. Is there anything that you would like to buy when you will have the money? A luxurious product or experience or service?

B: I would say more luxurious traveling. Like, just one trip where I really treat myself and I go on a nice resort vacation, to.... Yeah, I don't know. Just be in that kind of luxurious state so I really like backpacking and that's what I'm going to do in the summer. But maybe once I have more money, I would like to have one like relaxing trip. Luxury, have everything I want. I don't know. House in the middle of the sea? I don't know. So that would be it's not so much into objects. Yeah, maybe because for me, for example, for clothes, if I have more money, I'm just going to buy more but in Zara and Mango and but I probably won't go to buy luxury brands.

A: And why do you think that is like that? That you would still prefer to buy the same brands you buy?

B: Yeah. Because, honestly, for me, I'm more into constantly like changing my wardrobe. Like, I give away clothes, and then I buy some new ones. Not so much into having those pieces that you wear all like, unless it's like a bag, for example. But when, I when it comes to like wearables, clothes, I prefer to have maybe lower quality, I would have higher quality if it's, for example, a good jacket that I need for the winter. But even that I don't think it's luxurious, because that's functional. Because I need something that is good for the winter. Yeah, so that's not luxurious for me. But even then I would try to get the cheapest of the good ones. So I would that wouldn't be a luxurious thing. For me, it's more about being luxurious and experiences. So more about Yeah, traveling and treating myself to really nice fancy dinners. Maybe it's more about that, then...

A Why do you think it's more about the experiences and traveling? And more you relate that more to luxurious for yourself?

B: Why? I don't know. It's just because for me, it's more about what it makes me feel. And having a luxurious brand, yeah, you feel a bit pompous? but it's not like I care so much about it. It's more like being in a luxurious

experience. And then I'm really thrilled and I really enjoying the most and I'm really investing on that. Rather than having something in my closet that. Yeah, that makes me feel it. Because it's like I said at some point, it stops making me feel that way. You feel like you're invested. And it's it's super nice to have a Marc Jacobs but it's like the first year and then maybe it's gone. I'd rather have like a really amazing experience that I'm going to take with me all my life probably than having a bag in my closet that it's probably not even going with me all my life.

A: Okay. And how about others when they would see that you're enjoying this luxurious more luxurious traveling or something? Would that have any influence on you?

B: Not so much. I mean, it's obviously it's stupid, but it's obviously nice to post it on Instagram. And you know, what a nice resort you're in and blue waters and everything. Yeah, I would definitely post it on Instagram. Obviously to show other people, or maybe to make them a bit jealous. Here I am, I made it this way. But not that much. Maybe not as much as clothes. Because when it comes to traveling, it's really more about me. And yeah, I mean, that is the biggest treat I can give myself, so, not so much about others.

A: Okay, what do you mean that it's "more about me"?

B: Yeah, more about me. This is that I'm the one experiencing it. And when you're wearing something, people see it right. Yeah, but when you're experiencing something, people they're not there, right? So it's an individual experienced basically. So it's not like everyone's going to see what I'm doing. But everyone's going to see what bag I have. You know. So, it's more for myself?

A: okay. If you want to buy luxury product, what would be the most important features for you?

B: Quality definitely. It would be important to understand the materials used.

if it's good or not, that's something I would probably search online and or talk to the person in the store, try to, to see reviews on like, the quality or whether it's good or not, for how long do you have this bag? Also the design, obviously, yeah, it's not that, like I said, it can't be extravagant. But it has to be pretty neat and still like design, but it's like kind of high end. You know, it's not the normal Zara stuff. So something more like classic, I would say maybe. And yeah, quality, maybe color, actually, because I wouldn't buy something that has color. That is luxurious. I would buy something like either black or grey, something that I can wear with anything. So color would be, for example, something that would be on my mind. Yeah, the brand, obviously. Which brand them I'm buying from, because for me, it's, like I said, it's also about showing off, I am pretty upfront with that. And it has to be a brand that the people would know. Okay, so it's kind of shallow, but it's true. Yeah, because I don't know that many brands. So if it's something luxurious, I'm also going to go for what everyone knows, probably. I don't know much about those niche, luxurious brands. No idea. Just know about the big ones. So yeah the brand as well. I think that's it.

A: So the brand in terms of like, if it's like trendy or that it's famous, and yet people know it?

B: Yeah

A: And you just mentioned that you would, you mentioned the store and maybe also the internet where you would make your research? Would you prefer to buy in a store or online?

B: in a store.

A: And why is that?

B: Because it's more expensive and I need to feel it. Like I told, like I said about the material. Even though I can read about it online, I still need to go and feel it in the store. Maybe talk to someone also because in those luxury brands, you always have a lot of store kind of like help, you know, the way the everyone is really helpful. And they know a lot about the product. So I would definitely go there. Maybe I would obviously look at home. But then I would go to the store.

A: Okay. Are there any different brands that would fulfill these features that you would consider?

B: Like I said, Marc Jacobs. I really like it. It's not very extravagant, for example, Gucci is very, extravagant I don't like it. I would say, I think, Do you mean clothes?

A: No, actually in general. You can talk about clothes but also other products or experiences or services. Whatever comes to your mind.

B: Yeah. Experience. There's not really brands, right? Just hotels that I would like...I don't know, there's a chain in Portugal that I love. It's pretty amazing hotels. And I've been to a couple ones. And that's really like, you know, when you're in Portugal, and you really want to go and relax and you choose a really nice hotel, with a nice view, Nice food. So yeah, that hotel. And then. Yeah,I don't... see that. Maybe iPhone. iPhone is a luxury brand, because you have so many different, like Huawei's and like Samsungs that are the exact same thing with a much lower price yet, but you would still prefer to go to Apple, and I'm an Apple person. So that's also kind of a luxury brand. For me.

A: Why would you prefer to go to Apple?

B: I really like their interface much better. Okay, first of all, but it's also about, I don't know. These are some things that as a consumer, you can't really explain, but it's a lot about how you're involved with a brand. And how your, your peers are also involved with the brand. So I always had people around me that had iPhones. So, I also wanted an iPhone. And also because it's, I don't know, it's a brand that really speaks for itself. You know, you have this I don't know this charisma about the brand. And it's, it's still like in the forefront of like design and high end like a technology. So that's, that's for me luxurious, because obviously, I don't need an iPhone. But if I have to buy something I'd buy an iPhone, even though it's much more expensive.

A: Yeah. Okay so you just mentioned that you were surrounded by people also having an iPhone. Are there also other things where it is important for you what other people around you use? or buy?

B: Yeah, I mean, a lot, like, for example, with technology a lot. And also something that I noticed is that in Portugal, it is a lot about cars, and who has a good car. So that might have influenced me. That's why I really wanted to like this specific Mini Cooper that I really wanted, because I actually had a friend who had a Mini Cooper and then I had some friends that had other cars, and I really liked, but I didn't have the money to invest on a car. But now that I'm living in Denmark, for example, everyone has a bike, and I don't care. I don't care about cars anymore. You know, it's not even on my mind. I don't need a car. And if I have one, I don't need it to be a good like, brand or anything. So it doesn't force me.

A: Okay, and going back to the other brands that you mentioned for example, like Marc Jacobs. why do you think is brand would also like attract you or why is it fulfilling your needs?

B: My mom has always used Marc Jacobs. And she really likes it and I don't know sometimes I stole her bags, and she was very happy about it. So when I had to buy my own and also it was a trend at some point in Portugal. And so obviously that's having an influence but it's it's a balance between what's trendy , what you know, it's good, I trust that my mom has high quality stuff so I'm also going to go towards that and she also influenced me a lot and then it's also about Yeah, whether, I don't know, other people like it or not because you also do it like I said to show off a it. ,

A: And about Gucci for example you're saying that it's very extravagant? What do you think about the brand for example?

B: Yeah, the colors or extravagant the people who wear it [Gucci] are extravagant or that... It obviously depends on your environment, socially. But for me, people who wear Gucci are really those kind of I don't know extravagant new knew rich people. So the new rich as an it's, it's too much about showing off. And it's all about showing off. That's for me new rich. So you have now all the sudden you have money, which you didn't have before. Yeah. And now you want to buy all these luxurious things just to show off? Yeah. And that's people who are 'Gucci' to me.

A: Okay. That's why you don't feel very related to the brand?

B: Yeah. Also the design. I don't feel like it's it's a mix, but the design itself and the colors. So yeah.

A: Interesting. And so if you had to buy two identical products from two different brands, what would make the difference that you buy one over the other?

B: Two identical products?

A: More or less like similar price, similar qualities? What would make you choose?

B: The brand itself, I would say, if it's similar price, but then I mean, maybe one is Mango one H&M, I would go for the Mango, maybe because it's a bit more high end.

A: Okay, and talking more about luxurious products?

B: luxurious products? the brand as well. Like, the brand that maybe other people like more? What is also the brand that speaks more for my kind of design? Because the thing is, although you have two similar I don't know, let's say we have two similar sweaters, from two luxurious brands, but one is Gucci and one is Marc Jacobs, right? I will go for the Marc Jacobs because I identify more with the brand, with their design in general, than with Gucci, for example, although it's the, like, almost the same. Even if it's better in which I would maybe go for the for the Marc Jacobs, just because it's more like my kind of design and what I like more.

A: Okay, so yeah. So when you think you identify yourself more with Marc Jacobs. It's related to their design and, products?

B: And to the people, wearing it also, so it's, like, ecosystem around the brand, you know, the people who wear it, the design, the quality, the, I don't know, the designer, Like, what do they stand for, you know? that's it.

A: Yeah. What do you mean with what the designer stands for?

B: think it's about being still like, because for me, it's a lot about art. And if you have designer that that looks like, it's not so extravagant, that looks like someone who's just, he's doing his job. And is an artist basically. That really speaks a lot about the brand. And then if you have one of those crazy people that are just, I don't know, that don't really speak for myself, you know, for me and artists. It's more like laid back and not so extravagant, you know, and you do it because you're passionate about it. Yeah. So and maybe Marc Jacobs is more like that.

A: Okay. And do you think that owning these luxurious brands would allow you to indicate to others that kind of person that you are?

B: Yeah definitely, I think it's a lot about whatever you wear, that's, that's what fashion is for me, for example, that whatever you were, it's always going to reflect on who you are. That's why you wear things in certain locations and other things in other occasions. So maybe if I go and do like an interview, I will wear something with quality and something that doesn't look like an H&M you know. So it's a lot about context, and it's a lot about your surroundings. And who do you want to, the other people, to think about you, when you don't talk to someone? Right? When people just know you because they look at you and they kind of make this personality, right? For me, that's what fashion or whatever else is. Or traveling or the cars or everything that I own or my house or my furniture, everything. It speaks for itself. So when people don't actually know you and your personality, you want to reflect on you, you want to reflect that on your things.

A: Okay, great. [Explanation about the visuals part]

B: Okay, I have to tell which one catches more of my attention?

A: Yes or if you say 'Oh, this is interesting' , then tell us why.

B: So first of all, I see here some that are much more classic, and others that are much more extravagant. So when, first of all the these fluorescent colors [Balenciaga WFP]. Stella McCartney, Balenciaga, for example, LV trying to be a bit more, a bit less classic, clearly [Louis Vuitton 1]. So these, for example, don't really enjoy the pictures. First, this is yeah, well, great. You stand for sustainability and Stella McCartney. But this is not the kind of picture I want to see, Sorry.

A: So why is it not the picture you want to see?

B: Because you can still stand for something and don't make it visually, you know? For me, it's again, about being, when you're high end, it's a bit about not falling in the mainstream. Like now everyone cares about

plastic. So let's do some photos with plastic. No, you should obviously communicate your values and what are you trying to do, but there's no need to have pictures with models on top of plastic. I think that that's for me, even kind of a joke, honestly. So yeah.

A: And how does that make you feel about thinking about the brand? Like, does that influence your opinion?

B: Yes, It does. Actually, it's clearly something that they're trying to tackle into sustainability. But for me, it's just a joke. So that also influences me, Stella McCartney, what the hell is this? Okay, why would you do this? Like there's other ways of showing sustainability. You don't have to put model in top of trash.

A: So how would you evaluate this of this brand?

B: I wouldn't evaluate it positively...

A: Okay.

B: Dior I think it's my favorite one here. Because it's just very, it's it just gives you a like a feeling of something that is classic, high end something that is not crazy and extravagant. They still really speak for who they are. Yes, it's still something that is Yeah, it's about...

For example, here she's in a palace right? Yeah, it's about something almost kind of vintage and something that has its values and something that is much more authentic you know? And they stick with it you know, they're not changing to now like having pictures on plastic or using I don't know, neon colors. For me that's luxury, actually.

A: Okay, so this is why you're also mentioning the word classic when you see this?

B: Yeah, yeah. And also because like I said when I do luxurious, it has to be like this pretty neat, black you have it's like luxurious but in a vintage way in a more classic way.

B: [Points now at LVMH and Rihanna]

A: There's a story behind this one [brief explanation of LVMH and Rihanna visual/Case].

B: they're creating a luxury brand but is it going to be as luxurious as the Louis Vuitton?

A: What do you mean with as luxurious as Louis Vuitton?

B: Is it going to be as expensive or? Or is it going to be more commercial?

A: Would that make a difference for you?

B: I mean, I think she doesn't stand for luxury. So it shouldn't be a luxury brand. Like you should stick with your your values, like you have here. [Pointing at visual with Uma Thurman] This is the very like foundation of LV the classic bags and this monogram. You should stick with this and with someone like Uma Thurman, which is a very classic, very smart actress for example. Rihanna is a mainstream commercial singer. And you shouldn't try to be high end. It should be something more commercial more yeah young. But you should stick with your classic and not have heard of doing that.

A: So you would not take into account the other variables, you would be more attracted by this one like this LV and this image then if LV would create a new luxury brand with Rihanna?

B: Yeah, if it's a luxury brand with Rihanna, I don't think it's smart. If it's less luxury, then I think it's cool for them to have something less high end something more young. Maybe they want to diversify their audience, right? But if that's the if that's the they're like, strategy, then I would say she should have like a more of not so luxurious, but more into mainstream, not mainstream as Zara that's not what I'm saying. But yeah, less high end. To make it more commercial.

A: And with which one of these two would you feel more identified? Or attract?

B: Well, money wise, probably the one with Rihanna, but if I had if I have no budget, yeah, I would maybe go for the classic.

A: Okay.

B: Because, yeah, also, if you think about, Louis Vuitton is always going to be a brand that is in everyone's minds. It's in my grandma's it's going to be probably in my grandchildren, but Rihanna isn't.

A: Okay. Do you want to comment on any others?

B: No, this is again, like, yeah, I end but too extravagant [Balenciaga 2]. I don't like it. And that's Yeah. I think that's pretty much my comments. Yeah. And like I said, this is LV trying to get more into colors [Louis Vuitton visual 1]

A: [Brief explanation of Louis Vuitton visual 1]

B: Yeah, that's pretty, pretty amazing. Like I said, when you know, the story of the designer, you really look at it in a different way. That's not at all what I saw here. But when you tell me this by when you hear this story, yeah, it's pretty amazing.

A: So and does it change your perspective of LV when you now see what kind of advertising or campaigns that are doing now ?

B: Definitely! Maybe not so much the pictures itself, but the because, like I said, this is also something that United Colors of Benetton has always done. All like H&M they're all doing with this. Now it's all black kids. And for me, it doesn't speak so much, because everyone is doing it. It should be something normal. It shouldn't be something new. I really try to put out there should be normal to have like kids doing clothes or like people it's. But when you tell me the story about him, that changes everything. Because you don't know the story behind you know, the story for me H&M using a black child. Yeah. Well, we kind of have to, you know. And you don't know, what's the story behind it. But Virgil, I heard about him once. But when you tell me that, it speaks for a story that he for values and things that he wants to fight for with fashion. Yes, it changes completely.

A: And just to come quickly, back to the H&M. You said they 'have to' when you mentioned black kids, what do you mean with that?

B: Yeah, because basically, if you have all these media buzz around, brands not using, like black models, or Chinese models or whatever, Indian models, they need to respond to that. They need to respond to that. So it's sometimes not even, it doesn't even feel like they do it for a reason other than we kind of have to do it. Otherwise, we're going to be seen as a white extremist. So it doesn't have much of a story other than responding to what they have to.

A: And would you then evaluate LV more positive when you hear this story and the designer behind it?

B: Definitely, Yeah.

A: Maybe more than for example, that one that you were seeing us more classic without him?

B: What do you mean, so?

A: Okay, taking into account what you also mentioned about the other visual of Louis Vuitton, what do you think would attract you more out of these 2 and why?

B: Yeah, for communication wise, if they communicate his vision, well, yeah, just pictures. Then the one that has the small story, because the other one yeah, it's it's really about kind of their heritage. It speaks a lot for classical and everything. But this one, it's also like a refreshing thing for them. But only when I know about the story. If I don't, the picture doesn't talk that much to me.

Debriefing the interview and thanking the interviewee

Respondent 7

Welcome and Briefing

A: So first of all, we would like to talk about luxury in general. So if you hear the word luxury, what's the first thing that comes to your mind?

B: Luxury? Probably being rich. Having a lot of money that I can spend on things I don't really need or like high quality brands.

A: Okay. Anything else?

B: Luxury...I don't know also, like all the small things I buy every day. Like not related to food, but maybe going out in a restaurant or doing travel or trips. Going abroad on holiday.

A: Okay, so this would be things you would describe as luxurious for yourself?

B: I would say so, as I'm a student and not having that much money. I think it's a luxury to like, go out, you know, fancy restaurant, go on vacation to like, a nice hotel. Yeah, actually, I would consider that luxury.

A: Great. Yeah, that's great. And if you would have to describe it more in an abstract way, what luxury means to you like not regarding to now the nice hotels, travels or the food? What would you say?

B: Mhm more abstract...Just having a lot of money to spend on something. Like without that I really need it, but more than I want it.

A: Okay. Okay.

B: If that makes sense.

A: Yes. And why? Why do you think that being, like spending money on something that it's not really needed? It's luxury but why? What is the idea behind for you?

B: Okay, so I feel like for example, like food I need every day. So I can go to the supermarket and just buy it. And then everything else on top? Where I can also save the money, but I spend it on something.

A: So that is luxurious for you?

B: Exactly, that is luxury for me. It could be also like an item or like, bag or something or any kind of clothing.

A: Okay. Then, well, now, we would also like to know, like to go a little bit more deeper, like, have you ever purchased something you think is luxurious?

B: Well, I just bought a super nice coat from a brand. Yeah, for a couple of hundred euros. So I would say this is really a luxury.

A: And why would you say it's luxurious?

B: Because I don't really need it. And they're also cheaper coats but I bought this coat. I would say this is really luxury.

A: And why did you buy the coat? Why did you buy this code and not like a cheaper version or another version?

B: Because this one looked so nice. And the quality was really good. And I felt like I want it.

A: Okay. And how does like having this code make you feel like?

B: I felt pretty good. Pretty fancy. And yeah, it's nice to wear. And I feel kind of special because I usually just were like, rather cheap coats and now I have this really fancy coat and really expensive one. So yes, it makes me feel special kind of, because I'm not used to like wearing those luxurious coats

A: Why? Why do you think it gives you this feeling of feeling special when you have it?

B: Probably because I know how much I spend on it. So, I know what the coat is actually worth. This might sound stupid. but ... because I know how much I spend on it. And I know that is like special to me. I guess

that's just the feeling that I know how much I paid for it. You know that it feels so nice. And that it has a nice brand.

A: And how about if people see you wearing this coat? And like, make a comment or something on it? How do you feel about it? Or what do you think about this?

B: Well, I'm happy. I feel like that adds up to the money that I spent on it. People acknowledge that it is a pretty coat.

A: Okay, so and if you think back when you when you were a child, was there anything you always dreamed of? processing or buying when you are older and have the money?

B: Well, I wanted to have a car at some point. And probably my own apartment and all yeah, that's all that I thought of when I was younger, I guess.

A: Would you consider a car as something luxurious?

B: Well, I would feel like it depends on if I really need the car. So in like a big city I would rather not need it, so it would be like for me a luxury item. Yeah, because I wouldn't specifically need it but just having it also, I feel like it depends on like, the, the shape of the car and the brand of the car.

A: Okay...

B: If it's like 100 years old used car, whatever. It's like, I don't feel like it's that much luxury. But if I buy like a rather new car from a special brand that has some special gadgets, then I would feel it's more luxury as well.

A: And so you said for example, that it's something that you wouldn't need. But if you could and you had the money? Why do you think you would still buy it?

B: For the comfort... So I would feel like a car would offer some new possibilities. I wouldn't have to use public transport because I will be more flexible and it will just be more comfortable to have a car. Even though it's not necessary, but it would be just nice to have.

It would be driving this nice car and everything, which is not necessary.

A: How would you feel about like others seeing you with a car would that influence you?

B: Since I'm not really excited about cars, I probably I probably wouldn't mind what people think about me in a car. So yeah, I would rather not influence me. Like cars specifically because I don't really care.

A: And if it would be another product for example, or experience as we talked before about?

B: It's nice to like, so people realize or see that. I have something nice and they knowledge it. Yeah, I guess it's always nice.

A: Okay, Yeah. Ahm I have one last question, though. Why? Why do you think it would be nice when people would acknowledge it? Why would you feel nice?

B: So, since I spend a lot of money on it. And I'm happy myself because I like the product. And then other people say, Hey, this is, this looks pretty. And then I'm more happy that I spent the money because other people feel see it as pretty or something as well. So, yeah, it's just nice if they acknowledge it. Even if they don't know how much money I spend on it. It's nice. It's nice to know that it's actually maybe worth it. So that it was a good choice that I bought it.

A: Okay, that it's interesting. Yeah.

B: Also, sometimes you feel bad after like purchasing something that's not really not really fitting your budget. And then people are like Oh, that's nice. That's pretty. And then you're like, Oh, yeah, so maybe it wasn't a decision that I bought it.

A: But why do you feel like that?

B: Guilty, because right now, as a student, I don't have that much money. I should also save some money. If I just spend it on items, I don't really need it makes me feel a little bit guilty sometimes.

A: Oh, interesting. And when you will have the money? Is there anything else that you would buy something luxurious?

B: I would probably go on some expensive vacation. To some destinations further away. Maybe for longer periods than just a week or something? Or I would eat out more in fancy restaurants and try more things. But I don't know of any specific item that I would like to buy.

A: Okay. Okay, so it would be more about experiences then?

B: Yes.

A: And why do you think you value more experiences than items or products?

B: Because I feel like I have more from experiences. So if I for example going to trip. It's just, it might only last for like two or three weeks, but then I have like the memories and I tried something new, I saw a new place I probably made new friends. I feel like this is worth more than like, an expensive bag or something.

A: But why do you think the memories last longer than then a luxurious bag you would buy?

B: Probably the bag might last longer. Physically. But I think the experiences I will value more. Because in 50 years. I don't care what kind of bag I have right now. But I might, I might remember like 'hey, I went to this place'. That was really nice. So yeah, I think experience are just worth more than items.

A: Okay. And how, again, how would you feel when you wouldn't manage to do all these expensive trips?

B: I guess it will make me really happy. Because I can finally afford to see all these places. And it's like not normal I would say, so not everyone can afford it. And like...

A: How is that influencing us? that not everybody could afford it?

B: Well, I guess... I don't know. It doesn't really matter to me actually thinking about as long as I can afford it. But yeah, I guess I also value it more, because it's like, it's not. How do you say? Not taken for granted. it's just not normal that everyone can afford it. So it already feels special to myself.

A: Okay, and if you were to buy a luxurious product, what would be the most important features for you?

B: Any kind of luxurious product? Like experience or whatever? or service?

A: Yes what are the most important features?

B: I think the most important is that it adds value to my life. So it doesn't matter if it's an item or an experience. It's something that really needs to add value. And it's hard to say but it's so abstract?

A: But you can tell us examples, which kinds of value would you like the features to add to your life style?

B: Well, I would say like, the quality. And then how, if it's an item, how it looks, I guess, or how I would feel, I think how I would feel about it. Or if I just, sometimes you see something like, Oh, that's what I like just.

A: Okay so it seems like quality is important for you. And also the design of the product or the service, and how good you feel with it. And the feeling it gives you.

B: Yes that's right. Okay, and maybe also how long it lasts. But I guess it's kind of quality related, but if it's like an experience, how long the memories last? Or how long the service lasts?

A: Are there any brands that would fulfill these features that you're going to do? Like that would come to your mind when you think about?

B: Well, I'm actually not really into that into brands.

A: Okay, why do you think so?

B: Well because if a trip is luxury for me, I couldn't link into brands know to like restaurants going for food. Actually, that's luxury. There's no brand of course... Then in clothing brands, I like something like Lacoste or Hugo Boss. I'm not really into brands, specifically.

A: So when you buy a luxurious product? How important is then the brand? Or how does the brand influence your decision? Or is it more about the product?

B: It's more about this product. But I also I don't know, I have some things from some brands and if they last longer then I always say to quality, you know. So it's sometimes doesn't influence it, but it's mostly the product.

A: And if you now imagine that you would have more or less the same product with the same features, like same price. and so on from two different brands, how would you then decide between those are what would be then important for you?

B: Well, I guess they're never 100% the same?

A: Of course not but comparable.

B: Well, if it's the same price, and the same feature, I guess I wouldn't mind.

A: But how would you pick then when just more or less the brand is different?

B: Then I guess I would just take the brand that I know. If it's like something I know, like that the quality is good. And then lasts long, then just pick the brand I know and not maybe the no name brand or a brand I haven't heard of...

A: What would the fact that you know that brand? What would that give you?

B: Well then I know if the product is worth it. If I for example, have already a shirt and I know the shirt was ruined after like wearing it twice, I wouldn't buy the brand again. But if I know I bought that shirt, and I have it for like, two years, and it is still super pretty, then I might consider the brand again because I know it's worth it. I mean the money and they won't regret buying it.

A: Could you mentioned some brands that you would consider as luxury brands?

B: Something like Chanel, Dior, Valentino. Like those really expensive brands.

A: And why would you consider them as being luxurious?

B: I feel like their stores always look super fancy. And everything is so expensive. And not many people wear it.

So I would say that's really a luxury.

A: And if you would buy something from these brands? How would you describe the experience?

B: I guess I would feel really, really special. Because those things are super expensive. So I must have, like an excess amount of money for it. Yeah, so I would have, would just feel very fancy and special. wearing it

A: Would you ever buy something from those brands? If you could?

B: If I could? Probably yes. So I don't know which brand of the mentioned one specifically. But yeah, I would just get something. If I like it.

A: Why do you think you would like to get something from one of those brands?

B: I guess. First of all, that might sound stupid. But just because I can.

B: And then also because it's special, because not many people have it. So I would be like one out of I don't know how many in the city. And also going to the stores is really special. Because only few people go there. There's only few people who can afford it. So I guess it would be really satisfying to know, I can actually spend money on this because I have the money. And then wear something really special.

A: And how would you evaluate the experience you would get probably or I don't know, if you had already this experience that you went in the store to buy something like in such a luxurious store?

B: I never bought something in this kind of fancy store but just less luxurious. I will probably be super excited. Because also it is a new experience.

A: Okay, yeah. And what would be maybe your expectations about this experience in the store? What do you what would you expect?

B: Well, I guess I expect to be... I would know that people would treat me really special because I know I can afford that brand.

A: Okay. And why do you think that these brands that you mentioned, and the one that where you bought the coat... So why do you think the brand where you bought your coat is less luxurious than the other one?

B: That's a good question. I kind of in my head. It's just so my coat is from Hugo Boss. So I kind of feel like it's just less fancy. I don't know. Because for me, this brand is more common in my life. So it's nothing really

special to me. But since I've never had anything from what did I mention Chanel?. This is like, it also seems more expensive. So it seems also more special to me. Because like Hugo Boss, they also have like things that are more affordable. If that makes sense? Yeah. So it just feels less special and more normal. So less luxurious.

A: Okay. And if Hugo Boss would be more expensive would that make a difference for you how luxurious you see the brand?

B: Yeah, I guess more luxurious. Because then I would like, need more money to actually afford it.... Yes, then it would be more kind of a luxury if I then can afford to buy something of it. Or if I then buy something.

A: Do you pay attention to the brands when you would buy? Or when you buy a purchase a luxurious product? We quickly touched already on that, could you explain us a little bit more?

B: Well, I said it depends. Like I said, if it's like the same product, and I might just buy the more well-known brand. But like the brand is not the first thing I look into, when I buy something luxurious.

A: Okay. So which kind of ... which role does the brand play when you buy something or would buy something luxurious?

B: I guess it does play a role. But like, first, I would think of the product itself and the features. And then I might think about the brand. So if I want I don't know, let's say another coat. And then I would, I would first think about like, how should it look like? What should it have? What should be the price range? And then I might look into what kind of what brands of those kinds of coats? That's it.

A: And why do you think brands are not adding that much to you? When you're buying this type of product?

B: I guess I'm just not the type of person that is so much into brands. Like, sometimes I have sometimes I pay attention to brands, sometimes I don't. But it's not. It's not that it's like a focus. And also, I don't have as a student we don't have that much money. Right now I do not pay that much attention to brands and it has to be a really, a really special occasion. I guess that's just maybe later when I earn money, brands would be more important for me because then I can afford it, to have more luxury. Right now. I think it's only like really little occasions that I can actually pay attention to those brands.

A: Do you think owning for example, this Hugo Boss coat or any other type of luxurious product would allow you to indicate to others that kind of person that you are?

B: No, I don't think so. I feel like that people they usually have a lot of brands, like luxurious brands, are more posh and everything. And I don't see myself as a posh person.

A: Yeah. Okay.

B: So I wouldn't like be like 'hey, look at my Hugo Boss coat', because it's Hugo Boss. And it was like, I don't know how many hundred euros. But yeah, I mean, there are people like that, but I don't think it reflects my personality.

A: Okay. But for example, when you would say no, like I would buy a car, or one of those products from these very high and luxurious brands and you said it would make you feel special? And like, because you can you could buy it. But would this interact in the way that you express yourself? With those products for example?

B: I guess I would, I would I mean, I would show it to others, but I would not be like too obvious about it and it would be more for myself than for others.

So, I would wear it and be happy because I know what's worth it. And then, then... of course, as I said it is nice if other acknowledge it. I said before, so they said, Oh, that's nice. But I wouldn't necessarily say everyone has to know what, what brand it is that I'm wearing. Or how much it cost.

A: [Explanation of the visual parts]

B: Yeah, that's advertising. Anything that attracts me, or that it's interesting?

A: Yes.

B: Well, I guess this one because it's different. [Stella McCartney] With the trash.

A: And why is it different?

B: It is interesting, because it looks horrible.

A: Okay. Why do you think it looks horrible?

B: Because it's trash.

A: How does it make you feel looking at those pictures?

B: I'm just wondering why people would do advertising this way. But. So, it wouldn't? Yeah, I wouldn't usually pay attention to this. Because it's just trash. It doesn't look good in any kind of way.

A: So, it wouldn't attract you?

B: Like to buy this brand?

A: Yes, or how would you evaluate the brand when you see it is related to it?

B: Well, without the name, I wouldn't even tell that it's a brand.

A: [Brief explanation about Stella McCartney Visual]

B: Yes, I thought so. It's nice that it's actually sustainable and that's great. But I just like from the campaign.

A: Does that influence your opinion about the brand? So, did you know the brand before?

B: I've heard of the brand before but nothing concrete.

A: So, with this background information, does this change anything? The perception you have of the brand?

B: It is good that they create awareness, even though I couldn't have told anything by the Pictures. And it's also good, what do you tell me about the brand. It's a sustainable and sustainability is really important Especially for like a clothing brand. Some of them might not be that sustainable of it. So, if they can also communicate it in a different way than pictures? That's great.

A: But what do you say sustainability is important? Is that something you pay attention to if you would buy luxury brands?

B: I would like to pay more attention to. I think it's really hard and like, like today on knowing everything where everything is produced, and how and what they use. But I think it's getting more and more important to me, and I would also like to know more about it.

And also I would like to pay more attention than I do right now.

A: And if you were to purchase a product from Stella McCartney, knowing all this story behind how, again, how would you feel when he would buy this?

B: I feel like no would feel better. Because it's also something good for the environment, or something not harmful for the environment. And so yeah, I guess then I would actually feel like I pay also for not only for the quality of the content, but also for the sustainable aspect. I feel like that would make me feel even better.

A: And would you pay extra? If you would know, that product has this aspect from a brand and from the other branded does not?

B: And if I have to choose, I may know, like one brand has all these features and one doesn't, then I will definitely go for the sustainable option.

A: Okay. Going back to the question, that you thought that buying a luxurious brand, wouldn't reflect your personality, because you think that it's just like, expensive? Or if it would be from a brand that has all these other values integrated? How would this affect your perception? What would you think about it?

B: I mean, if that changes the reflection of my personally... I guess more than just if it's just expensive? So at least it has some values that I share.. So yeah, I would I think that would reflect me more than it it's just something only luxurious without anything else. Yes. So yeah, it would be nice if it has those features.

A: Okay. And how would you prioritize those features then?

B: This sustainable aspect?

A: Yes, compared to like, as you said about features, you talked mainly about quality? And also, you talked about the price?

B: Well, I guess it depends on my situation. Right now, I would as a student, I will go for rather the price and quality. And then later when I can actually afford it. And I think these factors are higher, because then I can pay for it. And I can take the sustainable aspect into consideration. So, I wouldn't mind like then to pay extra for it.

A: Okay, even though it would be a luxurious product?

B: Yeah.

A: Okay, very interesting. Can you please look at the rest of the pictures? What else gets your attention?

B: Well, World Food Program, what is this about?[Balenciaga WFP visual]

A: [Explanation of Balenciaga WFP visual]

B: Okay, so, it also has kind of like a good cause...

A: What do you think about the brand?

B: Well, I guess it's basically the same. It's also for a good cause. So yeah, that's a good thing as well. And, yes, I would also if I have the money pay extra for luxury company that does that. Because it also helps the environment. It does good. And it's not just for creating revenue for the company, but also like a social aspect behind it.

A: And, for example, how about when you would see these two visuals, [Dior and Balenciaga 2]. What's the first thing that comes to your mind?

B: Okay, this is more pretty [Dior] and this looks more casual [Balenciaga 2]. More rundown I would say, I would associate this more with like, like this Dior with a luxury brand.

Oh, yeah, this looks more special [Dior]

A: Okay what do you mean, it was more special?

B: Because this looks, this already looks really luxurious. Lights and the big hall it fits more to luxury brands than the other background, this backyard.

A: And which one do think would influence you more or attract you more?

B: I guess, this one was the nice hall [Dior]. Because this just doesn't look nice [Balenciaga 2]. It doesn't look too appealing to me. Well, this[Dior] gives me more of a feeling like pleasure, it's just more satisfying. Because it also like, Dior is also like the brand I associate very expensive, special. So, I would feel like also the environment is more special. And...

A: Why is this one not really giving you this special feeling [Balenciaga 2]?

B: Because it's just a backyard, which is not nice. The whole visual is just not attractive. Also, the colors. And then there's trash here as well. Yeah, this graffiti here, so are completely different than the other.

A: Okay. And then if you look at the rest, is there anything that comes to your mind when you see those visuals?

B: Yeah, the Louis Vuitton one is really cute [Louis Vuitton 1].

A: What do you mean with cute?

B: Well, it's a kid in an oversized sweater. I think that would actually attract me because I think it's super cute.

A: And how about the one below of the same brand? [Louis Vuitton 2]

B: Yeah, this one [Louis Vuitton 1] would attract me more than the other one [Louis Vuitton 2]

A: Why do you think that?

B: this is the kid just gives me more natural feeling I would say like, here [Louis Vuitton 2], it's just a model, showing us her perfect nails and the bag. And here [Louis Vuitton 1] is just a kid in a sweater which is more down to earth as the other one. I would be more attracted by the kid actually. Because it just looks more natural and more appealing. I would say. This looks really artificial [Louis Vuitton 2] than the other one.

A: Artificial? Why is that?

B: [Talking about Louis Vuitton 1] Because of her face. And then also how she has her hands like really unnatural and how she's lying there. And then she also looks kind of posh. So it just it's just a typical advertising. While this one is rather special.

A:[Brief Explanation of the visual Louis Vuitton 1]

How would you evaluate the brand, once you know the story behind?

B: I actually I mean, I could have told by the bag, but I didn't really think of it. But I think this [Louis Vuitton 1] is still nicer than this one [Louis Vuitton 2]. With the thoughts behind it [Louis Vuitton 1], this is way nicer. And the other is just typical [Louis Vuitton 2].

A: Yeah. What do you mean with nice?

B: As I said, is like more appealing and more natural.

A: So would you evaluate the brand more positively or negatively once you know all the stories?

B: I would say more positively.

A: Okay. And if you would purchase something, imagine you would purchase something from this brand, but not knowing about this story how would that make you feel?

B: I guess it would just be like any other just expensive luxury product. It wouldn't add any extra value like the sustainable, sustainable aspect or social aspect where before it would be just a normal luxurious, luxury product.

A: And compared to the other one?

B: I guess with this, it would make me feel better because I know like the brand's inclusive as well and includes the social aspect. I guess this would make me feel a little better than just this one.

A: And why do you think it would also make you feel better or why would this be more appealing to you?

B: Because inclusion is really important and I know that the brand focuses on social inclusion and I'm just happy that I can like, I would say, contribute to through my luxury and I can also contribute to like a brand that actually has a deeper cause. Maybe that's not too much but like they actually have some values and that I share with them. So and it's not just like they exploit people and all those bad things that usually happen in the clothing industry. Yes, it would just give me a better feeling because I know that brand is doing something good as well apart from making nice products.

A: Great. We also wanted to talk about [Brief Explanation about LVMH and Rihanna visual/case]

B: I think the first idea is that I don't really care much because it's just a singer. So she can she's not really someone I care about. So I guess I don't really have an opinion on this.

A: Okay, but would you, if now the collection would be out ,would you consider buying it?

B: If they have nice things and I see them somewhere in there like it then maybe, but I wouldn't go with it or go for it just because I know it's this new brand.

A: Okay. And will change the way you would perceive all these brands when they would launch something with Rihanna?

B: No, it wouldn't, no, because I'm not influenced by celebrities. Maybe it does something to like Rihanna fans. Since I'm, she's great. But I'm not that much into her. So, I guess it doesn't affect me.

A: And does it affect your opinion about the brands like for example, LV, that they do something like that?

B: No.

A: Why not?

B: I guess it's just that so far, I don't have anything from Louis Vuitton. So, I don't really have like a relationship with that brand. And I also don't really have any relationship like Rihanna. So, it doesn't really bother me. And that also, like, don't know enough about Louis Vuitton.

A: Okay. Yeah, like in general now that we've commented on all these different cases, what do you think in general now with all these luxury brands?

B: I guess I haven't like before when we talked about it, I haven't thought of all those extra aspects of like the social aspects, because there I was more focused on like the price and, yeah, the basic of luxury art. So I guess I'm now even more aware, but like all the features that come with that it wasn't before.

A: Okay, so do you think it would make you be more aware of the luxurious brands now that if you hear all these stories?

B: Yeah, I think so. Actually, now that I know that brands focus more on sustainability more than others, I guess that would affect me.

Debriefing the interview and thanking the interviewee

Respondent 8

Welcome and Briefing

A: So to start with the questions. First, more about luxury in general, if you hear the word luxury, what comes to your mind? What's the first thing that pops up?

B: Something I can't afford.

A: Okay, yeah.

B: I see it as something that people that you will, like, try to achieve, and this is both, like, a way to show off their wealth, but also to enjoy it, you know, because there's like luxury clothing, which is, you know, kind of a show of thing, but if you are thinking kind of in luxury hotels and so on, it is also a matter of comfort, so, there's both, I guess.

A: Okay. And if you think about luxury, more in an abstract sense, how would you describe what luxury is for you?

B: What I would consider luxurious?

A: Yes. for yourself, not related to any, like items or service or anything but more like in general, abstract way.

B: It's a I guess, it's like, extreme comfort. It's not having to worry about anything.

And it's white, for some reason. White, not like racially whites, but I like colors ... the concepts is for me, like immaculate white.

A: Why do you think that extreme comfort and that it's something that you don't have to worry about... Why do you relate this to luxury?

B: because luxury, is something that I consider like to be the creme de la creme. See what I mean? So it's like, the best that you can have, you can have the best, then the best is sort of not having to worry about 'all that shit'.

In that sense, if you can have luxury, then it's because you don't have to worry about all the difficulties that come with less comfortable and good things.

A: That's an interesting point. Okay. And to get a little bit more concrete, have you ever purchased something you would consider as luxury?

B: Yeah, when I went to I think once, I went to Bangkok for 10 days on my own, and I decided that I would get a five star hotel. But I know I could have saved up a lot, and that was luxurious to me, because it was a gift to myself. Because I, when I go to hotels, usually I get not something like that, especially if I'm traveling on

my own. But I was like, 'Okay, this is the time I'm going to take myself so like treat myself'. In that sense that's luxurious to me. Okay, that's interesting.

A: Okay, and why did you book this hotel, for example? And not another option?

B: So basically, I was in Singapore for a while, and I had to share my room with someone for the entire time that I was there. So I didn't have any personal space for a long time. So when I had that vacation, I was like, 'Okay, I need some time for myself'. And I've been deprived of this for so long time, that I am actually going to get some really good.

And so that was why I sort of felt like I'd been deprived of something that I regularly need. And so now that I had the opportunity, I was going to make up for it really hard.

A: Okay, yes. And you said that this would be like a treat for yourself. So when you were experiencing this, how are you feeling when you bought these expensive hotel, and then you were there?

B: It kind of felt good in the sense that it was my own money. And it was something that I had to achieve for myself that I was doing for myself. It was good in like a self care kind of things. I enjoyed it, it was kind of like, suspended and I didn't have anything to worry about, and I could just go to the pool and then go in my room and, you know, order in and just be very, very calm. So that that was see how it felt.

A: So you said that it, it's something more to yourself, but did you, for example, tell other people that you were buying this hotel option? Or?

B: No.

A: Okay, and how about if, what other people would say would that influence, you?

B: I guess I mean, I ended up telling some people that were like 'oh, what are you doing', and so on. And so they were kind of questioning maybe, because it's not very me to do that. I'm not usually the kind of person who will purchase that kind of thing. So there was a little bit of questioning from them. But it didn't influence me that much. I guess, when people pointed it out to me that I was doing that it felt a little uncomfortable, or not uncomfortable, but kind of

you know, like, kind of weird, because I know, it's not a typical me thing to do. So, but because I had made that decision, and I'm very stubborn. It didn't influence me that much. what they would think, but I do believe that on a regular level. If people deem what I'm doing to be luxurious, I would feel kind of uncomfortable, because it's not what I look to do.

A: Why do you think it's something that is not really you?

B: Because, on a daily basis, I'm very down to earth and something that's luxurious is something that is, as a student, very beyond me. And it's not something that I think about very much in my daily life that I want to do something luxurious.

And so in that sense, yeah, I don't expect it from me, and people don't expect it from me either. So.

A: And you think that luxury, in general, it's something that it's not really down to earth?

B: I think that it depends on the intention behind getting that luxury. So I don't think that everyone should be down to earth all the time. That would be boring, but in my sense, in any case, something luxurious is in order for it to be luxurious and it needs to be not something I have all the time and used to be like an exception. Otherwise, it just becomes the norm. So it's not luxury anymore. So yeah, it's like outside of your daily life, and, and I forgot my point, but yeah, it's not really something down to earth, or you wouldn't see it as something and down to earth.

It has to be like an exception. Reach for something more. I don't know...

A: And when you were a child or younger, do you remember having a like a dream for the idea of like, when I have money, I will like to buy this, or something that luxurious? Or an experience or a service?

B: I mostly wanted to travel. So I guess that was that. What I want to do right now yeah, like, well, I don't I don't know if this is luxurious. But I know that if I do have some money to decide, the obvious thing for me is do the traveling and not the five star hotel part, just the experience. So that's what I wanted as

a child. I didn't think that I know that I wanted those like, kind of Gameboy things and my mom wouldn't allow me to do but everything it was a luxury was just because other kids had it. That's all I could think of.

A: And why did you say that you don't know if you consider a travel luxurious? But for yourself, from your point of view, would you consider that something luxurious for you?

B: I mean, I guess it depends when you put behind luxury at this point openly imagine like kind of like in a in a wealthy way. But unless you take the luxury part as well, what I said about comfort and treating yourself. Yeah, then in that sense, they're like small luxuries in everyday life, which are like getting a good coffee and going to coffee shop and reading a book. So if you put luxury down to like a particular pleasure. And that says the traveling little solution to me because it makes me feel good.

A: Okay.

B: But I was thinking more when I think that but it's not like a word that I would associate with that. Immediately in case.

A: So okay, this is like about your childhood. But what about I mean, you're graduating when?

B: in June

A: But so let's imagine when you finish your studies, and that's implied you have a nicely paid job. Is there something to think about now that you will later when you have the money? You would like to buy it? That is luxurious?

B: Yes I want a Gucci jacket.

A: Okay tell us a little bit more. Like, which kind and why?

B: I don't know. I stumbled upon like a picture of one of their lines, that came out a couple years ago. And it just really like, I really liked it. But I cannot afford this. At all. It is more than I have a bank account. So it's like a splurge that I would do for myself if I could. Yeah, so that's like, kind of luxurious brand. That's the only thing in that sense that I can think of otherwise if I had money I would just starting to travel more.

A: But if you had the money to buy the Gucci jacket, what do you think is your motivation to buy it?

B: I just really like the design of it, and it is something that calls out to me, but I don't know what it is.

A: Okay, and if you could buy it, and you would be wearing it and how would you feel?

B: I think, really good in the sense that it always feels good when you do something for yourself that you've worked for and that you wanted for a long time. And also confident probably it would feel like not necessarily, I wouldn't see it as a bragging thing, which I sometimes see that people when they were luxury, the item, sometimes my first immediate thought of like, okay, they kind of just want to show off. And that's why I usually, like I'm not very attracted to luxurious things and brands, because I, I kind of see it as a showing off thing, which I dislike, but... so those particular items, like the hotel that I was in, it is like self care, that was, you know, because I wanted it and so I wasn't bragging about it. Yeah, you know, and I think it would be the same if I got the Gucci jean jacket, it would just be like a thing that has a different style that I really wanted that I really like, and so I would immediately feel very good.

A: Okay, so you said that luxury brands are mostly used to show off or you link them to the people showing off? So first, why do you think so? And why do you think this is like, why don't you like it?

B: I guess, because most people that I've seen, wearing or having, I don't know, what kind of bags and so on, they will buy it often for the brand. And, and I it's not like I wanted to touch that or you can immediately to me, that feels like, well, they're not doing it for themselves. They're doing it because of the brand because they want to show other people that they can't afford the brand. So that puts me off a little bit. Because to me, it's just according to much importance to material things where you could, you know, do something more for the people around you. Yeah, that's something that just ticks me off a little bit. And so I end up having, like, I don't have a negative view of luxury things. But usually the people that have them a lot, I tend to sort of distance myself. Also because I do I can't relate to that. So to me, it's like they're putting a little bit of a distance thing.

Hey, look, I'm kind of better than you. And so that feeds me up. It's not the luxury thing. It's the attitudes that I usually associate with people that have them.

A: Very interesting, when you say they do it for the brand, what do you exactly mean with that?

B: I mean, because luxury brands are to a certain, they do have good material. You do have beautiful designs, and so on, and so avantgarde or whatever. But a lot of them are just selling the fact that is luxury. They're selling the fact that they're offering a product that's over the price range of other things. And in that sense, it's sort of selling the idea that if you can do this, then, you know, you're up there, you're doing something that's more than what other people can do. And if that's the thinking, behind everyone that buys it, they're not doing it, because they particularly think that there's something more to this experience. It's just that they can do it. So they will.

A: And what do you what is your opinion of like, these brands, showing or selling only the luxurious, like you're buying us because you can, and therefore, it means that you have money?

B: I mean, I'm not going to judge the business.

A: But what's your view on that?

B: I don't really have one. I mean, I never really thought about it beyond the fact that, because I do think that if I look at luxurious brands I will be like, 'Oh, well, this thing they did is nice, this thing isn't. So some things are not worth it and I would not buy them and if people are wearing them then I'll be like the only did it for the for that and some other things like that jean jacket, I am like 'Okay, well, it's too expensive for me, but I would still buy it, if I could, since I do believe that they must be selling something that did call out to me. Even though I can't really pinpoint what. So I guess it depends on what they're buying but the ideas of offering something that it's just it's like it's normal, because there is this trait of human nature and this normal that some businesses will take advantage of it because it works. And they want to make a living. So I'm not so sure, that's not really where my issue is. I don't believe that. That the world, that there will ever be a world without like luxury. Because it is, so that people, it's like selling a dream kind of. People will always want that. So of course, they'll always be businesses selling that.

A: Ok. I if you had to buy a luxury product, like for example, the Gucci jacket or the hotel, what would be the most important features for you like the characteristics?

B: Something that I personally feel like an attachment towards.

A: Okay. So what do you mean by what kind of attachment? Or could you explain a little bit more?

B: Yeah, it depends kind of, I guess, it's about the memories I'm going to have with it or about it. For example, the luxury hotel, it's something that I felt like at that moment, I really needed. And that I knew that I was going to remember fondly. Because it was a moment that I took for myself that when I'm having a little less good time, I'm going to be able to think back into 'Oh, well, I did this for myself', you know, it was a very good time whereas if I buy this Gucci jacket is going to remind me of when I wanted it. And why really, you know, when I first saw it, and I was like, oh, wow, okay, this is gorgeous. Whatever. And so I feel an attachment and like, kind of remembrance about something that was good. So that would be useful. And what would push me to buy something that's outside of my means.

A: Okay and would the fact that other people are also wearing the Gucci jacket or something like that influence you?

B: I think if everyone around me wore them, I did not want it.

A: Why not?

B: Because I have, I mean, I think it's a bit normal that you don't want to do what everyone else is doing. And that's for me. If I did it, while everyone else around me was doing it, and I would feel like I was just doing it to sort of be on par with everyone else, when actually my, for me to go through is something that I feel is outside of my daily life is not really me. It would really need to be because I personally, feel an attachments, for which I wanted to do it. Yeah, if everyone else was doing it, I would question my motives a little bit.

A: And then would you consider not to buy it? So imagine your jacket and suddenly would get trendy again?

B: I think if everyone else was doing it, I would never have an attachment towards it.

A: But are there any brands that would fulfill like these features that you just mentioned?

B: I mean, I like it. I don't even know if Yves Saint Laurent is luxurious. So...

A: But it depends if you think they're luxurious or not, your opinion matters to us.

B: I don't think so I just like their perfume I use. NO, but I'm not attached to brands very much. Yeah I cannot think of anything. I mean, I will admire some brands because of commercials that I saw. So if I saw, they won't really make me want to buy the product, because I don't have an attachment towards them. But I'll respect and admire the brand itself. I remember when I was a kid, I watched the Cartier commercial, and I thought it was gorgeous. And so in that sense, whenever I see like a Cartier shop, I'm like, Oh, yeah, they you know, they did that I have a fondness towards them. So probably, if someone bought me something from Cartier, I would like it more than Swarovski. But I still wouldn't really care about the products, I would just because I just have more of an affinity with that brand because of that thing they did. And it's the same with Dior who have never considered or really want anything from them yet, because it's I've watched so many of those at all do commercial just from watching TV, that I feel like I have a little bit of a connection or whatever. You know, if I see it, I'll be like, 'Oh, yeah, you know, they did that.' Yeah, but it won't make me even push me to buy it.

A: Okay, but does it change your perspective? In your have been watching those commercials? Like, does it affect your opinion about them?

B: Yeah it will from being completely neutral and a little, maybe even a little, like, you know, only rich people buy this, whatever, I will probably be like, you know, they did something quite nice. Even though I won't be pushed to want one and I'll be like, that was quite cool. So I'll actually give them my respects.

A: Imagine you would have two very similar product. And just the brand would be different. How would you choose then between those two?

B: Well, it would depend a it's the same product and it would depend whether I watched a commercial from one. But otherwise, I really have no idea like I don't know most luxurious brands, so probably I would not know the difference. Maybe I would ask my fashion forward friend. What she likes best and then I'll be like, Okay, well, I'll take that because she likes it if I don't have a personal opinion on it. Then It really wouldn't matter to me.

A: Okay,so this is related to what you said before that it wouldn't need you would need to feel a personal connection.

B: Yes.

A: Okay. And, okay, which brands would you consider as luxurious for you?

B: And then some I don't know brands but like older kind of Dior things. And hotels for that kind of goes within. So like tourism and the hotels that are luxurious, so I guess just everything that advertises itself as say everything that is very expensive, and that has a brand name very attached to it. So if I can, if I've heard it before, and it's very expensive, I'll be like, 'Oh, this is a this is a luxury',

A: Okay,so you would relate to the expensiveness.

B: Yes

Yeah, and the fact that it has, I mean some things are very expensive just because because they're expensive to make, you know? if it's very expensive and it has like a name that I've heard before you know that they're actually advertising their name they want to stand for you know, a luxury brand and then I am like okay that's a luxurious brand, but I don't think about luxury that much.

A: so next question was going to be do you pay attention to the brands when buying a luxurious product?

B: yeas as I already said, it is more about the product than the brand. Expect maybe for Gucci.

A: Why you think it's like that?

B: because [Gucci] there is a singer that I really like that mentioned that he liked it and so I so I got this like little affinity for it. Yeah, that it had done like for like commercials with them. And then I saw that product that I really liked. So then I decided that I had more of an interest and I follow them on Instagram, which I don't do with any other thing. so this would be like my one exception, of luxurious brands that I like.

A: and what do you think about Gucci in general?

B: I think they've done some cool things. Yeah. Like they've just because there have been more products that I saw from them that I thought were pretty. So it's more because of the design yeah.

A: Okay. So do you think owning luxurious brand would allow you to indicate to others that kind of person that you are?

B: Well, it depends what I buy, right. But I think if I did buy a luxury product, then it would be because I felt the personal attachment.. And in that sense, yeah. That the product I choose. All those things, you know, that I could have bought for the same sum of money. I chose this one. So yeah. And that's as a show something coming up

B: And how important it is for you that other people see that you have bought this?

A: Not at all.

B: Could you elaborate a little bit more, why not?

because of my innate sort of dislike that people show off about the things because they're expensive. Yeah, I, I wouldn't want people to get the wrong idea and thing that I was just buying it to show off. So if they would see it, I would have the whole like, 'Yeah, but you know, it's because I really like it' kinda like defense reaction, because I don't want people to think that of me? So in that sense it wouldn't, Like, it would matter to me that they knew it was because I was attached to the objects. So I wouldn't want them to see that I bought a luxury item, I would want them to see that I bought just something pretty. You know, more about the product, and then the brand.

A: Okay. But what if people would come to you and say, 'Oh, this is such a nice jacket? Gucci? How would that make you feel then? Because if they would compliment you, like on the jacket, but also they would mention the brand?

B: I mean, just like it was for me when I was at like five star hotel? Yeah, a bit uncomfortable when they mentioned indirectly the price. But happy to talk about why I did it.

A: Okay, I don't know if I'm getting this right. You said that you would buy it because you feel personally identify with it. So it would be like a reflection of your own taste for example?

B: It's like a need. So in a sense, doing it shows that I really cared about it, because I put that much money into it that I usually wouldn't use. So it is important immediately for me whenever I do a luxury things for myself. It's that I really needed it. So I really feel strongly about it. So in that sense, I won't mind people noticing, because it is a very, you know, in itself, the fact that I did it shows that it was important to me. But I don't want them to think that it was just because of the brand because no, it was important to me that I did this. Not not just because I wanted to have that branded item.

A: Okay. Yeah.

[Brief explanation about the visuals part]

B: this one [Dior Visual] because I really recognize it. So much. Yes. It's always on French TV. Like, especially when I was growing up there. I think she's called Charlize Theron the actress.

I've heard of this one. I think Stella McCartney is one of those that if, like has forbidden for fur, right?

A: Yes or animal letter.

B: Yeah. It's like a vegan brand. So I read an article about that, which I thought good of. Because I care about animal cruelty. So um, So and that sense like from a distance thing that that's cool.

A: Okay. And if you look now, at the visuals or the campaign photos, what do you think about that? Seeing that?

B: I mean, it's very political, about the ecology. And the world. So that also helps me think that, I like the idea behind the brand, behind this campaign that they want to, I guess, offer products that's not like other brands, which don't care about the environment, but that, you know, they're, they want you to pay a lot of money, but for something that's good for the environment.

A: Okay, you said before, 'I think this is cool, even though from a distance'. So would you evaluate? How would you evaluate the brand in general?

B: Okay, like neutral positive. Neutral in the sense, that I won't make me buy anything from them. But when I see the name, I'll still be like, right, you know, they're better than most of the luxurious brands, that I don't know. Yeah, I'll have like a bit more positive opinion of them. So if I see someone wearing a Stella McCartney, maybe I'll be less critical of it, then if I sell them or something else. Yes. I'll be like, 'Oh, isn't that the one that's like animal cruelty free?' And then I'll just call me by name. I think that would impact me in this way.

A: Okay, but you still wouldn't buy it?

B: Yeah. I mean, unless there's an amazing product that I really want. Because I'm still like, not attached to that. And it doesn't. It makes me feel a bit more positive about it. But not enough to make me want to buy products from this brand. Like, yeah, because I consider that there's a lot of other products that are within my price range. Yes. That are also cruelty free and good for the environment. That make more sense for me to buy.

A: Okay. So it's also because of the money? We are also interested in if that would change after university when you have a well paid job?

B: But I, I still wouldn't like it, even if I did have a lot of money. Well, I don't know how I'm going to be in the future. But I don't think that I would turn to luxury brands like, 'Oh, this is something that I've wanted to spend money on'. Because it isn't so if I didn't have money wouldn't be that my first choice. I would probably use it to go on trips, which, yeah, that's where I would use some overflowing money.

A: Okay interesting point. I think you were also pointing out on this one.

B: Yeah, because I've seen this like seeing a lot around. So I just noticed that [Louis Vuitton 2]. like the Louis Vuitton thing, but I don't really have any feelings towards it.

A: Okay. [Explanation of campaign]. How would you evaluate this?

B: I mean, knowing this, I think it's a good initiative from him. But in the sense that I believe that everyone in society should do that, so it doesn't impact, again, like the Stella McCartney thing, it doesn't impact my life. It will not make me want to buy this bag more than before. I'll just be like, 'all right. That's a that's a good thing that's happening currently in an economy' but it doesn't touch me, you know?

It's like when something really like whether law passes that I think is good in a country that's very far away from me. I'm like, that's good. But I don't feel personally connected to it. I'll be happy for everyone that is concerned with this. And it's a good step for the world in general. It will not make me visit that country or something like, you know, it will not make me buy their products, I would just think that it is a good thing that's happening.

A: Okay. And if you would buy like a product from this brand, or from Stella McCartney, knowing all the stories behind, how would you feel or what would you think?

B: It would be an added plus, I guess I'm assuming that I bought it because I really liked it in the first place. And I'm like, okay, on top of that, it's good. Because, you know, because they're not as shitty as other brands can be, or they're doing something that's more than others are doing.

A: And how about when other people would see you wearing this?

B: I mean, then that depends if they know about it or not, right? And if they go, Oh, you bought a Louis Vuitton? I'll be like, Mhm [negative impression].

A: But if they got to know about all these news stories?

B: Then it would be cool to talk about, for sure. Because I'm interested in like, the political aspect of it apart from the brand, so I would have immediately diverged from the brand talk to the to the actual political talk. Yeah, unless they're really into fashion and they have all these crazy stories and I'm always open to hearing about things I don't know about, because it's interesting to know what other people care about, but I would automatically like divers the conversation to the actual subjects beyond the brand.

A: But for example, you were looking at this other ad of Louis Vuitton [Louis Vuitton visual 1], but you also looked and Balenciaga and Dior, what do you think about these ones?

B: Well, this, just seeing this picture is really like spot on the thing that if that reminds me that all the people that buy it or like wealthy, want to show off. It really dives into that for me. And with this [Visual] I see it. Also just the picture. Yeah, it looks less commercial, more artsy. And that's something that I am much more like. And so for example, if we go back to the fact that I like Gucci, it is also because I feel like most of their..., the reason why I follow them on Instagram, most of the posts are very artsy, were some that I value more than this picture for example [Pointing at other Louis Vuitton Visual]. So okay, this won't make me buy it. But I have better, you know, just to clarify, but I will have a better opinion of it. Because I'd be like, Oh, it's, it's kind of like art more than just to show off of wealth. And so okay, the brands that sort of shift. Does that shift? I guess? I'm more interested, more positive about it.

Then here Dior literally is about luxury, it is literally about the fact that what you're buying is expensive, and diamonds and gold and awesome. And if you're wearing that, then you're like a queen. Right? That's sort of what they're selling, which is something that I don't care for. I just really know their commercial so good that I let you know that I you end up not liking it, but sort of be like, Oh, yeah, you know, but I don't care for it. For the brand itself.

[Balenciaga] This is more like, I guess it's just because what they're selling is more urban, or whatever. I don't really know them. He's wearing like a world food program outfit. Which is also the kind of political step that the brands are taking these days, I guess, also to position themselves as something that's more than just unwealthy, but they didn't want to seen badly, you know. So there's also some of that you can question the motives, of course.

A: Be Seen badly. What do you mean with that?

B: More and more these days there, there's a demand for people to be politically correct to actually make a step and so on. And it's something that is expected way more, and so lose your old grounds, are trying to be, you know, trying to appeal to that side and luxury brands need to do it as well, because rich people that can afford it also want to be seen as, you know, good people and feel like, being good people, you know. So in that sense, they also have to take this stance, so that's, in my opinion, also why they hired a black creative director, which no one would have done 20 years ago. And it's a good stuff. But but i think is also what the world is society is forcing them to do regardless. I mean, I guess it's their idea behind what they're selling is different. just from looking at this Balenciaga wants to be more like cool for young people who are rich, I remember. I think I saw some like meme on Instagram about the shoes, which are like weird and crazy. And that's, maybe they're going a little bit also using kind of black, rural, hip hop culture to inspire themselves. And so they're also kind of having that in this background ad whereas this is Versailles kind of setting.

A: Yeah. Why do you think this is cooler for young people?

B: when I said it was cool, I think because right now there's like, very much interested in hip hop, both musically. If you looked at who are like big stars, a lot of them are hip hop artists or are you know. So, for now, there is an interest that is taking in the urban kind of idea. And in that sense there, this more traditional [Dior], I would say, and this is more feeding into what right now, the youth likes.

A: Okay. And which one would you personally, which one do you think we would feel more identified with or would attract you more?

B: If I had to choose one probably Balenciaga just because I sort of reject the idea of this like wealth thing. As I mentioned before, but I've also haven't seen a single Balenciaga product that I was like, Oh, this is beautiful. So I probably wouldn't buy it either but in itself in like the idea behind the branding, I would probably go for Balenciaga more than for Dior.

What is this one with Rihanna and LVMH here?

A: [Brief explanation about Rihanna and LVMH case/visual]

B: Well, I mean, I like Rihanna. So I will probably look on it a bit more kindly than other brands. I don't know. But I don't like her enough to just buy it. Because it's Rihanna. But probably I would feel a little positive about it. The way that I'm a little positive about McCartney, because they're doing something good, you know, that I care about this is, I think Rihanna is a really cool person. I am not a great fan of her songs, but I think as a person, she said some cool like, she stood for some interesting things, that I like.

A: Could you give as an example?

B: She talked about like feminist issues and society. So racial issues, and just the way that she's quite unapologetic, I guess about who she is, makes me like her as a character. You know what, what she is presenting yourself as, I don't know. We'll have to see like how it will be.

A: So far, there's also no more information. But, I think we were curious about how a company that owns all these brands, as we said, they are well known for being luxurious and high end...

B: But the fact that they chose Rihanna is very telling. It's like Balenciaga. Because she is that person. That's why I like her, you know that she's very representative of the youth. You know what we like, again, the urban idea, the fact that she's politically involved and so on, so the fact that they're doing this is also showing that they also want to have at least one of their brands that is feeding into that, also, so you can analyze it.

But in general, I don't think it's new that. I mean, for some brands had very famous actresses, to, you know, in their commercials and so the idea is very old. Obviously, everyone has been doing that.

A: But this will be different. It would be Rihanna's brand, she would not just being in the commercials.

B: Right. True. Yeah.

A: So just to clarify, it is not about her being a model. But her actually creating a luxurious brand.

B: So that makes me think probably she's going to have some products, she's gonna have a branding idea that's going to correspondence, all sorts of her image obviously. And so in that sense, it will be in the way that the Stella McCartney thing and what was it? The other one that had a political message? Yeah, Louis Vuitton right now is doing. But again, so I feel more positively about it. But I would not buy it.

A: So in general brands moving into this direction, how do you perceive this?

B: In general... But it's, it's making me feel positive in the sense that I'm like, Okay, if luxury brands are moving that shows because they are the top tier and the top tier, I would

assume that they don't really care about that much, you know, about, like, what the rest of society is dealing with, what kind of shit they're dealing with. So the fact that the top tier is also moving towards that, is make me think 'Oh, the world is, you know, politically moving towards a place that I like better. And so in that sense, it makes me feel more positive about society in general. I see it as a sign of things moving along. And as them being the whistleblower, you know, as I mean, the first person I'm thinking, if they're doing that, then it's because everyone is doing that.

A: And before, you also said that you kind of reject the idea of like buying things just because they are expensive, or all these people were buying these products, because of all this, just to show off? And if then you would know about all the stories behind and all these movements that are happening, or at least that we showed in these examples. would that affect your perception in that?

B: I think that most people will, because, yes, they are politically involved. Yes, they are doing this.

But there's still placing themselves as luxurious brands. And so I think that people would maybe then develop an affinity for certain way, because it stands for what they like, but they'll still at the end of the day buy it,

because, it is, you know, a sign of wealth. And that's why it doesn't make me feel better about them. But it's still wouldn't make me take that step.

A: Okay

B: So I think that when people do take that step, either, they're like me, and they're like, super like this product, you know, but they'll still be like, it's because it is the brand that I was looking at other ways they could go to any other, like environmentally involved brand. There are so many of them. Yeah.

Debriefing the interview and thanking the interviewee

Respondent 9

Welcome and Briefing

A: One of the first questions I wanted to ask you, it's what is the first thing that comes to your mind when you think about luxury?

B: Probably actually, fashion and designer brands probably and also about the whole industry that is evolved around it, like that so many people are connected to this designer circle of fashion people like, there are models that present the clothes, then there are the designers themselves that are like artists, but also like, creators, maybe also a bid stars that are admired by other people, but then they also brands in the, in the end, like human brands most of the time, and then there are all the magazines writing about it. Yeah. So that's a big industry around this designer fashion.

A: Okay, why do you think that fashion is the first thing that came to your mind?

B: I don't know. Maybe because I'm writing my thesis now about fashion as well. So maybe that's something that I'm invested in right now. And, but yeah, in general, obviously. That's also, it could also be architecture, maybe, but then again, I'm maybe more interested in fashion then like architecture, furniture or whatever. So yeah.

A: As an abstract concept what does luxury mean to you?

B: Well, luxury could be a lot of things, I think. It could be having enough money to live, then maybe also having enough holiday days to like when you think about work, to have enough time to relax and get energy back, like your energy levels, it could also be that everyone in your family is healthy, that you have a good relationship with your family and friends. That's all like luxury things. Also maybe going to a restaurant from time to time. And yeah, all these things that make life nicer, probably.

A: And how do you think they make your life nicer? In which way?

B: Well, they all add up to your own happiness, I would say. I mean, going on holiday, then it's also going on holiday and being able to have money to stay in a hotel or apartment or whatever, like being able to afford stuff. But I think the first thing that comes to my mind besides like luxury goods, because I said fashion before, is also having luxury things that other people maybe, cannot have in their life or don't have in their life. For example, being able to go on holidays like things that you might also need to work for. Yeah.

A: Okay, and have you ever purchased something that you would consider luxurious?

B: Yes, I have. So I own Louis Vuitton bag. And then I also have like a wallet from Aigner. It's a German brand,. I think they are from Bavaria. And and what else? I probably can tell you a lot more things that I have.Okay, I would also say, MacBook and iPhones are probably also part of it.

Because it's first of all very expensive. It's a designer item. And it's also something probably to show your status in a way. Yeah, so that would be like the things I would consider, like the most actually, but then I also like to purchase most of my clothes from a brand called Closed. They are also like a German brand more like stylish and very expensive. And they always use like, animal fibers. And it was produced in Europe, and yeah, so that's where all my money goes.

A: Okay. And why did you mention these bags from Louis Vuitton? And all these around brands of luxury? Why would you think they're luxurious?

B: I think first of all, because of the price point, definitely. I mean, they are all too expensive for what they actually deliver or give you like, I mean, it's still a bag. And obviously, I'm always one of those people that says I would rather spend more money on a bag because I have it like every every day I have it for a while also, I think because like these designer bags, for example, they don't go out of style kind of. So you can always like resell them if you don't like them anymore. So it's more worth of an investment maybe? Yeah, then also probably, because they are from like fashion designer brands. Like, as something that I would consider as like, yeah, designer brand. Yeah.

A: Why are you the fact that there's a designer in? Why do you associate designer brands to luxury?

B: Well it does not necessarily have to be like that, I mean there are a lots of very small labels. And I would also consider the people that are behind this label, as like designers, but I mean, like those luxury. And I would also consider those as fashion designers. But yeah, I don't have any of those kind of things.

A: Okay. You said that you also purchased from a brand that uses animal fibers, yeah,

B: It is called Closed.

A: Yes. Is that is that like a feature that you value?

B: Yeah, and I value high quality products, I would say. And I value if I can, like, also if I buy something from a fast fashion company, for example, I would most of the time, buy something and have it for a long time. Obviously, there are some pieces that I dispose after a while, because I don't know, they are super trendy. And they go out of style very quickly. But if I look into my closet, I don't have that many clothes, and I rather spend more money on stuff and then have it for a longer time. And I think what they like the pieces of clothes, they're very timeless. And I have worn them for quite a while. And I value if I'm able to do that with clothes. And I think yeah, they're timeless, but they have this modern twist. And I think yeah, they are fashionable. So that's why I buy them. Yeah, and for the animal fibers, for example, I value like if the product is not produced with plastic fibers, I always check this label inside the clothes to see because I think they start smelling very bad if you sweat, yeah. So so that's yeah, one of the decisions I make in the store basically.

A: And how about the fact that they are producing in in Europe?

B: And well, that's not the main point why I purchase it but it adds up to having a good perception about the brand, kind of.

A: Why do you think is that?

B: Because this shows me that it's not super mass produced? Because they would not do that if they would like they wouldn't mass produce something in Europe properly, because it is too expensive to do that. And it's like a smaller label maybe. And maybe also bit more exclusive, in a sense. Not that I want to wear like exclusive things. I don't mind if someone else also has this. But yeah, that's why I mentioned them before.

A: And then a LV bag for example, and why did you buy it?

B: Well, I actually think, well, I still I would not buy it again. To be honest, but it's because of the brand, I would probably it's not that I would not buy a design brand when buying a bag again, but it's because of the brand. But I come from this place where it's a bit more normal, I would say to have these like designer things. Yeah, I got clearly influenced by my surroundings. Every girl kind of had a Louis Vuitton bag and also liked it. And it was probably also kind of being part of a group. But then for example, when I started studying somewhere else, and no one would wear anything like designer. I was very embarrassed, because for a Louis Vuitton, that's why I would also not buy it again, the logo is like all over the bag, and then everyone knows what it is. And I think not everyone knows how much it costs, but they know that it's expensive. And especially in our age, I mean, I purchased it from my own money that I earned after school because I was working. So I didn't get it from like my family. But still, the perception that you give to other people who might not have that much money, I think wasn't for me then at that time, so I bought it and I also use it, but I don't use it as much anymore as I used to, and for example here in Copenhagen, and don't even have it with me, because I know that other people here don't have that much money and I don't want to, like show off or something, you know, okay, even if it was my like my own money, but still, I don't wanna show this perspective, if this perception to other people.

A: So what other people would think of you're wearing this product would influence you?

B: No I think it's more this. It's not what other people think. But that I don't wanna, I don't want them to think that I like have more, sometimes I don't know. But sometimes it's like, if people feel like you're way more money, I am bit uncomfortable with it. And I don't want to give this like perception because I mean, I just spend my money differently than other people. I rather buy one pullover or one bag a year instead of buying 20. So that's the difference, I think. But and obviously now I would probably also do it. But it's also that now I don't like the bag that much anymore. So...

A: And about the other products. Would you feel the same? The other ones that you mentioned?

B: Like the perception to others to me? Well, I think here for example, in Copenhagen, super normal to have like Apple products, like everyone has it. But I don't feel like I have to have it in order to belong to a group for example. I just, I guess I bought the MacBook at least because I thought it was cool. And it looked stylish. And but that was like I already had like a MacBook before. So it's like I was maybe 18. So bit different maybe also from my perceptions, knowledge think it's the best computer and I think it's easy to handle. So yeah, it works quite well. Yeah. And for example, the purse, I got it as a present from my brother. And yeah, but I like that it's a few like this, like, for these kind of products. I would not buy like a designer shirt, for example. Because I think, I don't know, do you really need something like that. But for a bag, for example, I think you have it for such a long time you use it very often. So it's kind of how do you say like, it's worth the investment because you use it for such a long time. And if you then calculated back on the days that you were it, then it was actually a very cheap price. That's how I see it.

A: Okay, that's an interesting point.

B: Oh, and also a winter jacket is probably also something where I would spend, maybe. I don't know if other people would think that is a good designer brand. But for me, it's not but I spent more money on like a winter jacket for example, because I also think it's like better quality.

A: And you would consider it luxurious?

B: No. I probably wouldn't, but I think other people would, because it costs like 500 euros, maybe. But I wouldn't say it's like, yeah, it's probably a luxury jacket, but not like a designer one.

A: Okay, so when you were a kid, was there something that you really wanted to buy? Or when you were younger? Like something luxurious like, when I have some money?

B: I'm not sure actually. There's nothing that comes to my mind right now. But I was always more that person to save money and then spend it on something bigger instead of buying like sweets every day, for example. Yeah, like a newspaper or magazine or whatever. So but I can't really think of anything, right now that I really

wanted. The funny thing is, though, that whenever you have the money to buy something, I overthink something way more. And if I don't have the money, I'm always dreaming of buying this bag or that bag now my bank account thanks to taxes coming back to me. It's very, very good. And now I don't feel like I needed actually anymore. So it's always okay. Yeah.

A: So now when you will graduate and you will start work and you will have more money. What we would want this looks racing that you would buy thing or service or experience,

B: I think. So now after right after graduation, I would probably use all the money on traveling I would consider as like a luxury thing to do because not everyone is able to spend that much money on going wherever in the world. And yeah, but then like if I think about pieces, like fashion pieces, for example. And I think I would probably by another designer bag. Yeah.

A: And Okay. How would you feel when you would spend all this money doing all this travels?

B: I feel very good. I mean, at the end of the day, it's all my money that I would spend so it's no one else's. And I worked hard for it. At least for the income. Yeah. And I like to kind of, I'm not this person that gets like every time gifts, or spend all the money on my bank account to be on like zero at the end of the month. I would always like to save some money but again, like if I know now that I would get a job or I have a secure job after, I wouldn't mind spending all the money because I worked for it and I think because also of the graduation or in doing this masters finishing it. It's kind of like a treat to yourself. So I think yeah.

A: And when all the people would know that you did all these nice travels and luxurious travels and all that would, what would you think about it? Or would that have any impact on you?

B: No, I think first of all, we are all we are in this community of people that are kind of ordering the same and yeah, obviously if we forget about the people that are not in this like bubble of us maybe studying in Copenhagen earning quite a lot of money, more money than other students definitely have. And for example, last year went on a trip with one of my friends who's studying in Portugal, her parents finance or masters, she doesn't have any money. So she was always like, looking out for every cent kinda, whereas I was more like, 'Okay, let's go to like a nicer place'. And like maybe book something a bit better. But then she was like, a bit short on money. So we didn't. Yeah, but I never think about what other people think about it, to be honest. But I think for like in our group of people, it's so normal to travel around that it's kind of it's not the reason why I do it. But it's kind of weird if you're not doing it, you know, like everyone just does it. So I don't think ...

A: Okay, and about the designer bag if you would buy one?

B: Yeah, I think that's something I would never buy again. But never say never. But now in my current state of mind, I wouldn't buy it bag again, where it's like very like Louis Vuitton bag that has like this Louis Vuitton logos all over it. I wouldn't buy it again. I would rather buy something where it maybe says like, very small or not even on it. And then I think it's more for me knowing that I bought this really nice bag for me with my money that I earned, and that I kind of treat myself with something. And also because I just value like nice clothes and bags and accessories in general. And I think that lots of people that don't have the knowledge about these luxury brands, they would never recognize them. Yeah, only these few brands, where everyone kind of knows probably also because how do you say like when for the Louis Vuitton, there are lots of like fakes on the market. And that's something that makes everyone know about this brand, for example, because there's so many like people that cannot afford it and by like fake one, for example.

A: Would that affect you, the fact that there was that maybe the bag that you bought, or that you would like to buy, it's very easy to access to it?

B: No, I don't think so. I mean, I also like to shop at Zara, and they fake everything basically that is on the runway. So that wouldn't affect me. I mean, it's more for yourself and also like Zara, maybe it's a plastic bag, whereas if you buy it from Sabine it's like this really nice quality leather. And I'm pretty sure that some my friends wouldn't recognize this brand, because they don't know it. Yeah, so yeah, obviously you, with this, you always, I kind of enjoy that I can use circle and then people that might have more money than you and just buy

it like just randomly when they go shopping and you save your money up for like buying this bag, they would now think that you would enter or you are belonging to this very exclusive circle, but it's no why I do it. I just like to have like nice of things. I don't know. cannot explain it.

A: Yeah. Okay. So in the beginning, you thought that some years ago when you bought the first bag, it was also very influenced because of the belonging to a group?

B: And I think it was not, I think I didn't buy it because I wanted to belong to them. I think it was kind of normal that everyone in this like circle of people that I was around, had this kind of brand. So I wasn't even like asking myself whether it's normal to buy like a 400 euro bag, as like an 18 year old. But then again, as I spent my own money on it, But I think, yeah, it was more like the normal thing. And not, maybe it was subconsciously. But it wasn't my intention to belong to this group of people. I think I'm self confident enough that I don't need certain things to feel like I have to belong. Yeah, something but then again, you obviously always adapt to your surroundings somehow, if you see like, all your friends are wearing these kind of sneakers, for example, from Gucci or whatever, and then you're the only one not and then you get kind of used to them. And you also think they are cool and then maybe at one point you would be like, it's not that we have to spend 600 euros on sneakers or whatever, you know.

A: Yeah. What would be different if you would wear that bag, now, like the Louis Vuitton or the one you would like to buy now if you would have money?

B: I think I would more, less people would know that I spent that much money on a bag and it would actually only be like a treat for me because I valued I think it looks really nice. I think it fits to my style. And yeah, so it would be more only for me and also not like, I hate showing off. Like I don't like to show other people how much money I can spend on something for example, I think that's very much how to say it inherited from my parents. They are always also because my dad he grew up with like, like no money from his parents. And he worked his way up studied, did his PhD and everything. And then he got like more money and one of his siblings, she doesn't have that much money. So he would always not hide but he always taught us not to show up. Show off. Also, when we got the Christmas presents, we didn't talk about it that much. Because we always grew up like this. Yeah, don't show other people how much money you might have. because it's not what makes you like a better, cooler or whatever person. Yes, you buy it for yourself, because you want to treat yourself or you just want to. Maybe you just want to buy it because it looks nice. You know, sometimes it's not even any other reason.

A: So you think that these, for example, this new brand, or these other German brand that you are buying, which was like small you said.

B: Yeah, I like a small label.

A: Do you think that these brands would allow you to indicate to others the kind of person that you are?

B: I think not because of the brand itself? Because it's a brand where they don't have any logo, but I think obviously, they have a style or sell clothes in a certain style, where I should maybe show other people with this kind of style like who I am, it's like, very timeless, but modern stuff. And, but for example, in this flat, they are all like very fast fashion buyers, and they would never ever recognize that I have these things, you know, like, they don't see it because they don't value it. And probably other people I know that like other people, because they're in this for this brand. And very good right now they have this like, special cut and I know that some people know that. It's from that brand. But it's not because why I'm buying it. It's only because of I like the style that they have. You know?

A: Okay. So you think it matches more with yourself and not to show anything?

B: Yeah, yeah.

A: Okay. If you were to buy a luxury product, what would be the most important features for you?

B: I think I would, cause I mean, I spent more money on it. I would consider various facts. And I would also inform myself, I would go to the store and look, and like talk maybe to someone maybe. Also, I know someone

who has like the same or similar bag from the same brand. So I would look first of all, like, really inform myself. But then I think I would always look for something that is timeless, but modern. And I would always look for the quality.

And obviously still also for the price. I mean, it will change maybe I would love to have a Chanel bag at one point in my life. But if I start working now, I would never buy like such an expensive bag. I would like, their suppress them. It's still the same. Yeah. Now, I'm just a student.

A: But if you had the money, would you buy it?

B: Yeah, definitely.

A: And why do you think it is like that?

B: But I think it is because of these two practices. It's like a very timeless bag, but it also matches to lots of styles. And it's still like a modern thing. Like, still so many people wear the very classic Chanel bags I don't know, when they were invented maybe 60 years ago. And yeah, so that would be like, something that it buy.

A: And how would you feel when you would buy it?

B: I think bad. Bad because I spent so much money. That happened at least when I bought this Louis Vuitton bag. I mean, I was kind of saving the money for it and then I bought it and it was like 'Is it really worth it to spend so much money on this bag?' I mean, now, I think you can always see like designer bags, at least I mean, though, there's not that much. But bags, I think you can always see as an investment as well, if you buy a kind of a timeless piece because the for this LV bag, I think it's already 300 euros more expensive than it was when I bought it.

A: Really?

B: Yes... And also these like Chanel bags, they always like rise and rise in their price. So I think I would feel bad maybe in the first moment, like, why do you really need to spend that much money on it, but then in the end, I will probably always justify it with the fact that it's kind of like an investment piece where you would be able to sell it at one point if you don't like it anymore. And I think that is for example, something that you cannot do with like a no name bag that is maybe also very good quality and like very great leather and everything but still because the brand is missing kind of you won't be able to sell it after. So yeah.

A: Okay. Um, so are there any different brands that would fulfill this features that you consider? You mentioned already some other brands?

B: Yeah, I guess. I mean, I don't know. I think all these designer brands now when I'm talking about I'm always thinking about bags, but I think they all kind of fulfill the same features to some extent. But then, like some brands, they get more hyped at one point, for example, like I think last year, there was this Gucci bag that was like super hyped like everyone had it. And now it's already been out of trend anymore, because maybe also too many people had it, like luxury designer brands. They always also live off the fact that not everyone can wear it and I read once this article about like Louis Vuitton once that too many 'cheap' people are buying it now as well, because they perceive it as like a status symbol. Obviously, it's good for the brand's growth. But in the end of the day, it's not good for the image kinda. Yeah. And but yeah, I think there are lots of brands that all fulfill the same features it just has to fit to my own style, I think.

A: Okay, so you're related more to your personal style?

B: Yes.

A: And how about the ethics and made in Europe? Or those features you mentioned before?

B: Yeah, I think, I mean, it's not the first driver that makes me want to buy something, it's also the quality and that it would last for longer time, and that it has like this. In terms of the fashionability that it is able to be in trend for a longer time that not after a year if you like I have to sell it or dispose it or whatever, like recycle it and give it to Red Cross because I don't like the style anymore. That's like I think the most important feature for me. It would always drive me first place to buy something. But I think it's really nice if it's made in Europe, but then this would also be more like a lesser extent important to me, I think then I would always... I think

then I would rather go for the quality furniture feature that it's not like polyester or any like plastic fibers, but it is like, I don't know alpaca wool yeah. More like quality pieces.

A: Okay, following something that you also said before? Do you pay attention to the brands that you buy, then when you purchase a luxury product?

B: Yeah, definitely. I mean, I think there are so for example I mentioned Gucci, I think there are smart people, it was kind of like this, all of a sudden, it was very in style. And everyone wanted to buy it. So now also people bought it that might not, that may be saved all their money or sold something just to be part of this group. So I think the brand would not represent my own identity in the end of the day. Because now I feel like for example with Gucci there are lots of like cheap girls with fake lashes super like going to the solarium every other week in like, I don't know, are wearing those. And I probably don't want to be one of those people. So I wouldn't buy it. But also, maybe not. I mean, they're also like Gucci bags, probably that don't even have this big logos on it. So you wouldn't see that it's from them. And then I might buy it.

A: So does that mean that if you prefer that it's not says big, like the brand name on a product? Is that a criteria for you to not buy it then?

B: Yeah. Like, if you mean, it's not a criterion, it's a criterion for me. Okay, I don't like when the brand name is very disposed on a product. I don't like that. Because like I said before, that I don't like to show off with whatever I buy. I buy it for myself and not so that other people see that I might have the money to spend 1000 euros on a bag, for example.

A: Okay, but if the label is not as big on the product or not really visible, then this then you could still imagine buying the brand.

B: Yeah, I mean, I would also buy it if it is like very, for example, with this lean bags it says, like in very small letters. If it says Sabine on it, and then I would definitely buy it, but I don't like those big logo things.

B: Okay, all right. Interesting.

A: How important it is for you that other people see that you're wearing it?

B: It is the other way around, I would say yeah, I don't like if people know. Like, obviously, I know that people who are also interested in it, they will recognize from first 10m but for me, it's important that people that don't have that much money would not recognize it.

A: So, we prepared some visuals. Please have a look at them. If something catches your attention, please let us know which and then also why.

B: First of all, the Stella McCartney, she is producing kinda sustainably I mean, not fully but she tries to do that because she doesn't use any leather and I think she also tries to produce most of her clothes in Europe and I think she also does like maybe circular economy, I think. It is that she's trying to recycle like plastic and you use it again for her clothes or bags? I'm not sure. And then for the Balenciaga, I know that there was a big debate about them using like trashy things like that other people would consider as like maybe treasure like those people that collect trash. I think they had those objectives that they showed and I think there was like a huge debate whether that is still fashion because, yeah.

A: Okay. Yeah.

B: And then I think the one with the black child, I think it is a child. I think that is very weird. And I don't get why they do that. I also think it has nothing to do with the picture underneath

And for LVMH I think

A: LVMH and Rihanna are creating a new luxurious brand from scratch. So we wanted to like mentioned this and see like what would you think that a singer and LVMH creation this new brand.

B: I think in general. that could work but I think Rihanna had a collection with Puma before were she was producing shoes. And as I would not consider Puma is like a luxury brand. but more of a sports warae brand. I think maybe it's not the best brand fit for LVMH to use her. Also because her followers or friends or whatever,

they might not be the classic luxury brand purchaser. because I mean, she has like big masses that she speaks to. Yeah.

A: And why are you referring to the other consumers as classic for example, of Lvmh. you said that she speaks to the masses into like, maybe other type of self consumers, but LVMH is like something more classic or?

B: Well, I mean, LVMH to some extent also speaks to the masses, because they have like these huge cosmetic and perfume part of their company as well. So obviously, that part is more created for masses, but then, for example, with Louis Vuitton, it is not like a mass product that everyone is able to buy. And I think her followers or friends, they are also bit younger, so maybe they're also not, not the ones with the budget. And then it would also mean that she would, like probably a lot of her friends would still buy it because it's from her. But that's also not a very good, like sign, kind of convincing the wrong consumer group to buy something rare expenses that they might not be able to afford.

A: What about you? Could you imagine buying products from this new brand?

B: No, but I don't like Rihanna style at all. I don't think that she would produce something that I would like and also, yeah, I don't know. In general, I think I'm not the biggest fan of like those celebrity collaborations because I always think it's more the celebrity doesn't design anything. That's some random designers in the background that design something, and she just promotes it with her face. So it doesn't really speak to me.

A: That's interesting. And going back to Balenciaga. Seeing this trashy environment that we were talking about. How does that make you feel?

B: Well, I don't think it's appealing at all. And again, it is interesting that people would buy it only because it's something of a design, because for me, if I would, if I purchase something from like a designer brand, it's because of the quality aspect. Because, as I said before, because it's timeless, and I would know for sure that I would buy this like neon green, whatever it is, I would not even wear it for one season, probably and I would dispose it after a short while. And for me, if I spend more money on this kind of things, I would want to have it for a long time. Yeah.

A: In this picture they made a new collection with the World Food Program and they integrated it into all their designs. And then there were donating a 10% of their revenues to the foundation. What do you think about when you hear this story? What do you think about the brand?

B: I think, like, obviously, now, I'm writing about kind of a similar topic and I am of the perception that it's good. I mean, obviously, they're not like sustainable. And they probably also not doing everything perfectly. But still, I think, if every brand, which is step do like little steps, and would start doing something like that, first of all, would help consumers be more aware of it. And, and second of all, I mean, they are still contributing somehow. So I think it's always good to start with these kind of things. Although I think it would have probably make more sense to integrate such a thing into their normal, like collections, like the classic things that they do instead of doing this super weird collection.

A: How would you evaluate overall the brand when you hear all this?

B: I think it would not change anything for me, now, I mean, it's also because there are lots of brands that are kind of doing similar things, initiatives. So I don't think it wouldn't change my perception now. But as though it also doesn't change, like to the bad now or anything like, you know, it's a bit neutral, I would say.

A: Okay, yeah. And about the McCartney, you pointed out, how was it? How do you evaluate that they are incorporating such values?

B: I think it's really good, also because she speaks up and goes to the conferences and does all these things. The only thing is, for example, that she she's a vegan and that's why she doesn't use like leather products, for example. I'm not sure if the fibers that she uses not like high quality, but what last as long as like a letter bag maybe would. So I, I think I mean, her products, what was the hype for quite a while? And I think I would not

have bought one because I would be too afraid that I would spend so much money and then maybe it wouldn't last as long as like a letter bag.

A: if you would know that, that quality is as good as another bag? Would that change your perception about the brand?

B: I have a good perception about the brand. I mean, I think it cannot get better.

If I can say that, like that. But I think I would always like then I would always consider like the style aspect or something of the pieces that she does. And I only know this one classic thing like model of that she did for like hand bags and purses. And it's just not like my style, that's the only thing, why I wouldn't buy it. Yeah, I think everything she does is very good. And probably I also don't know everything about her brands or about her pieces. So maybe if I would go into the store and see something, I might be convinced to buy it.

A: You also mentioned for instance, you also talk a lot about the this brand, this artist from their new collection [brief explanation of LV campaign] So the question is, what do you think about the the brand when you hear all this story behind?

B: Well, I think it's really good, also they have someone else, like their main director or whatever. That stands for these values, because I think it needs people in the industry that speak up. But I mean, now I saw this campaign and you don't understand it. Yeah. I mean, I would consider myself as someone who is a bit more involved in this whole topic, and it was interested in has like some knowledge. Yeah. So I think for in order for actually raising awareness, and maybe also speaking to more like masses, it would need to have more information. Like, I mean, this is more shocking, like, why would you advertise with the baby? And instead of, yeah, I don't know, writing a slogan on it and saying, did you know how many, like people that are black and in the fashion industry? I don't know. Yeah. But in general, I think it is good. But as I didn't even know about it, I think maybe the message did not spread out as well.

A: Yes okay. And, and how would you feel then when you would buy something from this brand, knowing the story behind?

B: Well, as I said before, I own something from Louis Vuitton and I just don't like the way that they play with their logo on everything. I mean, it's always I think it's super nice if there are like, sustainable initiatives or any initiatives and everything. And, and, but still, quality, price fashionability would always be factors that I would value more than, I don't know, positive messages or whenever they want to show.

Debriefing the interview and thanking the interviewee

Respondent 10

Welcome and Briefing

A: So the first question I would like to ask you is what is the first thing that comes to your mind when you think about luxury?

B: Something that only a few have. Something that's expensive. It's about I think status as well. And I think about indulgence.

A: Okay. Why do you think it's about status?

B: Because it's like, luxury is something for the richer part of society in my opinion, or just for people who want to have like, sort of show that they accomplished something.

A: Accomplished?

B: Yeah, I think it's a sign of accomplishment. And of course, to like, it's like beauty, but I think most of it is like, logos and status mainly.

A: Ok. And what did you mean with indulgence?

B: It's like, it's not something you need. It's something that's like extra, something you buy when you always have the basic so you have like, I can say what you need all the food and stuff like that. But luxury, luxury can also be food, but it's like the exclusive a little bit more.

Something you don't actually need and something you do just to make yourself feel better.

Or buy it.

A: Okay, so that's why even though you don't need it, maybe you would still buy it?

B: Yeah.

A: So coming back to the concept of luxury. What does luxury mean to you, personally?

B: Getting to spoil myself a little bit. When I have like a little bit extra after saving a couple of months and able to buy something a little bit nicer, lasts longer and better quality.

A: Why do you think it's nicer?

B: Usually, good quality, I sort of believe maybe it's not a real thing, but it believe that luxury items are generally a bit of quality. So, I would just assume that it's of better quality.

A: Okay, and nicer because ...?

B: Usually, like brands who do like high-end stuff and expensive stuff they have more money to explore and play a little bit. If you think about clothing, it's more like, different textiles, better textiles and so on. They're more working in making fabrics look nice, with little more movement and stuff, where maybe the cheaper stuff is more like, because it needs to look good on the first view, but not the feeling of it and not the rest.

So I think there's more thought into luxury stuff.

A: Interesting. Have you purchased something luxury that you would consider luxurious?

B: Quite a few things.

A: Okay, and why did you buy them and what did you buy?

B: A while ago I used to shop a lot of very cheap stuff and it was ending up in huge amount of money anyway, and I wanted to cut a little down and just spend more money on few things that I would enjoy and, because they are of better quality or last longer.

Then I just sort of fall in love sometimes with beautiful things, so yeah.

A: Ok. So is it because of their design or visual aspect or something else?

B: I like the visual part, yeah. Not completely into the whole new logos and branding stuff like that, but I like when it's just beautiful. You see, it's very nice, the colors are super sharp and.. yeah.

A: Okay, and how did you feel when you bought these different things?

B: I felt amazing at that moment. I was just like yes, I was just getting my vacation money. So I guess I had like 15- 17,000 DKK and I just decided to spoil myself and use it all on clothing. So I felt good at the moment and a little bit afterwards...I might have used the money better. But it's like one of the few pieces I bought there are the pieces I still have, whereas like the other things I bought, the cheaper ones, I just sort of like buy new ones every season and throw the rest out and stuff. So, the more luxurious thing, that's usually the one I keep.

A: Okay. And so, you said it makes you feel amazing. Why do you think it makes you feel so amazing?

B: Just because you feel like very pretty, when you buy these things, it looks really, really beautiful. And I like the uniqueness, I like to own something that many people might not own yes. So, it give me some sort of satisfaction to know I for example, I love limited edition stuff.

A: Limited edition? .

B: Yeah, because of the uniqueness.

A: Okay, and do you think that the people surrounding you would have any impact on you or influence on you?

B: I think of course a little bit. You always want to sort of look good in public I guess, but not in the sense that I need a specific brand. Maybe in the sense. I have a lot of friends who are very into not use or not buy too much stuff. Like of course we all buy H&M stuff but we also like to buy more expensive stuff, but less. Both like it's a little bit more environmental, I like to tell myself. But probably just because I think it's nice to have fewer items that just feels nice, it looks nice and kind of unique.

A: Okay, so you think these ads you more than buying? Many different but cheaper things?

B: Yeah, I think so. I think in the moment when I go shopping, of course the cheap things you get like 'yeah it is so cheap I could buy it', but the other when you buy more luxury, usually I think a little bit more about it. So you know, that specific thing you chose, it's something you really, really want. And you spend a little time saving for it. So, it also sort of definitely like experience of waiting to buy something finally having the money and the expectations and yes.

A: Okay, I wanted to ask you, so you save money so that you can buy these things?

B: Yes.

A: But is it because you feel more attracted to these things than with the cheap ones or why is it?

B: Because I get the feeling every time, I save up to buy something nice, it usually lasts longer, I really like it and the feeling of being a good purchase it last longer than if I buy something that's really cheap. I usually be like, 'Oh, it's great' for two times, and then looks a little bit like, after the first wash, it usually goes out bad looking and I sort of regret it a little bit.

A: Okay. And when you were a kid, do you remember having like this dream of like, when I have money and have grown up I will buy this, like in terms of luxury?

B: No, not really, I think it came a little bit later, like first when I was like a teenager, I think. I went to this little bit like, hippie sort of school. So, like alternative where people didn't care that much. So it's only in ninth grade or something, I think that people begin to care about, like, how clothes were looking. At that point, it was more about standing out and I was cool. Nobody wanted to have the same clothes.

A: Okay, that's very interesting.

B: But as a younger kid, no.

A: Okay. And everybody wanted to be different in that school?

B: Yes, like that was cool, yeah, absolutely. I was like, the one. The wilder, let's say I considered the more special clothes you're wearing, the better. I had a friend who was he was very like skirts and big hats and stuff for school. And me and my friends we were always like wearing big feather stuff and heels and stuff and we were only in high school, so...

A: Okay.

B: And only black. Completely black. Everything.

A: You were only wearing black?

B: only black. I think I had like two pieces of colored clothing in my closet.

A: And do you think that when wearing only black it was making you more unique and standing out or?

B: I think at that time, like the whole all black thing was very "hip". I just loved black stuff.

And then it changed a little bit. When I got to this university and it was more, than I began to fall in love the colors and the whole like, feeling of having strong colors on me, and I'm you just feeling more happy. And I guess in a sense, it's the same with the uniqueness is more unique to be colorful. But at school, it was like definitely all black everything.

A: Okay. Very interesting. So if I got it right, it was depending on their context, what would make you feel more unique, you were adapting to it?

Yes. But then in school it was definitely the black trend, we were all wearing black.

A: Okay. And how about when you graduate and you start to earn more money?

B: I think I will like trying to get rid off more the H&M and stuff like that. It's already trying to go right now... It's like a pile, of course, cheaper things and then once in a while to buy some expensive things. So I want to switch to only buying more expensive things just to have a few things that I really love instead of having a lot of stuff that I don't.

A: Okay, and would you go to the luxury products for that?

B: Probably Yeah.

A: Okay. And why do you think is that?

B: Of course, I think usually they have nicer colors and the movement again, but also just a little bit nicer. and also, because I think I'm guaranteed a certain product when I do that, in terms of quality

A: And how about the status that you mentioned in the beginning?

B: I think it also influences a little bit, I think, like, usually when I see back in time, I thought like, girls in their 20s were having like, all the style stuff and now I'm just more like 30-year-old women that finally can afford the nice clothing and they just look so chic. And, like balanced. Yeah, it just looks nicer.

A: How do you think you will feel when you can afford to buy all these new things?

B: Probably not better, but I'm hoping like, I'm excited to finally get the good payment and be able to go into a store with a little bit expensive and actually buy things without having to save up for a couple of months. But also, just not just clothing, but also food-stuff, buy better quality in everything. I guess that's better quality in general.

A: Okay, and about the status, you would link it, as you said before...?

B: I think In order to get to pay for it you need to have a certain sort of job. So yeah. If you don't have that sort of job, you won't be able to get it. So I guess that's sort of like correlated or in order to look nice and have nice things you'll need to have done well in your life. So it's a, it's a sign of "making it", but not in the "logo" like I have this sort of bag, but just in the way that I can afford to wear better quality.

A: So not because of the logo for you, but more of the quality?

B: But it comes with, like brands, who are well known or usually have a bigger budget to do more fun stuff. So it's kind of like in the circle, reinforcing circles.

A: And how, like, how would you feel when people would see you with all these new luxury products?

B: Probably good. I usually have this strange thing when I buy stuff, I like to imagine going down the street with a new outfit. So if you cannot see that mental image, it's not something you should.

A: Okay, so you think it does have an influence how people will see you?

B: A little bit, yeah. But mostly, it's about how I perceive myself and but, of course, then comes other people and especially like, your friends. I don't really care that much about strangers. It's more about your friend group. And I still have those friends where it was like about the different so we all dress, sometimes regularly, of course, but when we like to dress up, it's very, very strange.

A: You more or less mentioned it. But if you were to buy a luxury product, what would be the most important features for you?

B: Quality, of course, colors. Like the whole touch of it, like the feeling? So you can always, touch these things and you know they are like well treated or... and of course, I would love if the company had some sort of like, it's not something I actually look for, but I think it's nice when they take in active approach to environmental stuff and animals and sort of, I think it's when they're a little bit more expensive, they should sort of, but I wouldn't say no to that brand just because they didn't, but I thought it would be a nice extra thing if they did having a say in the whole, like, producing stuff in a better way.

A: And how would you feel when you would wear something from a brand that also has some positive attitude towards that?

B: I would feel like a little bit better. Because then I know that I bought something. First of all, that I only got one thing. And then if I could add on the extra positive, like, just make the purchase feel better.

A: And how about people that would see you wearing that and they'd know?

B: That will also be like a good message to send that you're actually care or also that you buy organic and stuff like that. So yeah, it's a sort of way to fit in? I guess the clothing part is, it's easy to buy organic. I suppose I try to buy this stuff, but buying better environmentally clothes without being in the brown color is... is pretty impossible.

A: Okay, would this have anything to do with your uniqueness feeling? If a brand would support this?

B: Yes, maybe it would be a little bit more distinctive than the others? Yeah, there's or it's just like when people finally if a brand has the money or the capability of doing so I wouldn't, they should say, so it would be just a great thing. It wouldn't be anything like if I were to decide between two dresses of a very nice brand. And I like the one dress more than even though the others are more eco friendly, and probably just choose from the looks still, but we don't do that either. But it will be an extra nice touch.

A: Okay because one of the questions was, if you had two identical products from two different brands, what would make a difference for deciding one or the other?

B: It would be mostly be like the look, and I'd like to see it, like, of course, the photo of it. I do a lot of online shopping when it's more expensive, usually. So if they present it in a nice way.

A: Okay, you do more online shopping when you look for expensive products?

B: I usually do online shopping for expensive products, and the less expensive products I usually go shopping to the store.

A: And why is that?

B: I think it's more convenient in a way because I think, also the whole store feeling when you sort of had to save up for it, it's nice to just be able to sit at home, look through all the clothing and compare the prices a little bit, instead of going into the store because we all know it's very expensive, and you have to look at all the price tag to compare and stuff. So until I have the money to sort of just freely look around, I like to do it more at home. I just feel more comfortable like that, I don't know...

Also, at home, online you have more options. You have it all like in one place. I like that as well. And then I do, obviously you do a lot of Instagram shopping, I guess we like for inspiration, to find a good brand and product and then I just sort of collect all the photos of the brands that I like my phone and I the visit the websites to prepare which one I like the most. And in that way, I'll every month I had like at least one or two things I want to buy, which I consider thoroughly and check if there's something new to replace them with. So I am always saving towards something but it can change a little bit. Then when I finally reach the right amount of money, I'll just spend it out on whatever is on that list at that time.

A: Okay, that is so interesting. Are there any different luxury brands that would fulfill these features that you are considering?

B: I'm not sure about any with the organic standards and everything like that, but a luxury brand that I do like, of course a real luxury one is this one called Zimmerman. Which is like very colorful, lots of very beautiful patterns and it's very beautiful, but it's also extremely expensive. Then if it's like, I don't know if it's something like right now that I am able to afford it something like Ganni. I use quite a lot of money there because they are just in between the expensive and not too much.

A: And why would you consider these two as luxury?

B: Because it's like the fabrics are pretty good. And if I have to say the most luxurious brands, I wouldn't choose it, but it's like student luxurious I guess, it's what you can afford as students. And of course, then there's the dream like getting the Chanel bags and the Gucci bags. And that's another great price range. Something you can afford when you are done studying but for studying is... yeah.

A: You mentioned the 'dream', why do you think that having something from these brands would be the dream?

A: because they're very beautiful and they're like very, very expensive. They are so beautiful that with just any few items, you can make anything look great, with a few items.

So if you have like the bag, you can make even cheaper outfits look a little bit more expensive.

A: And how would you feel when you would buy one of these?

B: Oh so good [smiles], I would feel like I could just add it to anything and it will make the whole looks more luxurious in a way.

A: Because in the beginning, for example, you said that something luxury is something that you don't need to, but when you would buy it you would feel like 'this is the dream'?

B: Yes, it's not something you would like... I could live without it. I could find beautiful stuff elsewhere. We're just like, just like the top of the cake. Something that you want to buy, but you can probably like buy more practical or better things

A: What do you think a lot of these brands in general?

B: like the very expensive ones?

A: Yes, why do you think they attract you?

B: Yes, because they are very expensive and very prestigious and they have the budget to do whatever they want. I always wanted to have a Dolce & Gabbana dress or anything with the colors, but they attract me because they have the money to make your things like a whole story about it. They make more beautiful photos and it looks great. And I like stuff that has a little bit of history. And the middle expensive half luxury brands, they attract me right now because they do beautiful stuff for an okay price. It's still expensive, but it's not completely out of reach.

A: So you mentioned history and that you like stuff that has some history?

B: And also, the people. Also, that you know it a little bit and you can tell people what it is and they instantly also know it's quality. Not in the logo way, but in the way that you can see it's distinctive, you can see that it's from something.

A: So that's why you would also pay attention to history of these brands...?

B: Yes

A: Okay, and do you pay attention to the brands that you buy or would buy when purchasing a luxury product?

B: I would say yes. Not saying that I would only buy well known ones, I'd like to find new ones that are like a little bit up and coming. Sometimes I even like that a little bit more. If it's nothing like the complete expensive one, then I would, sometimes I like to go looking for sort of unknown or half pricey ones again with the uniqueness because then it's like good quality and it's something people don't have. So at one point, I was buying from Korean designers, as we don't have a lot of them in here. And we ended up looking for their selling brands and yeah.

A: And then how did you feel when you were having this super specific, distinctive brands?

B: I love when people were asking you where it was from. I was like, 'Oh, yeah, it's from this Korean place, we had to order from a special side in order to get them. I liked that it was a little bit different. And that just say, 'Oh, you can't get it around the corner'.

A: And do you think that owning luxury brands allows you to indicate to others the kind of person that you are?

B: It might allow me to indicate that I accomplished something or that I'm a little bit in control. It's funny that like expensive stuff that clearly shows that you're out of control is something that you consider to be like, 'you've made it you have everything under control, you have money to buy this nice stuff'. But so you could definitely have like, I love colors and I think like the most colorful stuff you can get is from special brands... that kind of shows that you have something different. Because everyone likes to reflect a little bit in their clothing, like to show who they are.

A: Do you think this also for the people that you see in the street or from yourself?

B: Definitely yeah. But I think a little bit funny thing about Danes is that most of us look alike.

So we, so it's like sometimes you feel like 'Oh I'm standing out' and then you look, and you see everybody wearing the same'.

A: How do you feel when you see that?

B: I hate it I hate when I bought something and I thought like, 'Oh my God, this was amazing!' and the right colors, and it's just unique. And then you see four people walking in with the same thing. That's awful. That's why thing I like to buy more expensive things, then you at least have some people who are not able to be in that group. So you're like standing out.

A: Ok, the question how important it is for you that other people see that you have bought this luxury brand?

B: I guess it's more important like to see that you're able to... I guess it's a little bit important. You don't want to look bad. I hate the days where I'm like, a little bit like today, I was so tired, you just have to pull on what I could like... whatever mentally I was able to do this morning, but I love when I wake up and I'm feeling like fresh and I have time to accessorize and make the right clothing decisions. That kind of shows that you have some sort of extra energy into day, everyday life if you can dress nicely. And usually when you dress nicely, you choose one of the more expensive pieces in your wardrobe.

A: Why do you think is that?

B: Because those are mostly the ones I love the most. Because when I buy cheaper stuff, it's more on impulse. So I think that's a big difference between buying more expensive or cheap, cheap, I go down and I get like, Oh my god, it's so cheap I need it. Yeah, because it's like a, of course it looks good. But it's not like I cannot live without it, I'm just like, compared to the price, I need it, whereas if I buy a little more luxurious, I think so much about it that I actually had like this little love with it and you choose especially this piece. So yeah, you're more happy about it. usually lasts longer looks nice with a longer time. And so if I had to dress up nicely, I would choose, sometimes, of course, if there's like some of the cheap pieces, they're amazing, but most of the expensive ones I would choose for a day of looking a little bit extra.

A: Okay, very interesting. I'm gonna go to the second and last part of the interview. [Brief introduction about the visuals]

B: If I had to be attracted to one of these campaigns, I would like the [Dior] because of the setting, but maybe they're missing a little bit of color. I think the Stella McCartney looks pretty fun as well. Clearly trying to reflect something about waste and cutting down on it. So I guess you made a green collection for this?

A: [Brief explanation about Stella McCartney visual]

B: I like the approach, like the whole theme about, like actually caring about it. I was hoping they would do it for all their clothing and not just one line. So it's a little bit untrustworthy. The only do it for like, one. I like the theme, it's a good thing to try to do better.

A: How would you evaluate the brand, knowing this information?

B: Definitely positive, yeah, it's always a good thing that they can say that they're doing something good, but if they do it for everything and their whole clothing.

A: And how would you feel when you would buy something from this brand?

B: Again, just a little bit better... I think it would be mostly afterwards in the whole buying process, before than the actual buying, I wouldn't feel any difference, but afterwards when you're like, 'Oh, yeah, and you talk to people about, 'oh yeah I care about the environment' and in that context, then you will be more like 'yeah, actually my clothes are made from...' So it'd be more in that context, like the afterlife clothing.

A: And what do you think about like a luxury brand related to this sustainable approach?

B: I think it's good, good. That are like trying to do something turning into a little bit responsibility, especially because the whole clothing industry is pretty bad.

Oh and this one [pointing at LVMH and Rihanna visual]

A: [Brief explanation of LVMH and Rihanna visual]

B: Probably you find your will manage to... I don't usually like when celebrities go and make brands because it's not their profession, so to say. I especially don't like if they're like singers and stuff like that.

A: Why do you think so?

B: It just seems like, then it's not for the clothing, is more because the person is already popular and like the model of it, I like more when the brand has its foundation, actual designers who have like, committed their lives to design, I love that part and not just someone who thought it was a fun extra thing to do. So I like more when like the core foundation of the brand is an actual design, and not in like from a celebrity.

I mean, probably, if they made some amazing pieces, I would need to reconsider. But usually I prefer when it's designers to designers' stuff and like that. Also, with all the perfumes and stuff like that I think I don't like when it's like 'Christina Aguilera perfume' or something because it's not their field.

A: What do you mean with the fact that it's not their field?

B: Then it just seems like the easy way to get quick customers, then it's not because the products are amazing, or whatever you do is really great. And it's just because we have someone that is great to promote it.

A: I have one last question on this one. How would you feel when you if you would be one product from their brand?

B: I probably would feel fine if it's like, it was a good product, I would still be like, if it were in the luxury its materials, which is probably going to be that, it will be fine. But if it were only because of a commercial that I saw with it, then I wouldn't personally look for it, I wouldn't really seek for it.

[Pointing at Balenciaga WFP visual] This is something actually hate when you use like, brands to do like sweatpants and stuff like that... like when they do stuff like, t-shirts or not really, like when the design is not in focus but more just like, 'oh this is completely regular sweatpants, but we put it a logo on it and then it has to cost like 4000 [DKK]'.

A: [Brief explanation of Balenciaga WFP visual]

B: Which is a good theme, he thought about it is good. I just don't like when it's not about... I love when they put focus on shapes and fitting and stuff like that. But when you do stuff like sweatpants or like something that any other brand can do cheaper, and they're not necessarily better at it, then it loses the purpose of being high-end. When it's easy to create or make exactly the same or the quality or the fit isn't even different, then it's not really a luxury anymore. Then I wouldn't feel special wearing anything like that. The more complicated the design and shape and difficult it is to imitate from cheap brands, the more I like it.

A Okay, so you would evaluate the brand, either positive or negative or neutral?

B: It's definitely always positive to have external like to focus on taking care of the world and all that, but that doesn't have to affect the design in that way. So design first, the other things afterwards.

Then... these colors look beautiful in the Louis Vuitton ad [Louis Vuitton visual 2]. Clearly this has a message Louis Vuitton 1 visual], this one doesn't but I, the more golden, blue ocean colors, it looks nicer in a way. But I think they're trying to send a message the first one in this sweater [Louis Vuitton visual 1].

A: [Brief explanation of Louis Vuitton visual 1]

B: Which is, what can you say like, the whole history and stuff is beautiful about it. And you need to have a strong brand, because you're not really selling anything on this one, it just creates awareness of some part of it. So if you're just a little bit less well-known brand, this, this wouldn't work. Because then you are into clothing, and you're not really selling anything when you can see it on a proper age group. And this is only to raise awareness of 'we are committed in some way'. But you need a strong brand in order to do that.

A: What would your personality think about this one, when you know the story, and you know the brand?

B: It's great with the story, but I wouldn't buy anything because of it. So it's like, it's good to know if I was considering buying something from the brand, but it's not making me want to buy something. In that sense, it's a good thing, if I already wanted some. But I'm not thinking because they had this statement, I'm gonna buy that. But it's like it would be just an extra thing if I bought it

A: And if you would wear something from for example, this collection. How would you feel?

B: I would probably feel the same with that collection or any other Louis Vuitton collection.

A: Why do you think so?

B: Because it's like, just this theme, like, because it's about like, racial stuff, getting people into the industry, it's a little bit far from what they actually can do. Like, they can change fabrics and stuff and do change it that way. This is more symbolic, so when you buy something, you're not necessarily helping. But you are supporting the brand that has this image. So it's very indirect what you are supporting. Because if they do, like, 'Oh, yeah, it's 90% organic', or 'we don't do child labor or we reduce this something', you can actually see the change. But this is very much like a 'we want to make a statement for these people'. But

it's not something like they donate anything to help organizations or anything, So I'm lacking like a clear statement or clear, well that is a clear statement, but if they had a clear idea or vision of what are we doing to change this or supporting some organization, or we are hiring more people with darker skin color or anything like that. It's a bit like, we want to raise awareness, maybe they are actively doing that, but they're not sending a message about what they're actually doing.

A: And how would you evaluate their brand on overall knowing all of this?

B: I don't know. I need to consider... I actually consider Louis Vuitton to be more for like the older crowd. It's something like my mom has or my grandparents had? So it's like, I'm not that fascinated about it. I think in general like within my family and friends it's like the plus 40 that have Louis Vuitton. And the young I relate more with like Gucci and Chanel. Chanel is actually old and young. But Gucci I think is for a bit younger people.

A: Why do you think that Gucci is for younger people?

B: I don't know. I think they are just better at targeting younger people... Also, Louis Vuitton it's very in the whole logo world and it was like a huge thing 10 years ago here everybody really everybody had one, then they sort of got a little bit tired of it. I think like people still have the mindset that everybody's use to have it and the older generation has it.

A: And how do you think that Gucci is trying to target young people better?

B: In that they're more changed? It's probably just me but there's like... They have changed more the stuff, all the colors and shapes, whereas Louis Vuitton sticks with this like typical logo fabric and everything, so it's more like old and the same. While Gucci changes more, they have different bags, different looks, so it's not like if you buy a bag it will be the same as your mother bought years ago. It's not just the shape, it's just more different parameters they're changing in there. But that's specifically to bags, but also for clothing, I consider Louis Vuitton a little bit more conservative, because of the style and especially the colors. Very limited. Maybe it's just me, I don't know. But then you just see this more in and for older people

A: And one last question, about the Dior visual, you said that you really like the setting?

B: Yes, it looks like a fairy tale. I like when you do like, garments and stuff at all the colors and like, this looks like it's more work and they thought more about the location or, whereas in this one here [Louis Vuitton 2] it's very centralized about the product, which can be a good thing but I like it a little bit more with more stories in the commercials. I think that's the same as having the image of where would you where the outfit you're buying, so if you see a commercial where it is in a specific setting, kind of can relate to that setting as well.

A: What do you think then about the brand when you see these settings?

B: That they're putting more thought into it, maybe. Not just focusing on the design, but that the context might look good with the design.

Debriefing the interview and thanking the interviewee

Respondent 11

Welcome and Briefing

A: First, we would like to talk about luxury in general. So if you hear the word luxury, what pops up in your mind?

B: Money! I guess rich people and that's it. Okay, I mean money wise, like, luxury is not for medium class, right?

A: This is about your opinion.

B: so I don't think a medium class person will purchase anything luxurious.

A: Why do you think that?

B: Because it's expensive. And you'd rather spend your money otherwise. Like if I or a person has 1000 euros, even if you like luxurious things you won't spend it on them.

A: And if you would have to define what luxury means to you personally, and in a general abstract way, what would you say?

B: high quality design things in general. And that when it comes to products, and then you can also think about, like, more high class experiences, for example.

A: okay, and why high class experiences and quality?

B: Because that's what I think about luxury, right? Like, when you think about luxury, you think about high quality things? If not they wouldn't be luxurious. Same with experiences.

So hotel, you're expected to kind of quality and different from low quality hotels, right.

A: But when you say you does that also include yourself?

B: Well, yes. I'm talking about myself. I yeah.

A: Okay. Great. And yeah, because that's what we're interested in what you personally think about all of them. Okay, so since now, we got an idea what for you is luxury. Would you say you have ever purchased something that is luxurious to you?

B: I don't know, I would say no.

A: Okay...

B: like a product?

A: or a service or an experience?

B: Okay yes, I would say I went to a couple of good rooms, which was in hotels. It was nice.

A: Okay, and how did you feel about those experience?

B: I really enjoyed it and then I don't know if I bought something luxurious when I was younger, maybe it did? I'm not sure.

A: And coming back to the hotels. Why did you consider them these hotels as luxurious?

B: Because they had high quality services. And like what a team in general and also the place in general.

A: Why did you book this hotel?

B: Because they were very cheap. compared to the service they were offering, because it wasn't high season there and we wanted to relax just these last days.

A: You wanted to relax? So what do you mean?

B: We were going to very bad hostels before I we just didn't want to think about anything else. Just wanted to be taken care of and experience like being in a very nice hotel.

A: So that's luxurious for you?

B: Yeah, the hotel in general was luxurious the fact that I could relax.

A: But could you relax in a different way in this hotel then in the hostels you were?

B: Yeah, because they were high class services and then you went to very nice pool, a very nice place another week. Very nice food. And that's what was relaxing.

A: So did it make you feel different relaxed?

B: Yeah, like it made me feel special, of course. To have a great service, the personal was so attentive... Yeah,

A: Okay, so you just said you're not sure if you have ever purchased something luxurious when you were a child or younger? But do you remember anything you always dreamt of? When you were a kid?

B: Yeah, I always wanted some Louboutin or Manolo Blahnik. And I once saw a really awesome dress of Chanel...

A: And is that still something you would like to purchase?

B: Yeah, like, I really like Dolce and Gabbana sometimes not everything. Sometimes, like the dresses. Oh and to have a dress from Chanel that would be so nice...[interviewee seems to be very excited]

A: why do you think that?

B: because they are very pretty and the design is so amazing. And I would really like if I would buy something luxurious, it would be something like that, like, clothes, or then maybe a purse or something like that.

A: And why did you mentioned these brands? Why did you want to buy something from Louboutin or the others?

B: Because it was like super trendy, like everyone was having Louboutin even there was a guy in my class and he was like, super posh. And he had a Louboutin, he was going out with Louboutins. And yeah, it was basically because it was like trendy. Right now, I would purchase it just because of the design, and the quality of the clothes.

A: How would you feel if you would buy something from that brand?

B: I don't know. I would feel special.

A: Why do you think?

B: Because it's something that not everyone has. So it would make me feel different to the rest of the people.

A: Okay, but before for example, you were talking about that you would like to buy Louboutin because everybody had it. What about now?

B: Because I was younger.

A: What do you mean with "because I was younger"?

B: I wouldn't now I wanted to feel part of a group or something. So that's why I wanted to have a Louboutin because it was like, very poshy. And with manolo blahnik the same.

A: So does that mean you changed your perspective?

B: of course.

A: Why do you think it is like that?

B: Because now I have to pay things for myself. And you become more mature.

So you don't need this stuff. You don't need them.

A: What do you mean with that?

B: I mean, you'd need the quality and everything. But you don't need to follow the trend when you spend like 500 euros.

A: But when you graduate, you will earn decent money in a good job position. Would you buy these things or would you consider it?

B: I don't think so I have to like the proportion of money I have to earn to buy one thing from Louboutin has to be very high.

A: And if you did have the money

B: yeah, then of course, I mean, if the proportion is [high] enough, of course.

A: Okay, but you were saying that, for example, something that you don't really need. So you thought it was something...

B: Exactly. I mean, if that proportion of my salary, compared to the Versace dress is very big. I wouldn't mind. But I wouldn't give a high proportion of my salary to a dress.

A: But you said you don't need it. Why would you buy it?

B: Because I like it, it is something that provides I don't know, like some kind of "feeling good" to me. Is it like is the same thing when you go to Zara, but is not in the same proportion.

A: Again, what do you mean with that?

B: Well you don't need most of the T-shirts you buy. You buy them because you feel good with them, you feel nice and it is better for your self esteem. So you purchase it for that.

A: Okay. And if it was the Versace dress, from which you really liked the design, how would you feel when you will be wearing that?

B: Special, I guess.

A: And why?

B: Because again, it is a very nice dress, that will probably fit me better than another dress. And I would, I would feel prettier with it. And I don't know.

A: But what do you mean, when you say better? Can you define that? Or can you elaborate on that a little bit more concrete?

B: You feel prettier, and you feel like you're wearing something that really fits you. And it's really high quality and that everyone can see that. And you can also feel like oh, it's more like an experience that just the dress itself.

A: How would you feel when other people would see you with that dress?

B: I would feel like kind of like better than them sometimes. I don't know.

A: Why do you think you would feel better?

B: because you are wearing something not everyone has. Just because you're wearing something very very nice and not everyone can purchase and then it is something more special not everyone has, it's not like the yellow jacket from Zara that everyone was wearing in Spain.

A: Yeah. And what about other people seeing you in that dress? Would that have an impact on you?

B: Maybe you maybe I don't know. I don't think not in not in me, but I think for other people purchasing something like this Yes, they purchased it because it's like it makes you feel part of a class or like different kinds of people.

A: Okay, and what do you mean class?

B: class in terms of the class like every kind of class in the economy. in the society... you are like medium class high class and other classes. And you then pretend to be in high class even if you're not. sometimes if you're buying it because you only want to pretend [emphasized] to be that high class.

A: And would you ever buy something to pretend to be in a higher class?

B: No not now, but I have done it before of course.

A: You have done it before?

B: Yes.

A: Can you give an example?

B: like the way you dress and everything is to feel part of a kind of group, but I don't know if I was in that..if I was like pretending...but you wanted to be like posh so you had to dress like a posh person and I would never wear something that it was not like from Tommy Hilfiger or Ralph Lauren or something like that, I was obsessed with it.

A: And and why would you think you were doing that?

B: Because I wanted to feel part of this, like, posh group of my friends. Yeah, my friends were like that. And we were also going to this discos and being around with people that they were very, very posh. They were actually like, part of the big names of Spain.

A: And in which time was that?

B: In high school and at the university in Spain. I studied law and business administration. So imagine the people I was with...

A: What do you mean with 'imagine the people I was with? Can you tell us a little bit about that?

B: Yeah, like my university was the second most posh University in Madrid. So everyone had very big company or like their parents had very big companies. Because what do you study? you study business and law? Yeah, basically it was a university where everything was super posh..

A: And how did you feel about that?

B: At first I didn't mind that much. But then I just hated them. Oh my god I hate those kind of people right now.

A: so if you would buy something luxurious now, would that put you in that group now? How would you feel?

B: No, I don't think so. Because like, like one thing is posh. And one thing is luxurious. Like one thing is Tommy Hilfiger, Ralph Lauren again, things like that and the one and another different things like Chanel...

A: and why do you make that differentiation?

B: Because one is like Abercrombie or something like that It is kind of expensive but affordable prices. And they are very based on more the brand more than the design. It's also high quality but you can always like see the brand everywhere so it's made for some kind of people, I think more than Chanel and Versace e.g., that's more high class because it's basically saying I spend a lot of money, because it is more expensive of course but you obtain more design you have more than just the brand.

A: And if you if you would, buy a luxurious product, what would be the most important feature for you Like characteristics.

B: With products you mean clothes?

A: Or also experience or services.

B: Yeah, that's a very broad question. Because about clothes I would say design. In experiences I would say the the difference you obtain for more money than the average services you can obtain with a normal one. Like for example, if you go to a hotel, I would want the difference to be much higher than to a normal hotel. That's one thing that I would really take into consideration. Food the same thing. Like what are you paying? Like, what's the difference from average food? Is it really worth it or not? And for example, with makeup, I would say quality over anything else.

A: So yeah, and with clothes you said design? Why?

B: Because if you're buying something for 1000 euros, you really want it to be unique, very pretty. Or very, like it has to fit your body very very good. If not, I would not buy it.

A: And are there any brands that would fulfill these features that you just mentioned?

Speaking now of brands and moving away from products or services.

B: a lot of them again, would definitely buy something from Chanel at some point. or Dior, I don't know. I think there are a lot of brands out there that I would purchase from.

A: You mentioned now a lot of clothing brands? Are there any other like product or service or experience categories? Where you could think of brands?

B: Yeah, of course. Like makeup I know a lot of brands of makeup and I would definitely buy that if I have money.

A: What makeup brands?

B: Chanel and Yves Saint Laurent or maybe also Clarins and Bourjois.

A: Why these two?

B: Or Dior. because they are.. I've I tried the makeup and it is pretty pretty good.

A: Even though it's very expensive?

B: Yeah, I would definitely buy it. Actually, my red lipstick is from Yves Saint Laurent and it is amazing [excited].

A: How do you feel when you when you buy all this?

B: I mean, I don't know, I feel more beautiful because it's actually like, it fits more my face and it stays there longer.

A: And about the brand?

B: Is not about the brand. Again, I think makeup is just about quality.

A: And if you would have two more or less identical product with the same qualities and features? But from two different brands? What would make the difference that you choose one over the other?

B: Everything like exactly the same?

A: More or less of course, like the main features.

B: Okay, I would go for the brand I know more about.

A: And why is that?

B: Because you have a reputation. So imagine if you're going to buy two shirts. One is from Zara, one is from...

A: Okay but we are talking more about luxurious products.

B: Yeah. Okay, so then Chanel and I don't know, a very expensive other brand in a normal shop, I would go for Chanel. Because you have the reputation behind the brand. And honestly, so like because of the brand because you're saying okay. Well, actually, right now is not so much like that, because the designers like unique designers are very, very well regarded.

But in general, I would go for the more reputational brand.

A: And how do you build this reputation of the brand? Like or your opinion about the reputation of the brand?

B: I think it's a lot of branding in general and the marketing. And also depends what do you know about the brand. I mean, I think , I used to read a lot about fashion. So actually, I know a little bit about the brands and that's why I would go for what I know.

A: and what would change if you know both of the brands? How do you then choose?

B: I don't know because they it depends a lot on the brands.

A: And what is their reputation that you talk about give you?

B: it's just about like. I don't know the message that you want to give. Maybe we have Chanel and you're giving one type of image of it if you just have like one random T-shirt, even if it is the same style. so yeah...

A: okay, we already touched on that but could you mentioned some brands that you would consider as luxury brands?

B: Chanel, Versace, Dior, Manolo Blahnik...

A: Why do you think those brands come to your mind?

B: Because I like them.

A: and why do you like them?

B: because I have seen the clothes. I mean every brand has their own style. And I do like this I love this one's not Manolo Blahnik thought, but in general because like I don't know you associate luxury with some kind of brands since you are quite young. Also because of TV shows series and everything.

A: And do you think owning like one of those luxury brands you just mentioned would allow you to indicate which kind of person you are?

B. No, I don't think so. I mean, it depends on.... Okay, it depends on the product. Because for example, someone wearing a Dolce Gabbana or something... yeah that is a pretty nice example, a belt or a cap or just Michael Kors for example. You can tell what kind of person that is. For example you're wearing a cap from Dolce and Gabbana or Gucci, it kind of signals, it means you are super tacky. I mean you are definitely rich kid like, a new rich kid.

A: so when you see someone like that, you automatically assume that?

B: yeah Michael Kors would be a "wanna be". When you buy a Michael Kors it is because you want to feel like super posh, but you're not posh so you buy a Michael Kors.

A: Why do you think that it is like that?

B. because sometimes it is like, anyway when you're buying something from his design it's because you like the designer, and you like the brand and everything but when you're wearing something that explicitly says the brand without any design because Michael Kors are not very beautiful but the typical like normal bag and just with the Michael Kors logo or such a typical belt from Dolce and Gabbana or Gucci... that's like very "italian" for example, we called them "dolcegabbaneros" that kind of guy that you know is super tacky and everything.

A: and what do you think about having like the brand displayed so big on a product?

B: I think it is tacky, it is definitely super tacky. And it is for rich people, like those new rich people.

A: Why do you think it is like that?

B: Why? Because they want to show they have money.

A: Okay, and would you consider buying a luxurious product with a big logo displayed on it?

B: I mean, it depends but I don't think so. I mean of course if you're buying a Chanel and it has the logo there and it's just like this. Yeah, of course. But if it doesn't have any design behind it, I don't think I would buy it.

A: And if you would buy something that it's because of the design. Do you think this would help you to show to others what kind of person that you are?

B: Yeah, I think so. I think people also purchase those things because they want to feel like they are higher class than the one in which they actually are.

A: Why do you think your taste in that changed? Like when you were a kid and you were trying to fit in and you saw like a class differentiation and now you don't any more?

B: It is also because of the people you're with, also to be more mature and you see this stupidity in people like you just associate things, right?

A: What do you mean with stupidity?

B: like when you're just when you're talking about things they are very like classic in the way of being and everything is about the money or the clothes or things like that just like realize it's not that important. And of course, it's not their money so they are playing with daddy's money and everything is kind of very easy for them and this is annoying.

And yeah, I think it's also because of the culture.

A: What do you mean by that?

B: I think, it's like in Denmark you don't see that much. I have to say you are like you see classes in terms of people, but in Spain is very related to their image. It is very like, as I said before, like Italians. They need to

show that they are something and they are part of something that they have this amounts of money or that amount of money. And here you don't see that people show off.

A: And would you say that the place where you live influences you?

B: Yeah, of course.

A: In Which sense?

B: I mean, I think that showing off it's still in me and yeah, I mean if I had a lot of money I would buy luxurious things of course and I would like people to see it. Why not? Like I don't feel like I would be like here they don't buy super nice cars, they buy like electrical cars and things like that. But if I have the money to buy a Ferrari, I will buy it.

A: Okay. How important is it for you that other people see that you have bought this luxury brand?

B: I mean yes, things are like they are: I would like people to see my super nice pair of shoes or Ferrari or house or whatever.

A: And how would that make your feel when other people see you with all your luxurious purchases.

B: Successful [laughing].

A: And why do you think you would feel successful?

B: Because it is like, even if you don't want to admit it, we live in a meritocracy society, so when you have money and you're successful you feel better with yourself you feel like better than the others. And some something like is a very nice feeling that everyone next to you thinks that. I'm sorry to be so sincere, but it's like that.

A: And would you say that living in a different country influence that

B: Yeah, I think like living in general here it definitely makes you change a little bit your perception about things like here maybe I wouldn't buy the red Ferrari I would buy like a nicer bike. But in Spain you get the people to look up to you if you have this or that and here it is actually like they look at you like worse sometimes if you like to show off a lot. So it all depends on society. So socially constructed.

A: Would you say you care then what other people think about you?

B: Oh yeah, of course. I mean here I feel like danish people are not like that. But if for example they do go on trips and they love to go on like super luxurious trips. and they can go to Bahamas and everyone has to see that and that's how they show off. But not like us like we show off with clothes or big houses or big cars.

A: And with us you refer to whom?

B: to the Spanish people okay.

A: So you in your opinion, you see a differentiation between how people show off here and in Spain?

B: Yeah, definitely. And that influences also the way I purchase luxurious products.

A: Okay, very interesting. Thank you for all those insights and so yeah, that was already all of the questions so now we go over to the visuals prepare. So we would like you to have look at this all luxurious products or brands and please tell us what we show strikes you catches your attention and then also why.

B: Okay, so they are trying to like to catch your attention with society societal problems for example this one, rugt? and this one with plastic [pointing at the two Stella McCartney and Louis Vuitton 1 campaign photos]. And they are trying to, I think they are trying to be a little bit like politically correct. I mean, they are trying to go for the more sustainability trend right now. Not Louis Vuitton, but Stella McCartney yeah definitely. I think Balenciaga and LV... Wait I don't know why there are both names there [pointing at Rihanna and LVHM; Balenciaga and World Food Program]. Well the Rihanna and the Balenciaga photos I think they are trying to attract other kind of people maybe.

A: What do you mean by that?

B: so more kind of millennial right now like going for trap music and trying to relate these two industries a little bit?

A: Or why do you think that based on what we've seen?

B: Yeah, based on like not this one but this one is very clear [Balenciaga + World Food Program]. Like definitely even if it's the World Food Program even if it's like that they are trying to attract some kind of like the new, the young people right now and you relate this a lot of with music and Rihanna of course. You do. But there was this one is like very "trap" right now. You could see these and say, you can relate it with music, for sure.

A: Why do you think this is trying to attract more younger people?

B: Because you don't see this type of this kind of style in older person? Like, I don't think you can wear this when you are 40. on the other side, like the other. But Balenciaga, I think it's more for young people, even if this doesn't look like that [Balenciaga without WFP].

And with this, the Dior we are definitely going for older people and more luxurious people, higher class, higher income.

A: And why do you think it is like that?

B: Because of the marketing right now. Like, I mean, just the picture of Charlize Theron there and like running in a very luxurious museum or...Ah, no its Versailles. you can tell that it's not going for millennials right now.

A: Why do you think so?

B: because I associate Versailles with old, not old, but like traditional trends, and more like it's very, very secure. So you're going to the more traditional luxurious image.

A: But what do you mean with secure?

B: secure in a sense, that everyone is going to associate Versailles with luxury - like now 20 years from now or 20 years ago. Like is very, very secure. You're going for the middle aged people.

A: And what do you think when you see those ads [Dior]?

B: I don't feel really attracted I feel again, it's like more traditional so it is kind of out of my league. Right now. I feel kind of bad, it is maybe the life I want to have, but it's not the one I have definitely. And if I was to, like, if I were to buy a cologne, I would never buy that. Because you You got it. I mean, if maybe smells great, but not through the internet, for example, because I associate it with more traditional values.

A: So you think this brand is more for?

B: I think that's marketing, right? [Dior] Like, yeah, Dior I think is for more middle aged people. On the other side, yeah, Balenciaga I think is more for young people.

A: How do you feel when you see this?

B: I feel more related to it. Not the first one [Dior], but the first one, of course [Balenciaga]

A: And why do you think you feel more related to it [Balenciaga]?

B: Because it's something that you can see in the streets and you know, people spend a lot of money on it. But it's more like you can actually see it on the street, see it on your friends. And, so definitely more, it approaches is more, it's more it's closer to me.

A: How would you feel if you would be wearing this [Balenciaga]?

B: I don't think I would, I would just feel like very, very cool. That's it. I wouldn't feel like super luxurious. On the other hand, like Stella McCartney, it's also very close to me, and I definitely would wear Stella McCartney, and I wouldn't feel like that much cooler is more like more designed, more trendy.

A: Why do you think Stella McCartney is closer to you?

B: Because I don't think it is so luxurious as Dior. It's kind of expensive, but at the same time, I don't think it's that that expensive. It is also about the design and sustainability and everything, but it's very, it's very, like focusing on young people.

A: You mentioned sustainability. What do you think when you see a luxury brand relating to those issues.

B: I mean, honestly, I think it's just image. I don't think they give a damn. I don't think they are actually doing anything for changing is like, they are just like, going with the trend of sustainability. Like a trend. It is trendy, it really sells, its money.

A: And how does that make you evaluate the brand? does that change anything? Or in any way, the way you think about the brand?

B: No! Because I think again, it is only image. So it's cool if they want to be sustainable, but I don't think people are like, I'm gonna buy Stella McCartney because it's more sustainable. At least I wouldn't. It is just like if you buy Stella McCartney it is because you want to feel more sustainable. But it's not because of, you know what I mean? It is all about the branding. It is branding of Stella McCartney and of yourself. So if you want to feel better, you buy the

maybe this thing that, you know, it might be more sustainable. But at the same time, you have to know that it is not so sustainable. It is just the way you want to feel when you buy it.

A: Do you think you would feel better, more sustainable if you buy Stella McCartney?

B: personally no, because I'm fully aware that she's not that sustainable. I mean, it is certainly a trend and they are like, taking advantage of that trend.

A: Okay, [Brief explanation about Stella McCartney visual]

B: I think it's so amazing, it is very cool. I think it's cool. Yeah, it's trendy, and of course, it's good. Super good if people start to make a difference. But again, I feel a little bit like being lied to. Like, I think this is necessary, but it's also I don't know. I don't know if they actually like, work for that, maybe. But what about other things? Like, maybe they have kids like working in their factories or whatever, but you don't know what's behind this. Like, maybe this is amazing. And they're working with the plastic problem, but they are consuming a lot of co2 with the flights or other aspects of their business. I don't know. You never know. And for someone that really cares about sustainability, and they have a lot of money, and they would spend it on this. Sure. I mean, I they might change their mind because of this. But I think we all have to be aware of this kind of a lie.

A: Okay, that is very interesting. And you also mentioned this one, what do you think about this one? [Louis Vuitton 2]

B: So I think this is like, see, this is what I told you about! The new rich people tend to buy this kind of stuff. And this one [LV with baby]. I don't know, it's like, I don't get it. I don't know, do they want to be like, trying to give some type of message? Or is it just because the kid is awesome, amazing skin. It's very beautiful to look at.

A: And how does it make you feel?

B: Yeah, maybe like they try to give some like, I don't know image of being socially responsible or something like that, about society. Yeah, but I think they might want to give that image. Again, I don't know if it's that or just the aesthetics or a very black kid. It's nice to see.

A: And what do you think about the one below [Louis Vuitton 2]?

B: The other one again is like Dior they go for the traditional way of luxurious brands like associating it with very rich, very beautiful woman. So when you would see that, you would think that you are Uma Thurman...but as I said, I don't feel very identified with that

A: To give you some context on those two images. [Brief explanation of Louis Vuitton visuals]

B: I think that's different than the one from Stella McCartney. Because actually, they have a lot of things to do with the fashion industry. And fashion industry can change a lot in that way.

A: What do you mean was that way?

B: you can change the way that beauty is seen. So you can actually change beauty. Like The beauty standards? So I guess in that sense, they are more they can really make a change. And they have to do a change, they really should. So the inclusivity of black people or different people or fatter people. I think it's very, very important. And they can really make a change in that.

A: And what do you think about the brand when you hear this

B: Actually like better. Like it creates a better image in my head than before.

A: Okay, and if you would purchase something from LV? What would? How would you be what would you think?

B: I don't think I would relate to that, I don't know, it depends. I mean, I would not only buy it because of this one campaign. Because again, like the proportion of my salary with the LV is so big that I would really take other things into consideration.

A: But if you would have the money, how would that change?

B: Yeah, then yeah, then maybe you try to purchase in a more responsible form?

A: responsible in which sense?

B: Yeah, in every sense, like environmentally and socially. But I guess that, I don't know, you have to have a lot of money to be able to choose because of that.

A: So when you see these two different things, are these two different ads? How do you think from with a brand from that, and then these one with the story behind? [Pointing at two LV ads].

B: Just feel like sometimes brands have to, like, update a little bit? And that's why they are trying to do now as a change from the typical marketing way of branding to more like a trendy one. Or too be like, showing that they care about things more than before.

And if I saw , like this brand somewhere in the streets, I would just like I would continue walking, I would not stop to look at it any closer or if it is a store I wouldn't purchase anything.

A: And why is that?

B: Because it's very classic. And it's like associated to very traditional people.

A: The last one that you mentioned, [Brief explanation of the Rihanna and LVMH visual]

B: I think it's cool. Because reality is very, because Rihanna is very cool. So even if you don't like the music, you associated it with this image, you have Rianna like this independent black woman and beautiful and she does whatever she wants to do and she has the body like the body she wants to have and she doesn't care about things. And so they are actually going for the independent woman, so feminism, racism with black woman. Also, the beauty because she's not very very thin right now. And she has like this image of rebels. Oh, she's like a brand herself. And they are really trying to be part of that image that she projects.

A: The collection will be created at some point. Could you imagine buying something from the brand? If you would have the money?

B: Yeah. It can be

A: Why do you think so?

B: Because she has the style. And she knows how to combine things. And I think if she's there, she's gonna like kind of make some inputs to the design and, again, it's like the brand Rihanna is herself, she's kind of cool.

A: So do you feel more identified with that?

B: Yeah, I think even though if the image was Rihanna or Beyonce, I would definitely buy something [excited]

A: How does that make you perceive a luxury brands, after what we were talking?

B: Yes, I mean, not the perception but just want to buy it more because this one is closer to you than just like the traditional kind of luxury brand as I said before.

Debriefing the interview and thanking the interviewee

Respondent 12

Welcome and Briefing

A: What is the first thing that pops up in your mind if you think about luxury?

B: I think about something that is expensive and at the same time probably. Not needed at all. Yeah, I think that's what I think with when I think about luxury.

A: If you would have to define luxury in an abstract way, what would you say is luxury for you?

B: Things that only rich people can afford.

A: And why do you think that?

B: I think it's the general concept of luxury.

A: Okay that is interesting, but we are more interested about what you think and therefore what is your concept of luxury.

B: Okay, then that's my concept.

A: Would you buy something that is luxurious for yourself?

B: I'm thinking about it because I cannot remember when was the last time I bought something that I consider luxury. So yes, I would buy it.

A: And why do you think you would buy something luxurious? What would that mean to you?

B: I was thinking about one of the products that I buy a lot which is coffee. And I enjoy buying good coffee and that's sort of luxury because you can buy the normal one in the supermarket. So I buy it basically because of the quality of the product and the taste.

A: And what do you think makes the coffee luxurious?

B: The main reason is, as I said, the quality and the better taste then the one you buy from the supermarket, the regular one, the taste, it's normally not fresh and you feel it when you taste the coffee in this in this particular example, and the one that I normally buy tastes way better.

A: And how do you feel about buying the more luxurious coffee?

B: I think it's not about feelings. It's more about the taste of the product itself of the coffee. So I do enjoy drinking good coffee. It gives me some satisfaction. Of course. And I enjoy the moment when I drink it, when I can I always take a moment to enjoy it.

B: So what are my feelings when I buy good coffee? Okay, it gives me some satisfaction because I enjoy a lot drinking good coffee.

A: And was there something luxurious you dreamt of having when you were a kid or when you were younger?

B: No, not really. I think it's not in my mindset or I was not raised in that culture.

A: Why do you think that?

B: Because I never felt appealed to cars. I never felt appealed to have a big house. That's something that doesn't attract me at all.

A: And in terms of luxury? Why do you think it never attracted you?

B: It's a good one. Yeah, I'm really thinking about it because I'm thinking okay. Maybe it's because I didn't have the money to buy something luxurious but I don't think that's the case at all. It's basically that in my concept of luxury, probably it also has something to do with waste like wasting money in things you don't need. So probably because of that.

In general in my family we never did, we are not so much people who buy luxury products.

A: What do you mean with in general we are not people that bought luxurious products?

B: Because I give the example of the coffee. I think that good coffee is luxurious. and there are some exceptions in that. Like for example, probably sometimes affording a good meal or a good piece of meat. That's also luxurious and I sometimes do that and that's what I mean, in general and the others are particular examples.

A: Okay and if we talk about those particular cases, for example why do you then feel more attracted to sometimes go into a nice restaurant?

B: I think we will go back again to the same answer which is because of the quality of the product itself.

A: And how does it make you feel to go in such a nice restaurant? Why do you occasionally go there?

B: No, but what if once again the same answer it's because normally, when going to little bit luxury restaurant, you might get a better product in terms of taste in terms of quality. So that's a good reason to pay a little bit more for luxury in those cases.

A: And how do you feel going to those restaurants?

B: It's nice because I know the food will be good and the atmosphere is usually nicer and it feels like a treat to myself.

A: When you are enjoying that high quality meal? How do you feel when spending money on it?

B: It's about satisfaction in my case. It's about feel the feelings of satisfaction when eating that. But no more than that.

A: Okay, is there something in the future you would like to buy? Like after your graduation when you get a good paid job?

B: Why would I like to buy when I rather than I have money? Okay, let's assume that I yeah, I need so since I'm going to graduate soon. I was thinking to buy a better camera and better camera gear which is one of my hobbies and can be also considered as luxury.

A: Why would you say that is something luxurious?

B: Because among the camera products you can buy. The output of a good camera, which is also luxurious camera. It is way better than a low-end camera.

A: Okay so you when you would buy the camera and it is something you wanted to have for a long time, how do you think that would make you feel?

B: I think I will enjoy a lot spend time with my camera at the same time. I will feel, that I have something that I have finally something with me that I was willing to have. So an enormous satisfaction will be with me.

A: And what makes the camera special to you? Or why would it be exactly this camera or this gear? And what are the main features that product has for you?

B: Well, basically because of all the features of this camera, let's set up the picture got the picture quality is 40% better than the other ones. It has a lot of commands which are reachable with the hands and the low end cameras, they do not have because of course all these extra features they cost money to manufacture so makes it makes a little bit of sense. And and also that it lasts longer than a low-end camera. I think I just saw the mainly the main the main features I will go for.

A: Is there any other feature that is important to you besides the quality when talking about a luxurious product?

B: Not really I think in all the examples we have discussed during this interview quality has been one of the factors that I have always pointed out so I don't think there is another reason for me to buy luxurious products. It's one of the reasons of a luxurious product.

A: Okay but we are more interested in which features or characteristics a luxurious product or service or experiment has?

B: Good quality.

A: If saying that the different brands would kind of offer the same. Why one and not the other one?

B: In that case, I will look for the price and the price quality balance, which means you can always pay a little bit more to get more quality, but that a little bit more sometimes can be. thirty percent more of the price by

getting 10% more of the quality then the price balance is not really at the place. So then I will try to look for something I could balance between the price and the quality. That's why sometimes that's why probably I could choose one camera instead of the other one. I don't know if I explain that correctly actually.

A: And would the brand play any role in this decision?

B: No, not really.

A: Could you elaborate more on that?

B: because in my case when I make decisions to buy a product. I will try to read about it extensively, especially when it's something that I consider luxury. So the name of the brand doesn't say too much, I will, because I will read reviews, comments, blogs about it and my decision will be based on that and not on the name of the brand.

A: Would you tell your friends about it, the new luxurious camera?

B: Yeah, I will tell this to my close friends for sure, but I will say it more 'like hey, I got a new camera' instead of 'hey, I got a new luxury camera.'

A: And before you said you would take a lot of time analyzing everything, all the features of that product especially if it is a luxurious product. why is that?

B: because normally luxury means more money. Okay, so that's the main reason why I will make my research on a product.

A: And why do you think it is like that?

B: As a consumer and someone who thinks before buying a product. I'm not compulsive buyer, which means that I will read something before buying it or I will compare prices. I will read about it before buying it.

A: And if you had the money and leave the price aside?

B: I think it's the same story, because I am someone who enjoys buying something, but that's not really something doesn't mean a lot of products. So in this case I prefer to do a wise choice instead of multiple wise choices.

A: What do you mean with wise choice? Can you elaborate more on that?

B: What I mean is like I said before, that I would normally read beforehand. And if there are there are multiple options or choices, I will try to read about all of them.

A: And are there any brand that would fulfill those features you commented on in regards to luxurious brands.

B: Oh yeah for sure.

A: Can you mention them?

B: Oh, yeah, I think so examples in terms of cameras. There is Leica that's a luxurious brand for cameras. In terms of coffee there is one good really good coffee in Copenhagen called Coffee Collective. And I'm trying to think about the things that I like and sometimes I buy and are luxurious. I think those are the main ones. Okay, I think this to luxurious because they are a little bit overpriced. But also they have a better quality.

A: When you say overpriced does that mean you considered the price is too high for the quality you get?

B: Yes the balance between price and quality. I will say that it's high. It's not there at all.

A: What do you think of people who are using this brands?

B: I think it's probably it can be because it's about people who never had to worry about money and how they spend the money when buying these products.

A: And if you would purchase a brand like that, how would you feel about that?

B: I think I will do I will be happy one by one of these products. But at the same time I will feel like hey, I'm wasting some money, but I could have saved.

A: Yes. Why would you feel happy?

B: Because it is a product of good quality.

A: When you buying this is coffee or you type of this type of cameras and people would see it. What would you think would that influence you? And if so, how?

B: I will feel 'like hey this guy has a really nice camera over' or 'This guy knows about coffee probably' but at the same time they will let me think 'hey he spent some money on these' but on the other hand I also think he could have saved money by buying these other product that does something similar or taste quite similar.

A: but would you still feel good?

B: as I said before like if money will not be an issue and all those that will feel good. But I have the feeling, I will feel like I wasted money.

A: Why do you think you have the feeling you're wasting money? Since money is not an issue. You need to work money would be an issue you would be worried about and why is it a waste of money?

B: I think it doesn't really matter if you have the money or not. If money's an issue or not. You can have a lot of money in your bank account. Anyways be a smart person when buying products, or buying cleverly.

A: But what would be a clever choice then?

B: The balance between the price and the quality.

A: Okay, but is there not a brand you dream of owning something from? When you would have the money?

B: In terms of cameras for example, which is one of the only things and I don't buy at the moment. It's just that I'm not really in that sense. I don't want to say that I'm simple, but I'm not dreaming of buying a nice car or a nice house.

A: But it is not only about products it can also be about experiences.

B: Okay let me think about it for a moment... I was thinking if I would win the lottery I would keep working of course, but I would also buy some things, like a car. But a nice, decent car, nothing special... probably I will buy a house, something more than standard.. I will also go on holidays, but I'm sure I cannot be holidays for more than three months because that's too boring for me.

A: So in your opinion would be going on holidays for 3 month be something luxurious?

B: It depends when and where. If we would talk about holidays in Dubai. Paying thousand euros a night probably yes that's luxury. But that would not be my style at all.

A: But spending 3 months in Dubai without paying 1000 euros per night is then not luxurious for you?

B: Correct!

A: Why would you consider traveling not as a luxurious lifestyle?

B: No, I think you can have a you can be traveling without spending so much money. Actually, that's why I don't consider it as a luxurious. experience. I know people who are actually at the moment in Asia spending probably 20 euros a day when traveling that I think that's not luxury at all.

A: Okay interesting point. So now, going more to luxurious brands, which brands would you consider as luxury brands?

B: I think in terms of clothing I will go for the expensive brands. Gucci and all of those things. In terms of automotive and cars, of course also expensive on Porsche, Lamborghini,

A: Why do you think they are luxurious?

B: There are multiple brands of cars all of them they do the same but how they do. is different. You can go from point A to point B driving an old car and you will arrive to the point B. The only difference is that probably will not be so comfortable while going to that place or probably you will not be as fast as you will be when driving a Lamborghini. A Lamborghini is a car that offers a lot of power in the motor or a lot of comfortability when driving it a lot of features and extra things to play with so that's why I consider it as a luxury because you can do the same with other products, but at the end what changes is how you do it.

A: Do you feel attracted to buy a Lamborghini one day, if you would have the money?

B: Not really.

A: why not?

B: I could think about a Tesla. Is Tesla luxurious? Yes it is.

A: and why do you think so?

B: It's an electric car and it's an electric, I think it's the same example than the previous one going from point A to point B. Tesla is a car with a lot of features a lot better, a lot of comfortability and therefore it's expensive. There are also electric cars from Nissan and there are electric cars from Volkswagen.

A: So what makes the Tesla more luxurious than an electric car from Volkswagen?.

B: The amount of features that you have. a Volkswagen. Let's say that it's a simpler car that can drive you to places and a Tesla it's just another car exactly as the Volkswagen probably that can bring you there in automatic without you having to drive.

A: Would you consider the extra features that the Tesla has and not the other cars, as luxurious?

B: Yeah indeed. That's a good that's a good way of saying it.

A: How would you feel driving a Tesla?

Super happy.

A: And how about when other people would see you driving that car?

B: I don't really care what other people think so in this case.

A: But what about family and friends?

B: I think my friends would be like 'Oh my god Salvador bought a Tesla', 'so cool'

A: And how would that make you fee?

B: Super happy [he sounds excited], because I love the brand. I love the technology behind that car along what is involved in the development of that car.

A: So would you consider something with a high technology as luxurious?

B: No, not really because you can use high technology in medicine for example, and that's not luxurious. So is that something that you need to leave. You said it before for me luxury means some extra features that are not needed in a product.

A: Okay. But why wouldn't you buy a Tesla yet?

B: Probably if one day I have enough money, for sure because it's one of the products I feel attractive too.

A: And why do you feel attracted to it?

B: I just said it before because I am aware of all the technology and the impact of such a car.

A: What do you mean So what was the impact of such a car?

B: I mean in terms of an energy and sustainability.

A: Why is that important to you or is that important to you?

B: It's important to me. It is important to me because I'm trying to live in a simple style in terms of sustainability.

A: Okay could you elaborate more on that?

B: Let me think about it. Okay, so I think I will buy the Tesla if I have the money, of course, more money than the price of the cars. It is a luxurious product because it has way more features than a regular electric car. it appeals to me because it's a sustainable car since it's not using fossil fuel to power it. That's a good incentive for me to buy that specific brand.

A: So if you have two cameras or two similar ones, but one of the other one isn't sustainable how would that influence your decision?

B: I would go for the more sustainable even if it is a little bit more expensive.

A: Okay, even if the quality is a little bit lower

B: I would consider it for sure, because sustainability overpasses other factors in my criteria when buying products.

A: Okay. Which other criterias are then also important besides sustainability and the price and the quality as you said yourself. Is there any other criterion that is important to you?

B: I'm recalling all the examples of you have discussed because there is nothing else.

A: Do you think driving a Tesla, would allow other people to indicate which kind of person you are?

B: Yes I think so. It says a lot about the person.

A: What do you think so?

B: Because Tesla is technologist brand but at the same time sustainable and I feel that that appeals to me.

A: So you would say you feel identify with it?

B: yes, I would.

A: Okay, and how would you evaluate the fact of other people seeing you in the Tesla?

B: Not at all. It's not relevant for me.

A: Why not?

B: Why is it important to me? I don't know. Really.

A: Okay coming back to something you said. We talked about clothes, you were mentioning Gucci and it sounded negative. Why is that?

B: I don't think it is negative. I like to think that people buy stuff that brings them happiness. So if there are some people that with the money buy those products and those products they bring happiness to them. It's completely fine for me.

I would buy luxurious products if they bring me happiness for sure.

A: And what do you think about this brands?

B: Okay, what do you think about this brand but in which sense? In terms of the price, in terms of the quality, in terms of marketing?

A: whatever you want to talk about.

B: But it's a waste of money. At least when it's about this clothing brand.

A: Okay so now we are going over to the last part of our interview. We are going to show you some visuals. So please take your time and look at them and let us know what catches your attention and then also why.

B: Okay. I'm going to try to explain that I think about it. Okay, so I think the first picture is the one of Louis Vuitton, with the black baby holding something. The first thing that I that comes to my mind is that I don't really like the advertising, because somehow it bothers me that they they are using a dark-skinned kid to do this advertising.

A: And why is that so?

B: That's also that I don't know but probably because what comes to my mind is that probably this baby kid, was hired by this brand and probably not treated fairly.

A: Okay and why is that?

B: Because I am someone who looks for sustainable products. So from a sustainable means it's very very wide topics and fair trade is one of them. So I know that Louis Vuitton produces products all over Asia because of the low manufacturing prices and not always standing for fair trade. So that's why that comes to my mind.

As I said before I wouldn't mind buying something which is expensive as soon as it offers good quality and is sustainable..

A: Okay. We will give a short explanation of the ad [explanation].

B: Okay, at least for me only looking at the picture that was not the case. but it also has to do with the concept my I have in my mind of this brand probably if this if I would have see the brand that would be different.

A: And how would you elaborate the brand now when you have heard the background of the campaign?

I think it's only advertising and probably it's not real. But what I mean is that companies or brands, they try to advertise themselves as something that they are not.

A: Would you evaluate the brand in a positive neutral or negative way?

B: I see it as something positive, that they want to change things. But probably that means that I will have to read a little bit more about these brands to further evaluate on it.

Compared to the one before, the other LV picture here, I think for me this is the typical picture that of a luxury brand but I don't know why the bag doesn't look, is it real?

A: Yes.

B: Sorry. It looks fake on the picture.

A: why do you think it is a classical picture.

B: There is something like , she is lying on something. Yeah for me to use this is the typical luxurious picture.

A: How do you feel when you look at this? Does it cause any reaction in you?

B: Not really. It doesn't bother me, it doesn't make me feel like I want to buy that bag. No, no, that's not it doesn't create or triggers any sort of emotions on me.

But now I am interested in that. What is the story behind that picture [Louis Vuitton 1].

A: There is not such a story behind, it is an older advertisement from Louis Vuitton with Uma Thurman, the actress as a model.

B: So I think that's why probably the market is full of those pictures in which there is a beautiful woman or a super sexy guy laying on the beach because that's what they want to advertise. That's what they want to create a people or triggering people that they feel like the picture like the person in the pictures.

A: And can you relate to this feeling? And do you feel identified with the people on the picture?

B: No, I think I said it before.

A: And how about the other one? The one with the baby?

B: I would never buy such a product.

A: Okay, but how do you feel when you see the other one and you know the story behind.

B: It is something disruptive, which is different compared to the regular marketing campaign of luxurious brands. Yeah, if this will make me buy the product, I don't think so.

A: But would that drive you more towards the brand then the previous one?

B: It will get my attention. It will trigger probably some curiosity. but , why are they using black skin, and what does he have on his hands?

A: Anything else you want to comment on?

B: Let me see what else. The other picture is a guy on a catwalk [Balenciaga WFP]. I think it's he's wearing something yellow. Since it's about me and my feelings and my emotions and all of that I think it is ugly what he's wearing. I have no clue what is this for a brand actually, so what what I think about this is okay, it is a catwalk. It looks like he's surrounded by people. So this is supposed to be from a good brand probably and. Once again, the model is good. Typically stereotypic model of luxurious brands. the closing doesn't appeal to me doesn't trigger anything on me just like that.

A: [Explanation of Balenciaga and the World Food Program]. How does that change your feelings and your perception?

B: I think it's something positive and it appeals to me. But at the same time I still think that the clothes are ugly. I think it is something good for the brand by knowing the story behind it. But once again, I still think it's ugly on but I will not buy it myself.

A: Any other picture you want to comment on?

B: I don't know all the brands actually, so.. I see one that is interesting too. I don't know the brand, in one picture. There is a woman laying on trash. She's wearing sort of a green dress. I think it's interesting because I never saw a brand advertising themselves like that [Stella McCartney]

A: What do you think about that?

B: I think it gets my attention just because it's a model surrounded by what it's probably trash or probably not. I don't know by knowing nothing about the brand. So it's just something that will get my attention. I have no clue what already trying to advertise in any of those pictures. I don't know if it's the clothes if it's pointing at the issues with trash? Or for something completely different. So it's not really clear. What are they advertising in any of these pictures?

A: [Explanation of Stella McCartney]. So what do you think about that?

B: I think it's something positive for a brand trying to do that. I think it's good that companies are starting to worry about sustainability and fair trade. Of course. Yes, but I will also say that. In this case, you only see the picture you don't have the context or the story behind it. So I will say that probably to increase the impact of such an advertising or campaign. It's good to put some text or to have something next to it that explains further. Trying to be more sustainable...it's in.. there is a change. It's like a good impact on the brand.

A: even though it's expensive?

B: yeah, even though it's expensive. But for example if I can buy a dress of the same that it's also sustainable from a cheaper brand. I will go for the cheaper brand.

A: Okay great, well do you want to comment on any other visual?

B: No, I think that were the most interesting ones for me.

Debriefing the interview and thanking the interviewee

Appendix 5 - Interview Meaning Coding

Appendix 5.1. Overview of Central themes and subcategories

Central Theme	Subcategories
Luxury construct	Add Value
	Dream
	Exclusive
	Experience
	Freedom
	Good Feeling
	Happiness
	Money
	The Best
	Unnecessary
Status Signaling	Improve social status

	Recognition
	Signaling wealth
	Belonging
	Brand prominence
	Differentiation
Uniqueness	Differentiation
	Feeling special
	Being unique
	Self-expression
Hedonism	Accomplishment and satisfaction
	External to the product
	Negative feelings
	Positive feelings
	Quality and aesthetics
Sustainability	Self indulgence
	Added value
	Authenticity
	Everyday
	Negative feeling
	Positive feeling
	Responsibility of the brand
	Second priority
	Signaling for a good cause
	Transparency
	Willingness to pay more
Ethics	Adds value
	Authenticity and transparency
	Positive feelings
	Secondary feature
Inclusivity	Added value
	Authenticity
	Beauty standard
	Contribution of participants
	No personal connection
	Personally affected
	Positive feeling
	Responsibility of the brands
Traditional branding	Meaning
	Not identified
	Old fashioned/outdated
Modern branding	Authenticity
	Meaning
	Positive perceptions

Younger audience

Appendix 5.2. Interview analysis

Luxury Construct

Natural Unit	Subtopic	Central Theme
"You know, you have this I don't know this charisma about the brand. And it's, it's still like in the forefront of like design and high end like a technology." by respondent 6	Add value	Luxury Construct
"Something you don't actually need and something you do just to make yourself feel better." by respondent 10		
"It is kind of a luxury because it's expensive, and it's not really necessary. But it adds value to my life again, so. " by respondent 5		
"Yeah, I guess more luxurious. Because then I would like, need more money to actually afford it.... Yes, then it would be more kind of a luxury if I then can afford to buy something of it" by respondent 7	Dream	
"I think like something more like very elegant, classic, of course expensive and I think it has something like, it's something that you want, but you can't afford. So, not a myth but something like a dream, at some point." by respondent 3		
"I think about high end design, I think about price. I think about quality" by respondent 6	Exclusive	
", I would associate this more with like, like this Dior with a luxury brand." by respondent		
"Luxury is something exclusive, and it is something like, out of the ordinary." by respondent 1		
"Also maybe going to a restaurant from time to time. And yeah, all these things that make life nicer, probably." by respondent 1	Experience	
"I would probably go on some expensive vacation. To some destinations further away. Maybe for longer periods then just a week or something? Or I would eat out more in fancy restaurants and try more things." by respondent 7		

"I think about like, the best and nicest hotels or not necessarily what's like in an apartment or just a destination. Everything is just calm and there is a lot of like, water surrounding me. So like an island... That's, yeah, so like, I think when I think about it closer, I think about traveling and luxury together, let's say." by respondent 4		
" And I think when I travel far away, I find that quite luxurious, because I know that most people might not be able to our age, travel for a month somewhere or, you know, go to the other side of the world and be able to afford it," by respondent 4	Experience	Luxury Construct
"So I think it was mostly clothes and travelling, for instance. Staying in really nice hotels and all that." by respondent 3		
"when you think about luxury, you think about high quality things? If not they wouldn't be luxurious. Same with experiences. So hotel, you're expected to kind of quality and different from low quality hotels," by respondent 11		
"I can, like travel to wherever I want to travel to. So that is also a luxury to just say, I can go on vacation to say, Mexico or wherever. It is also luxury. So that is something that I want to be sure of in my future that I can like afford that" by respondent 5		
"Just having a lot of money to spend on something. Like without that I really need it, but more than I want it." by respondent 7	Freedom	
"Probably the bag might last longer. Physically. But I think the experiences I will value more. Because in 50 years. I don't care what kind of bag I have right now." by respondent 7		
"The best for me would be something that makes me not have to, in terms of this travelling thing, something that makes me not think about anything else besides living in the moment, which means I don't have to worry about and cleaning my clothes or cleaning my room or spending too much money or too little money, because I'm going to luxury place, which means I can afford luxury stuff." by respondent 4		
"But my dream in general was to be able to afford to do anything I want, anytime I want, luxury or not luxury" by respondent 4		

"I've reached the point where I live a luxurious life because I can afford to do what I want to do." by respondent 4		
"I guess, it's like, extreme comfort. It's not having to worry about anything." by respondent 8		
"I think it's something that is kind of over over the top meaning something that is probably a higher price than I would usually buy. So it's kind of like a treat for me. luxurious thing. It's something that maybe not a lot of people have." by respondent 6	Good feeling	
"Rihanna is a mainstream commercial singer. And you shouldn't try to be high end. It should be something more commercial more yeah young. But you should stick with your classic and not have heard of doing that." by respondent 6		
"But this one, it's also like a refreshing thing for them. But only when I know about the story.If I don't, the picture doesn't talk that much to me." by respondent	Good feeling	
"Because it's just a backyard, which is not nice. The whole visual is just not attractive. Also, the colors. And then there's trash here as well. Yeah, this graffiti here, so are completely different than the other." by respondent 7		
"And also just a positive, like, good life, better life? Something like that." by respondent		
"It could be having enough money to live, then maybe also having enough holiday days to like when you think about work, to have enough time to relax and get energy back, like your energy levels, it could also be that everyone in your family is healthy, that you have a good relationship with your family and friends. That's all like luxury things. They all add up to your own happiness, I would say." by respondent 1	Happiness	Luxury Construct
"I mean, going on holiday, then it's also going on holiday and being able to have money to stay in a hotel or apartment or whatever, like being able to afford stuff." by respondent 1		
"Because it's first of all very expensive. It's a designer item. And it's also something probably to show your status in a way." by respondent 1	Money	
"I think first of all, because of the price point, definitely. I mean, they are all too expensive for what they actually deliver or give you like, I mean, it's still a bag. " by respondent 1		

"I would probably use all the money on traveling I would consider as like a luxury thing to do because not everyone is able to spend that much money on going wherever in the world." by respondent 1		
"I will probably always justify it with the fact that it's kind of like an investment piece where you would be able to sell it at one point if you don't like it anymore." by respondent 9		
"I think about something that is expensive and at the same time probably. Not needed at all. Yeah, I think that's what I think with when I think about luxury." by respondent 12		
"Things that only rich people can afford." by respondent 12		
"I think that good coffee is luxurious. and there are some exceptions in that. Like for example, probably sometimes affording a good meal or a good piece of meat, that's also luxurious" by respondent 12		
"I think about high end design, I think about price. I think about quality" by respondent 6		
"for me something luxurious is something that I'm paying for to treat myself." by respondent 6		
"For me, it's more about being luxurious and experiences. So more about yeah, traveling and treating myself to really nice fancy dinners." by respondent 6		
"that's for me luxurious, because obviously, I don't need an iPhone. But if I have to buy something I'd buy an iPhone, even though it's much more expensive." by respondent 6		
"here she's in a palace right? Yeah, it's about something almost kind of vintage and something that has its values and something that is much more authentic you know? And they stick with it you know, they're not changing to now like having pictures on plastic or using I don't know, neon colors. For me that's luxury, actually." by respondent 6		
"I think she doesn't stand for luxury. So it shouldn't be a luxury brand. Like you should stick with your your values, like you have here. [Pointing at visual with Uma Thurman] This is the very like foundation of LV the classic bags and this honogram. You should stick with this and with someone like Uma Thurman, which is a very classic, very smart actress for example. " by respondent 6		
	Money	Luxury Construct

<p>"If it's less luxury, then I think it's cool for them to have something less high end something more young. Maybe they want to diversify their audience, right? But if that's the if that's the they're like, strategy, then I would say she should have like a more of not so luxurious, but more into mainstream, not mainstream as Zara that's not what I'm saying. But yeah, less high end. To make it more commercial." by respondent 6</p>		
<p>"Because I don't really need it. And they're also cheaper coats but I bought this coat. I would say this is really luxury." by respondent 7</p>		
<p>"I think the most important is that it adds value to my life" by respondent 7</p>		
<p>" and this looks more casual [Balenciaga 2]. More rundown I would say" by respondent 7</p>		
<p>"Well, this[Dior] gives me more of a feeling like pleasure, it's just more satisfying. Because it also like, Dior is also like the brand I associate very expensive, special. So, I would feel like also the environment is more special" by respondent 7</p>		
<p>"No, it wouldn't, no, because I'm not influenced by celebrities." by respondent 7</p>		
<p>"I guess I haven't like before when we talked about it, I haven't thought of all those extra aspects of like the social aspects, because there I was more focused on like the price and, yeah, the basic of luxury art. So I guess I'm now even more aware, but like all the features that come with that it wasn't before." by respondent 7</p>		
<p>"luxury is something for the richer part of society in my opinion, or just for people who want to have like, sort of show that they accomplished something." by respondent 10</p>		
<p>"Because of the price tag, that is the first factor I think when I think of luxury." by respondent 4</p>		
<p>"If I'm way richer, and if the definition of luxury to me is the same: it's a price indicator" by respondent 4</p>		
<p>"But I wouldn't consider those shops as luxury brands actually, because I mean, they are not known for that and then their price is also not that expensive, as Louis Vuitton or Chanel or things like that." by respondent 3</p>		
<p>"Luxury in general, first word is expensive. " by respondent 2</p>		
	Money	Luxury Construct

"Money! I guess people and that's it. Okay, I mean money wise, like, luxury is not for medium class, right? so I don't think a medium class person will purchase anything luxurious." by respondent 11		
"I think more than Chanel and Versace e.g., that's more high class because it's basically saying I spend a lot of money, because it is more expensive of course but you obtain more design you have more than just the brand. " by respondent 11		
"It is kind of a luxury because it's expensive, and it's not really necessary. But it adds value to my life again, so. " by respondent 5		
"because normally luxury means more money" by respondent 12	The best	
"I think this to luxurious because they are a little bit overpriced. But also they have a better quality." by respondent 12	The best	Luxury Construct
"I think it's something that is kind of over over the top meaning something that is probably a higher price than I would usually buy. So it's kind of like a treat for me. luxurious thing. It's something that maybe not a lot of people have. " by respondent 6		
"Probably being rich. Having a lot of money that I can spend on things I don't really need or like high quality brands" by respondent 7		
"like all the small things I buy every day. Like not related to food, but maybe going out in a restaurant or doing travel or trips. Going abroad on holiday." by respondent 7		
"this already looks really luxurious. Lights and the big hall it fits more to luxury brands then the other background, this backyard." by respondent 7		
"And then she also looks kind of posh. So it just it's just a typical advertising. While this one is rather special." by respondent 7		
"I guess it would just be like any other just expensive luxury product. It wouldn't add any extra value like the sustainable, sustainable aspect or social aspect where before it would be just a normal luxurious, luxury product." by respondent 7		
"And I think about indulgence." by respondent		
"We're just like, just like the top of the cake." by respondent 10		

" Yeah, because I feel like it's just an upgrade from the norm maybe." by respondent 1		
"[...]a better version of something else[...]" by respondent 2		
"So if it's just lifestyle, or if it's physical products, or whatever, then you have one version, and then you have a better version." by respondent 2		
"because luxury, is something that I consider like to be the creme de la creme. So it's like, the best that you can have, you can have the best, then the best is sort of not having to worry about 'all that shit'. In that sense, if you can have luxury, then it's because you don't have to worry about all the difficulties that come with less comfortable and good things." by respondent 8		
"I think it's something that is kind of over over the top meaning something that is probably a higher price than I would usually buy. So it's kind of like a treat for me. luxurious thing. It's something that maybe not a lot of people have. " by respondent 6		
"I'd rather have like a really amazing experience that I'm going to take with me all my life probably than having a bag in my closet that it's probably not even going with me all my life." by respondent 6		
"Yeah, for communication wise, if they communicate his vision, well, yeah, just pictures. Then the one that has the small story, because the other one yeah, it's really about kind of their heritage. It speaks a lot for classical and everything. " by respondent 6	Unnecessary	Luxury Construct
"Chanel, Dior, Valentino. Like those really expensive brands." by respondent 7		
"it's not something you need. It's something that's like extra, something you buy when you always have the basic so you have like" by respondent 10		
"It is kind of a luxury because it's expensive, and it's not really necessary. But it adds value to my life again, so. " by respondent 5	Unnecessary	

Status Signaling

Natural Unit	Subtopic	Central Theme
"I got clearly influenced by my surroundings. Every girl kind of had a Louis Vuitton bag and also liked it. And it was probably also kind of being part of a group." by respondent 9	Belonging	Status Signaling
"But I don't feel like I have to have it in order to belong to a group for example" by respondent 9		
", I kind of enjoy that I can use circle and then people that might have more money than you and just buy it like just randomly when they go shopping and you save your money up for like buying this bag, they would now think that you would enter or you are belonging to this very exclusive circle, but it's no why I do it. I just like to have like nice of things." by respondent 9		
"I think I'm self confident enough that I don't need certain things to feel like I have to belong. Yeah, something but then again, you obviously always adapt to your surroundings somehow" by respondent 9		
"it's good. Like, it's trendy. So it's also something you show off, because it's a Marc Jacobs." by respondent 6		
"So it's kind of a trendy thing." by respondent 6		
"So I always had people around me that had iPhones. So, I also wanted an iPhone." by respondent 6		
"My mom has always used Marc Jacobs. And she really likes it and I don't know sometimes I stole her bags, and she was very happy about it. So when I had to buy my own and also it was a trend at some point in Portugal. And so obviously that's having an influence but it's it's a balance between what's trendy" by respondent 6		
"and she also influenced me a lot and then it's also about Yeah, whether, I don't know, other people like it or not because you also do it like I said to show off a it. ," by respondent 6		
"But then in school it was definitely the black trend, we were all wearing black." by respondent 10		
"Because it was like super trendy, like everyone was having Louboutin even there was a guy in my class and he was like, super posh. And he had a Louboutin, he was going out with Louboutins. And yeah, it was basically because it was like trendy. " by respondent 11		

<p>"like the way you dress and everything is to feel part of a kind of a group, but I don't know if I was in that..if I was like pretending...but you wanted to be like posh, so you had to dress like a posh person and I would never wear something that it was not like from Tommy Hilfiger or Ralph Lauren or something like that, I was obsessed with it." by respondent 11</p>	Belonging	Status Signaling
<p>"[A: And and why would you think you were doing that?] Because I wanted to feel part of this, like, posh group of my friends. Yeah, my friends were like that. And we were also going to this discos and being around with people that they were very, very posh. They were actually like, part of the big names of Spain." by respondent 11</p>		
<p>"Yes, they purchased it because it's like it makes you feel part of a class or like different kinds of people. [...] class in terms of the class like every kind of class in the economy. in the society... you are like medium class high class and other classes. And you then pretend to be in high class even if you're not. sometimes if you're buying it because you only want to pretend [emphasized] to be that high class. [...] At first I didn't mind that much. But then I just hated them. Oh my god I hate those kind of people right now." by respondent 11</p>		
<p>"for a Louis Vuitton, that's why I would also not buy it again, the logo is like all over the bag, and then everyone knows what it is." by respondent 9</p>	Brand prominence	
<p>"that's why I would also not buy it again, the logo is like all over the bag, and then everyone knows what it is" by respondent 9</p>		
<p>"I wouldn't buy it bag again, where it's like very like Louis Vuitton bag that has like this Louis Vuitton logos all over it." by respondent 9</p>		
<p>". I would rather buy something where it maybe says like, very small or not even on it." by respondent 9</p>		
<p>"And I think that lots of people that don't have the knowledge about these luxury brands, they would never recognize them." by respondent 9</p>		

"I read once this article about like Louis Vuitton once that too many 'cheap' people are buying it now as well, because they perceive it as like a status symbol." by respondent 9		
"they're also like Gucci bags, probably that don't even have this big logos on it. So you wouldn't see that it's from them. And then I might buy it." by respondent 9	Brand prominence	Status Signaling
"I don't like when the brand name is very disposed on a product. I don't like that. Because like I said before, that I don't like to show off with whatever I buy. I buy it for myself and not so that other people see that I might have the money to spend 1000 euros on a bag" by respondent 9		
"I would also buy it if it is like very, for example, with this lean bags it says, like in very small letters. If it says Sabine on it, and then I would definitely buy it, but I don't like those big logo things." by respondent 9		
"you can tell people what it is and they instantly also know it's quality. Not in the logo way, but in the way that you can see it's distinctive, you can see that it's from something." by respondent 10		
"Also, Louis Vuitton it's very in the whole logo world and it was like a huge thing 10 years ago here everybody really everybody had one, then they sort of got a little bit tired of it" by respondent 10		
"So I wouldn't like to buy something with the name of the brand on it or where you can see it a lot." by respondent 3		
"I feel like it's more the brand that's wearing me compared to me wearing the brand. " by respondent 1		
"I think it would prefer it without the print." by respondent 2		
"But also, just now that I look at it in, it's just that whole idea of having some statement on you, it's not really something necessary for me, I would prefer the other way." by respondent 2		
"I don't know the message that you want to give. Maybe we have Chanel and you're giving one type of image of it if you just have like one random T-shirt, even if it is the same style. so yeah..." by respondent 11		

<p>"You can tell what kind of person that is. For example you're wearing a cap from Dolce and Gabbana or Gucci, it kind of signals, it means you are super tacky. I mean you are definitely rich kid like, a new rich kid." by respondent 11</p>		
<p>"</p> <p>yeah Michael Kors would be a “wanna be”. When you buy a Michael Kors it is because you want to feel like super posh, but you're not posh so you buy a Michael Kors." by respondent 11</p>	Brand prominence	Status Signaling
<p>"but when you're wearing something that explicitly says the brand without any design because Michael Kors are not very beautiful but the typical like normal bag and just with the Michael Kors logo or such a typical belt from Dolce and Gabbana or Gucci... that's like very “italian” for example, we called them “dolcegabbaneros” that kind of guy that you know is super tacky and everything. [...]I think it is tacky, it is definitely super tacky. And it is for rich people, like those new rich people. [...]Because they want to show they have money. " by respondent 11</p>		
<p>"yeah as I already said, it is more about the product than the brand." by respondent 8</p>		
<p>"I don't know, again, it doesn't really add any value for me that it says Tommy Hilfiger, but I mean, I know that they have a high quality product." by respondent 5</p>		
<p>“Because for me, it's less about the brand itself and then more about the quality. So you could have the same shoes, and then they just put a fancy logo on it. It doesn't add that much value for me." by respondent 5</p>		
<p>"That's why thing I like to buy more expensive things, then you at least have some people who are not able to be in that group. So you're like standing out." by respondent 10</p>	Differentiation	Status Signaling
<p>"So I guess that's sort of like correlated or in order to look nice and have nice things you'll need to have done well in your life. So it's a, it's a sign of “making it”, but not in the “logo” like I have this sort of bag, but just in the way that I can afford to wear better quality." by respondent 10</p>	Improve social status	

"I mean, it's not the reason why I bought the shoes in the first place because I bought them for myself. Not because of other seeing them. But it's a nice side effect that you get compliments." by respondent 5	Recognition	
"so, not so much about others" by respondent 6		
"People acknowledge that it is a pretty coat." by respondent 7		
"I probably I probably wouldn't mind what people think about me in a car. So yeah, I would rather not influence me." by respondent 7	Recognition	Status Signaling
"so people realize or see that. I have something nice and they knowledge it. Yeah, I guess it's always nice." by respondent 7		
"And then other people say, Hey, this is, this looks pretty. And then I'm more happy that I spent the money because other people feel see it as pretty or something as well. So, yeah, it's just nice if they acknowledge it. Even if they don't know how much money I spend on it. It's nice. It's nice to know that it's actually maybe worth it." by respondent 7		
"of course, as I said it is nice if other acknowledge it. I said before, so they said, Oh, that's nice. But I wouldn't necessarily say everyone has to know what, what brand it is that I'm wearing. Or how much it cost." by respondent 7		
"I don't really care that much about what people think." by respondent 4		
"I think that's, yeah I actually wouldn't care about what people think. I mean, it's mostly for me, right? So, it wouldn't be to look better for others," by respondent 3		
"Yeah, I think that's, that's part of the, successful and achievement. To me, at least that includes other people's perception" by respondent 2		
"I don't really care what other people think so in this case." by respondent 12		
"It's not what other people think. But that I don't wanna, I don't want them to think that I like have more" by respondent 9		
". And yeah, so it would be more only for me and also not like, I hate showing off. Like I don't like to show other people how much money I can spend on something for example," by respondent 9	Signaling wealth	

"Because we always grew up like this. Yeah, don't show other people how much money you might have. because it's not what makes you like a better, cooler or whatever person" by respondent 9		
"they are all like very fast fashion buyers, and they would never ever recognize that I have these things, you know, like, they don't see it because they don't value it." by respondent 9		
"And very good right now they have this like, special cut and I know that some people know that." by respondent 9		
"And very good right now they have this like, special cut and I know that some people know that." by respondent 9		
"and don't even have it with me, because I know that other people here don't have that much money and I don't want to, like show off or something, you know, okay, even if it was my like my own money, but still, I don't wanna show this perspective, if this perception to other people" by respondent 9		
"if people feel like you're way more money, I am bit uncomfortable with it. And I don't want to give this like perception because I mean, I just spend my money differently than other people." by respondent 9		
"B: Not at all. It's not relevant for me." by respondent 12		
"it just elevates you kind of not just to show other people, but also a bit. You always like to show off, a bit if you buy I don't know, like a Gucci bag or whatever." by respondent 6	Signaling wealth	Status Signaling
"Yeah, I think it's, it's a lie to say no. Obviously, when you buy something, luxurious, you also want to, to show a bit, It's it's kind of like the, I don't know, it's like a wolf pack and you want to show a bit of your alpha part," by respondent 6		
"t's because it kind of shows that you are able to buy it. And it also shows when it's something like design, for example. It shows you that you have like high standards, I would say and that you are able with maybe your work, or whatever you do in life to buy it. So it kind of shows off of it." by respondent 6		
"it's obviously it's stupid, but it's obviously nice to post it on Instagram. And you know, what a nice resort you're in and blue waters and everything. Yeah, I would definitely post it on Instagram. Obviously to show other people, or maybe to make them a bit jealous" by respondent 6		

"Yeah, the brand, obviously. Which brand them I'm buying from, because for me, it's, like I said, it's also about showing off ," by respondent 6		
"And it has to be a brand that the people would know. Okay, so it's kind of shallow, but it's true. Yeah, because I don't know that many brands. So if it's something luxurious, I'm also going to go for what everyone knows, probably" by respondent 6		
"And also something that I noticed is that in Portugal, it is a lot about cars, and who has a good car. So that might have influenced me. That's why I really wanted to like this specific Mini Cooper that I really wanted, because I actually had a friend who had a Mini Cooper and then I had some friends that had other cars, and I really liked, but I didn't have the money to invest on a car" by respondent 6		
"But for me, people who wear Gucci are really those kind of I don't know extravagant new knew rich people. So the new rich as an it's, it's too much about showing off." by respondent 6		
"No, I don't think so. I feel like that people they usually have a lot of brands, like luxurious brands, are more posh and everything. And I don't see myself as a posh person." by respondent 7		
"So I wouldn't like be like 'hey, look at my Hugo Boss coat', because it's Hugo Boss" by respondent 7		
"I wouldn't feel comfortable to wear something like that, because I think it would be more to show off than anything else." by respondent 3		
"[asian culture] people really spent a lot of money and it is also a bit to show off, That they actually that they have the money. And this is just nuts, some of the values and I don't want to like, be associated with" by respondent 1		
"[Interviewer feeling uncomfortable] No, actually, I don't think it's it's that that important to me. ... maybe it's a short answer, but no that is how it is. " by respondent 1		
"If I paid that much money for something like that, that would be part of it, otherwise it wouldn't be worth it." by respondent 2		
"[...] my immediate thought is that I would think about how would other people look at me if I was wearing those brand." by respondent 2		
	Signaling wealth	Status Signaling

<p>"that's not really important to me, to show off that I can afford something" by respondent 2</p>		
<p>"[When she would wear the Versace dress] You feel prettier, and you feel like you're wearing something that really fits you. And it's really high quality in that everyone can see that. And you can also feel like oh, it's more like an experience that just the dress itself" by respondent 11</p>		
<p>"It's also high quality but you can always like see the brand everywhere so it's made for some kind of people, I think more than Chanel and Versace e.g., that's more high class because it's basically saying I spend a lot of money, because it is more expensive of course but you obtain more design you have more than just the brand." by respondent 11</p>	Signaling wealth	Status Signaling
<p>"Yeah, I think so. I think people also purchase those things because they want to feel like they are higher class than the one in which they actually are. " by respondent 11</p>		
<p>"I think like living in general here it definitely makes you change a little bit your perception about things like here maybe I wouldn't buy the red Ferrari I would buy like a nicer bike. But in Spain you get the people to look up to you if you have this or that and here it is actually like they look at you like worse sometimes if you like to show off a lot. So it all depends on society. So socially constructed." by respondent 11</p>		
<p>"I think, it's like in Denmark you don't see that much. I have to say you are like you see classes in terms of people, but in Spain is very related to their image. It is very like, as I said before, like Italians. They need to show that they are something and they are part of something that they have this amounts of money or that amount of money. And here you don't see that people show off. " by respondent 11</p>		
<p>"I mean, I think that showing off it's still in me and yeah, I mean if I had a lot of money I would buy luxurious things of course and I would like people to see it. Why not? Like I don't feel like I would be like here they don't buy super nice cars, they buy like electrical cars and things like that. But if I have the money to buy a Ferrari, I will buy it." by respondent 11</p>		

<p>"It didn't influence me that much. what they would think, but I do believe that on a regular level. If people deem what I'm doing to be luxurious, I would feel kind of uncomfortable, because it's not what I look to do. [...]</p> <p>because of my innate sort of dislike that people show off about the things because they're expensive." by respondent 8</p>		
<p>"And also confident probably it would feel like not necessarily, I wouldn't see it as a bragging thing, which I sometimes see that people when they were luxury, the item, sometimes my first immediate thought of like, okay, they kind of just want to show off. [...]</p> <p>I, I kind of see it as a showing off thing, which I dislike, " by respondent 8</p>	Signaling wealth	Status Signaling
<p>"</p> <p>but... so those particular items, like the hotel that I was in , it is like self care, that was, you know, because I wanted it and so I wasn't bragging about it." by respondent 8</p>		
<p>"because most people that I've seen, wearing or having, I don't know, what kind of bags and so on, they will buy it often for the brand [...] to me, that feels like, well, they're not doing it for themselves. They're doing it because of the brand because they want to show other people that they can't afford the brand" by respondent 8</p>		
<p>"it's sort of selling the idea that if you can do this, then, you know, you're up there, you're doing something that's more than what other people can do. And if that's the thinking, behind everyone that buys it, they're not doing it, because they particularly think that there's something more to this experience. It's just that they can do it. So they will.</p> <p>" by respondent 8</p>		
<p>"it's kind of like art more than just to show off of wealth. And so okay, the brands that sort of shift. Does that shift? I guess? I'm more interested, more positive about it." by respondent 8</p>		
<p>"I know that it does for some people just because they like to wear certain products with the brand name on it somewhere. But it doesn't necessarily increase the quality, which is the defining feature." by respondent 5</p>		

"I mean, everyone kind of cares about the opinion of others, even though they say they don't. Yeah, so of course, in the sense I care about what others think. But again, I would not buy these things because I want to show off." by respondent 5		
"is more for myself, actually, than to give a good impression to people." by respondent 3		

Uniqueness

Natural Unit	Subtopic	Central Theme
"and I think it would be the same if I got the Gucci jean jacket, it would just be like a thing that has a different style that I really wanted that I really like, and so I would immediately feel very good" by respondent 8	Differentiation	Uniqueness
"I think that people begin to care about, like, how clothes were looking. At that point, it was more about standing out and I was cool. Nobody wanted to have the same clothes" by respondent 10		
"And I guess in a sense, it's the same with the uniqueness is more unique to be colorful [...] I liked that it was a little bit different" by respondent 10		
"When they came out. It was something really like when you headed home you were like 'Uh this is so fancy', but now everyone, like almost have it at home" by respondent 1		
"I think maybe if I had one at home, it wouldn't feel as fancy as before. If like, you know, if maybe it was like in the beginning when you had one and it wouldn't be like oh, yeah, this is really nice, but with everyone has it, so it ust becomes the norm. And then it's not that you know, luxurious, fancy anymore" by respondent 1		
"But, you know, I really think also that the way they had these products, but also because it is really hard to get them, that I mentioned before, like it's because it's unique, there's not that many. So like it's yeah, just because you're one of those you would have it then it's just really like luxurious and you can differentiate yourself. " by respondent 1		
" I hate it I hate when I bought something and I thought like, 'Oh my God, this was amazing!' and the right colors, and it's just unique. And then you see four people walking in with the same thing. That's awful. " by respondent 10		
"So [...] it's yeah, just because you're one of those who would have it, then it's just really like luxurious, and you can differentiate yourself." by respondent 1		

"That's why thing I like to buy more expensive things, then you at least have some people who are not able to be in that group. So you're like standing out" by respondent 10	Differentiation	Uniqueness
"I don't know. I would feel special. [...] Because it's something that not everyone has. So it would make me feel different to the rest of the people. " by respondent 11	Feeling special	
"I think if everyone around me wore them, I did not want it." by respondent 8		
"I guess I also value it more, because it's like, it's not. How do you say? Not taken for granted. it's just not normal that everyone can afford it. So it already feels special to myself" by respondent 7		
"And then also because it's special, because not many people have it. So I would be like one out of I don't know how many in the city" by respondent 7		
"Luxury is something exclusive, and it is something like, out of the ordinary [...] if you have something luxury, you feel a bit more special, or maybe feel a bit more like, fine or better. " by respondent 1		
"Because when it comes to traveling, it's really more about me. And yeah, I mean, that is the biggest treat I can give myself, so, not so much about others. " by respondent 6		
"Because if you're buying something for 1000 euros, you really want it to be unique, very pretty. Or very, like it has to fit your body very very good. If not, I would not buy it" by respondent 11	Being Unique	
"So I wouldn't want them to see that I bought a luxury item, I would want them to see that I bought just something pretty. You know, more about the product, and then the Brand " by respondent 8		
"I like the uniqueness, I like to own something that many people might not own yes. So, it give me some sort of satisfaction to know I for example, I love limited edition stuff. [...] Yeah, because of the uniqueness" by respondent 10		

"I've smelled other people wearing this perfume around me like a lot of good friends of mine have the same perfume and we all smell different. Does that make sense? So I find it very, I feel like with this specific perfume, it's almost like it's only mine. Because I've tried like a typical vanilla spray at a shop or something and smells like a freaking vanilla spray. In this case, I feel like this perfume allows me to kind of have my own identity" by respondent 4	Being Unique	Uniqueness
"maybe if I'm in a nice coffee machine like that makes it you know, especially like, remember the espresso machine right with the capsules? Yes. Like right when they came out. It was something really like when you headed home you were like 'Uh this is so fancy', but now everyone, like almost have it at home. " by respondent 1		
"Because everyone likes to reflect a little bit in their clothing, like to show who they are" by respondent 10	Self-Expression	
"I think when you buy luxury clothes, these are not clothes that you can buy anywhere, so it's also a way to differentiate yourself at some point, and show a bit more your personality, you know? " by respondent 3		
"I think it would prefer it without the print" by respondent 2		
"I would rather buy something where it maybe says like, very small or is not even on it" by respondent 9		
" I think not because of the brand itself? Because it's a brand where they don't have any logo, but I think obviously, they have a style or sell clothes in a certain style, where I should maybe show other people with this kind of style like who I am, it's like, very timeless, but modern stuff. " by respondent 9		
" I personally don't. Don't use these.Big brands, right? First of all, because it's expensive and second of all. It's not really something I would associate myself with." by respondent 1		
"But also, just now that I look at it in, it's just that whole idea of having some statement on you, it's not really something necessary for me, I would prefer the other way" by respondent 2		
"And clothes, there's also a big opportunity for some self expression.I think your show more through what you wear, than through what you drive." by respondent 2		
"because for me, it's a lot about art " by respondent 6		

"I would maybe go for the for the Marc Jacobs, just because it's more like my kind of design and what I like more" by respondent 6	Self-Expression	Uniqueness
"And to the people, wearing it also, so it's, like, ecosystem around the brand, you know, the people who wear it, the design, the quality, the, I don't know, the designer, Like, what do they stand for, you know? that's it. " by respondent 6		
"And if you have designer that that looks like, it's not so extravagant, that looks like someone who's just, he's doing his job. And is an artist basically. That really speaks a lot about the brand " by respondent 6		
"I think it's a lot about whatever you wear, that's, that's what fashion is for me, for example, that whatever you were, it's always going to reflect on who you are " by respondent 6		
"I would first think about like, how should it look like? What should it have? " by respondent 7		
"The more complicated the design and shape and difficult it is to imitate from cheap brands, the more I like it " by respondent 10		
"And then it also depends on how it looks, that's obvious that it should fit a certain style and I would want to buy it, if we're talking about clothes " by respondent 2		
"[Features she looks in a luxury product/service] Because about clothes I would say design " by respondent 11		
"On the other hand, like Stella McCartney, it's also very close to me, and I definitely would wear Stella McCartney, and I wouldn't feel like that much cooler is more like more designed, more trendy" by respondent 11		
"I think they've done some cool things. Yeah. Like they've just because there have been more products that I saw from them that I thought were pretty. So it's more because of the design yeah" by respondent 8		
"because sometimes it is like, anyway when you're buying something from his design it's because you like the designer, and you like the brand and everything [...] " by respondent 11		
"And honestly, so like because of the brand because you're saying okay. Well, actually, right now is not so much like that, because the designers like unique designers are very, very well regarded. " by respondent 11		

"Because I mean,the clothes that you wear are also an indicator of your personality too. So I think wearing clothes is a way to express yourself, so I would say yes. " by respondent 3	Self-Expression	Uniqueness
" Dior they go for the traditional way of luxurious brands like associating it with very rich, very beautiful woman. So when you would see that, you would think that you are Uma Thurman...but as I said, I don't feel very identified with that" by respondent 11		
"So it would be more about the design of the clothes" by respondent 3		
" I mean of course if you're buying a Chanel and it has the logo there and it's just like this. Yeah, of course. But if it doesn't have any design behind it, I don't think I would buy it" by respondent 11		

Hedonism

Natural Unit	Subtopic	Central Theme
"Happy I guess, fulfilled. I think experiences make you feel fulfilled, because probably just staying somewhere and working all of your life will not make you fulfilled" by respondent 5		Hedonism
"It would make me feel successful, owning it. Like an achievement. " by respondent 2		
"So it would be a way to show me that all the things that I have done in the past, actually they are worth it and that you've earned that, finally. " by respondent 3		
"I think when you maybe we reach a milestone, and then you're like, Okay, for example, if I finish my bachelor's and be like, Okay, this could be a symbol of me achieving like something" by respondent 1		
"I'll feel happy and accomplished [about being able to travel]. " by respondent 4		
"I feel a little more proud. Yeah, because I actually not I was like, wait, but I remember I wasn't, that ashamed I bought this computer " by respondent 4		
"Accomplished, like yeah, because it would mean that I have reached the goal in my life. " by respondent 4		
"Yeah, I think it's a sign of accomplishment. " by respondent 10		
"It might allow me to indicate that I accomplished something " by respondent	External to the product	
"I feel like their stores always look super fancy" by respondent 7		
"It felt good, yeah. Yeah. I think so. It felt good to wear it. To try it on. Also to be in the store, because the whole store felt a little more luxurious than if I had bought it online or in H&M, where I usually buy all my clothes. So it was a different experience and a good and positive experience" by respondent 2		
"Because of the interior, the decoration, how everything looks [inside a luxurious store] " by respondent 2		

"And I think the experience around the product is something very important for a luxurious product. It's also about the presentation of the product, about the salesperson about even the packaging, maybe it's just a lot of superficial things that you don't really need, because it doesn't add that much value to the product itself. Because the product is still the same, right? It just increases your experience, it's a nice experience.. " by respondent 5	External to the product	Hedonism
"I sometimes like to go to Tommy Hilfiger and buy things there. Because if you like the sales, like the whole sales experiences is really good, because you really feel like they're taking care of you. And try to help you find something that you really like " by respondent 5		
"the whole presentation, like they just really think about that everything goes in line, and then you have really nice people helping you in the store. So yeah, I think that really adds up to the experience" by respondent 5		
": Like, you want to treat yourself if you buy something like that, right? So you want to, you don't just want to grab it and buy it? And then that's it. You just want to have some more around it " by respondent 5		
"But then you kind of get used to it [having a luxury product or services] right? So you don't really pay attention to it anymore" by respondent 1	Negative feelings	
"I think also, when you upgrade, then it just becomes the norm of what you are used to. So like they also decrease then. " by respondent 1		
"If it's, for example, my computer, since I have a newer computer right now, I almost feel guilty for having it, because I'm so young, and this computer is almost 2000 euros and but it's coming from my own, like, it's me deciding, like an idiot to purchase this computer because I want it. So I feel a little bit and I don't want to be judged by having such a higher range product. " by respondent 4		
"I know my current financial situation does not support a luxury lifestyle, I feel sometimes guilty " by respondent 4		
"So for me to think of me having this lifestyle is almost a little bit shameful, because I know, it's not a necessary thing in my life. " by respondent 4		

"Guilty, because right now, as a student, I don't have that much money. I should also save some money. If I just spend it on items, I don't really need it makes me feel a little bit guilty sometimes. " by respondent 7		
"Rather than having something in my closet that. Yeah, that makes me feel it. Because it's like I said at some point, it stops making me feel that way. You feel like you're invested. And it's it's super nice to have a Marc Jacobs but it's like the first year and then maybe it's gone " by respondent 6	Negative feelings	
"But I have the feeling, I will feel like I wasted money. " by respondent 12		
"I think bad. Bad because I spent so much money. That happened at least when I bought this Louis Vuitton bag. " by respondent 9		
"And I enjoy buying good coffee and that's sort of luxury because you can buy the normal one in the supermarket. So I buy it basically because of the quality of the product and the taste" by respondent 12	Positive feelings	Hedonism
"if you have something luxury, you feel a bit more special, or maybe feel a bit more like, fine or better." by respondent 1		
"[Driving a Tesla] Super happy, because I love the brand. I love the technology behind that car along what is involved in the development of that car. " by respondent 12		
"I would buy luxurious products if they bring me happiness for sure. " by respondent 12		
"you feel it when you taste the coffee in this in this particular example, and the one that I normally buy tastes way better. " by respondent 12		
"It's more about the taste of the product itself of the coffee. So I do enjoy drinking good coffee. It gives me some satisfaction. " by respondent 12		
"it's a nicer feeling like that you have, once you, once you get out of that stage that I spent so much money, then it's really, it's really nice to look at it. " by respondent 6		
"It's more like being in a luxurious experience. And then I'm really thrilled and I really enjoying the most and I'm really investing on that. " by respondent 6		

<p>"I felt pretty good. Pretty fancy. And yeah, it's nice to wear. And I feel kind of special because I usually just were like, rather cheap coats and now I have this really fancy coat and really expensive one. So yes, it makes me feel special kind of, because I'm not used to like wearing those luxurious coats " by respondent 7</p>		
<p>"But I might, I might remember like 'hey, I went to this place'. That was really nice" by respondent 7</p>		
<p>"I guess I would feel really, really special. Because those things are super expensive. [...] so I would have, would just feel very fancy and special. wearing it " by respondent 7</p>	Positive feelings	Hedonism
<p>"So, I would wear it and be happy because I know what's worth it. " by respondent 7</p>		
<p>"I wanted to cut a little down and just spend more money on few things that I would enjoy" by respondent 7</p>		
<p>"Then I just sort of fall in love sometimes with beautiful things, so yeah " by respondent 10</p>		
<p>"Dream? And of course, then there's the dream like getting the Chanel bags and the Gucci bags. And that's another great price range " by respondent 10</p>		
<p>"It makes me feel very happy because I really love this this perfume. " by respondent 4</p>		
<p>"I would be like happier at the moment, but maybe like, better in a way that maybe I would feel more confident I would say" by respondent 3</p>		
<p>"And why really, you know, when I first saw it, and I was like, oh, wow, okay, this is gorgeous. Whatever. And so I feel an attachment and like, kind of remembrance about something that was good. " by respondent 8</p>		
<p>"It makes me feel good. Yes, it's all positive. " by respondent 2</p>		
<p>"because I like it, it is something that provides I don't know, like some kind of "feeling good" to me. Is it like is the same thing when you go to Zara, but is not in the same proportion. " by respondent 11</p>		
<p>"You feel prettier, and you feel like you're wearing something that really fits you. And it's really high quality in that everyone can see that. And you can also feel like oh, it's more like an experience that just the dress itself" by respondent 11</p>		

"[Yves Saint Laurent lipstick] I feel more beautiful because it's actually like, it fits more my face and it stays there longer. " by respondent 11	Quality and Aesthetics	
"Because again, it is a very nice dress, that will probably fit me better than another dress. And I would, I would feel prettier with it" by respondent 11		
"And that's something that I associate also to durability in this case with luxury brand." by respondent 4		
"Well I think also because they are really elegant, well that's the idea I have about luxury brands" by respondent 3		
"Usually, good quality, I sort of believe maybe it's not a real thing, but it believe that luxury items are generally a bit of quality" by respondent 10	Quality and Aesthetics	Hedonism
"Usually, like brands who do like high-end stuff and expensive stuff they have more money to explore and play a little bit. If you think about clothing, it's more like, different textiles, better textiles and so on. They're more working in making fabrics look nice, with little more movement and stuff, where maybe the cheaper stuff is more like, because it needs to look good on the first view, but not the feeling of it and not the res" by respondent 10		
"Because I get the feeling every time, I save up to buy something nice, it usually lasts longer, I really like it and the feeling of being a good purchase it last longer than if I buy something that's really cheap" by respondent 10		
"Because this one looked so nice. And the quality was really good. And I felt like I want it." by respondent 7		
"I guess I would feel really, really special. Because those things are super expensive. So I must have, like an excess amount of money for it. Yeah, so I would have, would just feel very fancy and special. wearing it " by respondent 7		
"o I felt amazing at that moment. [...] Just because you feel like very pretty, when you buy these things, " by respondent 10		
"Oh and to have a dress from Chanel that would be so nice...[interviewee seems to be very excited] " by respondent 11		
"[...] because they are very pretty and the design is so amazing" by respondent 11		

"it's my birthday and I buy one piece of very expensive clothes. which I usually would not buy because it's very expensive, but it's my birthday. And I want to treat myself." by respondent 5	Self-indulgence	
"then I kind of do something for yourself and buy some nice shoes. You don't really need to, but I am going to buy them to make me feel better, I guess." by respondent 5		
"you buy it for yourself, because you want to treat yourself or you just want to." by respondent 9		
"I know the food will be good and the atmosphere is usually nicer and it feels like a treat to myself. " by respondent 12		
"And then I think it's more for me knowing that I bought this really nice bag for me with my money that I earned, and that I kind of treat myself with something. " by respondent 9	Self-indulgence	Hedonism
"it would actually only be like a treat for me because I valued I think it looks really nice. " by respondent 9		
"for me something luxurious is something that I'm paying for to treat myself. " by respondent 6		
"But also for myself to make myself feel like I did treat myself and I am confident and I'm enjoying and I can, I can give this to myself. It's kind of like a present to myself. So I feel a bit more confident. " by respondent 6		
"Yeah, but when you're experiencing something, people they're not there, right? So it's an individual experienced basically. " by respondent 6		
"[Luxury is] Something you don't actually need and something you do just to make yourself feel better. " by respondent 8		
"Getting to spoil myself a little bit. When I have like a little bit extra after saving a couple of months and able to buy something a little bit nicer, lasts longer and better quality" by respondent 10		
"we just didn't want to think about anything else. Just wanted to be taken care of and experience like being in a very nice hotel. " by respondent 11		
"[...] and that was luxurious to me, because it was a gift to myself. Because I, when I go to hotels, usually I get not something like that, especially if I'm traveling on my own. But I was like, 'Okay, this is the time I'm going to take myself so like treat myself'. In that sense that's luxurious to me" by respondent 8		

<p>"And it was something that I had to achieve for myself that I was doing for myself. It was good in like a self care kind of things. I enjoyed it, it was kind of like, suspended and I didn't have anything to worry about, and I could just go to the pool and then go in my room and, you know, order in and just be very, very calm. So that that was see how it felt. " by respondent 8</p>		
<p>"but... so those particular items, like the hotel that I was in , it is like self care, that was, you know, because I wanted it and so I wasn't bragging about it. " by respondent 8</p>		
<p>"For example, the luxury hotel, it's something that I felt like at that moment, I really needed. And that I knew that I was going to remember fondly. Because it was a moment that I took for myself that when I'm having a little less good time, I'm going to be able to think back into 'Oh, well, I did this for myself', you know, it was a very good time " by respondent 8</p>	Self-indulgence	Hedonism
<p>"then I kind of do something for yourself and buy some nice shoes. You don't really need to, but I am going to buy them to make me feel better, I guess " by respondent 5</p>		

Sustainability

Natural Unit	Subtopic	Central Theme
"So if they did it, it means that once they care about the consumer, they care about the world, and they want to financially be able to produce their product for 30 or 40 more years. So if a product is sustainable, I kind of see it as something that won't damage my life." by respondent 4	Added value	Sustainability
"So yeah, I would I think that would reflect me more than it's just something only luxurious without anything else." by respondent 7		
"It would be an added plus, I guess I'm assuming that I bought it because I really liked it in the first place." by respondent 8		
"And then if I could add on the extra positive, like, just make the purchase feel better." by respondent 10		
"But it will be an extra nice touch." by respondent 10		
"but I think it's nice when they take in active approach to environmental stuff and animals and sort of, I think it's when they're a little bit more expensive, they should sort of, but I wouldn't say no to that brand just because they didn't, but I thought it would be a nice extra thing if they did having a say in the whole, like, producing stuff in a better way." by respondent 10	Authenticity	Sustainability
"I guess their aim is to raise awareness about overconsumption and trash. And then I would assume that their clothes are hopefully very sustainable. If not, this would be a really stupid campaign to have. So I think the whole sustainability, things should be related to the brand and what the brand actually does." by respondent 5		
"Stella McCartney, I know they breathe and live sustainability meaning I'm sure that, well I'm trusting them a lot saying this I haven't done my research of course, but I will tell you that if you look at these two different supply chains, this one [Stella McCartney] will be more sustainable than this one [Balenciaga]. At least from the reputation they have." by respondent 4		

<p>"Because you can still stand for something and don't make it visually, you know? For me, it's again, about being, when you're high end, it's a bit about not falling in the mainstream. Like now everyone cares about plastic. So let's do some photos with plastic. No, you should obviously communicate your values and what are you trying to do, but there's no need to have pictures with models on top of plastic. I think that that's for me, even kind of a joke, honestly." by respondent 6</p>		
<p>", like neutral positive. Neutral in the sense, that I won't make me buy anything from them. But when I see the name, I'll still be like, right, you know, they're better than most of the luxurious brands, that I don't know. Yeah, I'll have like a bit more positive opinion of them. So if I see someone wearing a Stella McCartney, maybe I'll be less critical of it, then if I sell them or something else" by respondent 8</p>		
<p>"I like the approach, like the whole theme about, like actually caring about it. I was hoping they would do it for all their clothing and not just one line." by respondent 10</p>	Authenticity	Sustainability
<p>"So it's very indirect what you are supporting. Because if they do, like, 'Oh, yeah, it's 90% organic', or 'we don't do child labor or we reduce this something'" by respondent 10</p>		
<p>"No! Because I think again, it is only image. So it's cool if they want to be sustainable, but I don't think people are like, I'm gonna buy Stella McCartney because it's more sustainable. At least I wouldn't." by respondent 11</p>		
<p>"It is all about the branding. It is branding of Stella McCartney and of yourself. So if you want to feel better, you buy the maybe this thing that, you know, it might be more sustainable. But at the same time, you have to know that it is not so sustainable. It is just the way you want to feel when you buy it. " by respondent 11</p>		
<p>"personally no, because I'm fully aware that she's not that sustainable. I mean, it is certainly a trend and they are like, taking advantage of that trend." by respondent 11</p>		

<p>[After the explanation] I think it's so amazing, it is very cool. I think it's cool. Yeah, it's trendy, and of course, it's good. Super good if people start to make a difference. But again, I feel a little bit like being lied to. Like, I think this is necessary, but it's also I don't know. I don't know if they actually like, work for that, maybe. But what about other things? Like, maybe they have kids like working in their fabric or whatever, but you don't know what's behind this" by respondent 11</p>	Authenticity	
<p>"For food, for instance, the most important to me is that it's a healthy, sustainable. Yes, both healthy for me and for the planet, as much as possible, and however were involved in the production of that." by respondent 2</p>	Everyday	Sustainability
<p>"That [=sustainability] is something I would pay for, because that is important to me." by respondent 2</p>		
<p>"but also if the product has an organic label or something like that. So actually, when I purchase something, most of the time, not always, I try to purchase something that is sustainable," by respondent 3</p>		
<p>"So yeah, I think that I will prefer to buy a product from a brand like that, than doesn't harm the environment" by respondent 3</p>		
<p>", I really enjoy sustainability" by respondent 4</p>		
<p>"There is that aspect of you know, consciousness that is the thing with Lush, like I haven't bought a shampoo in a container for almost three years now. So I think and the product actually works much better without a packaging them whatever other shampoo I might have tried. So I would also think that because of the environmental friendliness of it, I also attribute it a more luxurious field, which usually like for someone if there is no packaging, there isn't luxury." by respondent 4</p>		
<p>"but sustainability is definitely a factor because when you see when you go to Lush, or you see any sort of store that sells something not packaged, it already feels a little less luxurious, just by the looks, because luxury I think is something that you see, it's I cannot feel luxury, personally. I mean, maybe if I touch something with Cashmere, but I don't own anything with Cashmere, so I don't know how it feels" by respondent 4</p>		
<p>"It's important to me. It is important to me because I'm trying to live in a simple style in terms of sustainability." by respondent 12</p>		

"I guess the clothing part is, it's easy to buy organic. I suppose I try to buy this stuff, but buying better environmentally clothes without being in the brown color is... is pretty impossible." by respondent 10	Negative feeling	Sustainability
"And that was because of the sustainability factor that I completely forgot before. I wouldn't be a little more proud." by respondent 4	Positive feeling	
"I think for me personally, it's more about like, that the brand is a sustainable thing, when brands they support, like good values and something with sustainability" by respondent 1		
"it's of course positive. Because that's the values I look for when I invest in something a bit more expensive," by respondent 1		
"That's, I guess that's also a way of supporting a good cause. So yeah, in a way, something positive, at least related to the brands [Stella McCartney]		
:Yeah, definitely positive towards the brand. Yes, it does. I think that's good, that they're trying to do something like that, in bringing awareness to it. And yeah, use a sustainable material or donate to the cause. Something like that. That's definitely a positive towards the brand. I like Stella McCartney a little bit better now, yeah I do. I think before, I mean I knew. Stella McCartney, but I didn't really have any strong perception of the brand," by respondent 2		
"I would be happy to support a brand that cares about the environment." by respondent 3		
"because I think it's nice that you are engaged in thing like sustainable development." by respondent 3		
". And for me, it was kind of like, in a way, something that made me not feel ashamed about these computers. So it was kind of like a, 'you did good'. You got something that actually is made from recycled computers or aluminum which means even though you're still producing waste, you're producing waste from a recyclable waste." by respondent 4		

<p>"Well, I mean, that's very positive. I think it would... but again, since I'm a poor student I would still not buy the product but I would probably have a positive image about them altogether about the brand. I think that I would consider this brand in the future then...</p> <p>I would probably rather consider buying Stella McCartney, as I'm aware of their ethical codes in terms of sustainability. [Compared to other known, traditional, classic brands]" by respondent 5</p>	Positive feeling	Sustainability
"It's nice that it's actually sustainable and that's great." by respondent 7		
"I feel like I would feel better. Because it's also something good for the environment, or something not harmful for the environment." by respondent 7		
". So that also helps me think that, I like the idea behind the brand, behind this campaign that they want to, I guess, offer products that's not like other brands, which don't care about the environment, but that, you know, they're, they want you to pay a lot of money, but for something that's good for the environment." by respondent 8		
".I mean, unless there's an amazing product that I really want [...] It makes me feel a bit more positive about it. But not enough to to make me want to buy products from this brand." by respondent 8		
"Definitely positive, yeah, it's always a good thing that they can say that they're doing something good, but if they do it for everything and their whole clothing." by respondent 10		
"I think it would be mostly afterwards in the whole buying process, before than the actual buying, I wouldn't feel any difference, but afterwards when you're like, 'Oh, yeah, and you talk to people about, 'oh yeah I care about the environment' and in that context, then you will be more like 'yeah, actually my clothes are made from...' So it'd be more in that context, like the afterlife clothing." by respondent 10		

<p>"but I think it's nice when they take in active approach to environmental stuff and animals and sort of, I think it's when they're a little bit more expensive, they should sort of, but I wouldn't say no to that brand just because they didn't, but I thought it would be a nice extra thing if they did having a say in the whole, like, producing stuff in a better way." by respondent 10</p>	Responsibility of the brand	
<p>"But then specifically for me, something like the sustainability, just to stick to that one, would also be important, but not as important, actually. For some reason I care more about it." by respondent 2</p>	Second priority	Sustainability
<p>"Then it's [= sustainability], it's more like a nice to have, it's definitely a plus, but not necessarily something I would pay a lot more money to get. Like, if I have two T-shirts side by side and one has a label that says something about sustainability or green or good for the environment, but it's five times as expensive. I probably wouldn't buy that. But if it's more or less the same, or little more expensive, then I would buy that option." by respondent 2</p>		
<p>"No, not the main feature, but it's [=sustainability] definitely definitely part of the consideration. And always a plus" by respondent 2</p>		
<p>"If I have to take the Chanel example, it would be hard for me to say: I won't buy the Chanel perfume because it's not sustainable, because it's something I love. But if Chanel finds a way, for example, to use a packaging, which is already, glass is already kind of sustainable, because you can break it and remake it." by respondent 4</p>		
<p>"or example, sustainability and traveling don't really go hand in hand, at least at this point in time" by respondent 4</p>		
<p>"Like I said, the Chanel thing, even if it wasn't sustainable, I was still purchase it right now. Unless they find a solution, then I will purchase the solution" by respondent 4</p>		

<p>"And it's kind of in a way what I feel with this computer because even though this computer is flashy, was made 100% with recyclable aluminum, which is the first computer that has ever been made with that. To be honest, it was the reason also why I bought it" by respondent 4</p>		
<p>"And then I thought okay, well, this one is newer. So the quality makes sense to get now instead of getting an older computer that will crash in three years. But also it's made with sustainable products. So I feel a little more enticed to buy this product. So I would always pick, if I have the choice and the quality is the same, I would pick sustainable over not, because in my head, why would I not pick the sustainable alternative?" by respondent 4</p>	Second priority	Sustainability
<p>"Yes, it wasn't the main factor. Because it wasn't the first thing I saw. But I can tell you for sure, that that definitely made me want to spend my savings more in that from here than in another computer. And that's the reason I paid the full price" by respondent 4</p>		
<p>"I will not feel ashamed for spending the money because I would know that the quality matches also my second criteria, which is the environment or sustainability of something." by respondent 4</p>		
<p>"and then I also really liked the product itself, because in many occasions, there are sustainable products but I just think they are super ugly unfortunately." by respondent 5</p>		
<p>"if I have to choose, I may know, like one brand has all these features and one doesn't, then I will definitely go for the sustainable option." by respondent 7</p>		
<p>"but we also like to buy more expensive stuff, but less. Both like it's a little bit more environmental, I like to tell myself." by respondent 10</p>		
<p>"it appeals to me because it's a sustainable car since it's not using fossil fuel to power it. That's a good incentive for me to buy that specific brand." by respondent 12</p>		
<p>"I would consider it for sure, because sustainability overpasses other factors in my criteria when buying products." by respondent 12</p>		
<p>"And now for me, luxury means exactly, you know, quality and or sustainability, right? If there is that option" by respondent 4</p>		

<p>"I wouldn't necessarily buy to show others that I'm super sustainable and ethically correct and whatever. But as a side effect, I think it's not bad because probably, I could also influence the behavior of others. So I think that is the positive side effect, if you can influence probably other people to buy a brand where you believe in and they are just better and all." by respondent 5</p>	<p>Signaling for a good cause</p>	
<p>"something like sustainability, green environment- whatever. If that was the main thing, and I paid extra for that, and they could actually prove it, then it could be worth it. And if I made a lot more money than I do now, then I would also be willing to pay more for something like that." by respondent 2</p>	<p>Transparency</p>	<p>Sustainability</p>
<p>"I would like to pay more attention to. I think it's really hard and like, like today on knowing everything where everything is produced, and how and what they use. But I think it's getting more and more important to me, and I would also like to know more about it." by respondent 7</p>		
<p>"I mean, obviously, they're not like sustainable." by respondent 9</p>		
<p>". You never know. And for someone that really cares about sustainability, and they have a lot of money, and they would spend it on this. Sure. I mean, I they might change their mind because of this. But I think we all have to be aware of this kind of a lie." by respondent 11</p>		
<p>"something like sustainability, green environment- whatever. If that was the main thing, and I paid extra for that, and they could actually prove it, then it could be worth it. And if I made a lot more money than I do now, then I would also be willing to pay more for something like that." by respondent 2</p>	<p>Willigness to pay more</p>	
<p>"So they got me there you know, they made me pay almost 1000 euros just for this little sustainability thing." by respondent 4</p>		
<p>"So if I say again luxury means higher prices means quality blah blah. I would pay happily more if I think luxury fits my standards and, in this case, buying this disgusting plastic bag fit my luxury standards because it was more costly as well." by respondent 4</p>		
<p>"I guess then I would actually feel like I pay also for not only for the quality of the content, but also for the sustainable aspect" by respondent 7</p>		

"And then later when I can actually afford it. And I think these factors are higher, because then I can pay for it. And I can take the sustainable aspect into consideration. So, I wouldn't mind like then to pay extra for it." by respondent 7		
"I would go for the more sustainable even if it is a little bit more expensive." by respondent 12		
"I said before I wouldn't mind buying something which is expensive as soon as it offers good quality and is sustainable." by respondent 12		

Ethics

Natural Unit	Subtopic	Central Theme
"[animal fibers] that's not the main point why I purchase it but it adds up to having a good perception about the brand, kind of. " by respondent 9	Adds value	
"that people weren't working too much in the factory and that they are earning enough money and things like that. So in a way, I would care about the ethical part of the luxury brand and it's something I would check and that would give me some extra value" by respondent 3		
"I think it would make me feel better about my own consumption choices, knowing that I have more choices than people somewhere else. And that I buy things that are unnecessary, probably because you don't need that many clothes anyway. But you feel better about it when you know that at least they are ethically sourced" by respondent 5		
"But that doesn't relate to anything Balenciaga does, the company is not forced to feed people, they're forced to ensure that the quality of work is good" by respondent 4	Authenticity and Transparency	Ethics
"But again, I feel a little bit like being lied to. Like, I think this is necessary, but it's also I don't know. I don't know if they actually like, work for that, maybe. But what about other things? Like, maybe they have kids like working in their fabric or whatever, but you don't know what's behind this " by respondent 11		
"I think if there was a company where that was very transparent in these terms, and then I also really liked the product itself, " by respondent 5		
"fair work conditions or sustainably things like that. Whereas these zero hunger things that is completely unrelated in a sense. I mean, it's still something good to do. But it's nothing that is inherent in the brand itself, I would say, so..." by respondent 5		
"I mean, it's kind of unrelated. I find it quite random, to be honest. I mean, it's, again, it's nice that they do that, it is a good thing to do. But I would not buy the brand more just because they partnered up with the World Food Program " by respondent 5		

"most of the brands, they all have their fancy corporate responsibility, whatever and so forth, and so on. But it's sometimes very hard to know if they're really that sustainable as they claim they are. Because it's not very transparent in terms of their value chains" by respondent 5	Authenticity and Transparency	
"So it's very indirect what you are supporting. Because if they do, like, 'Oh, yeah, it's 90% organic', or 'we don't do child labor or we reduce this something' " by respondent 10		
"Balenciaga right now is just trying to make a name for themselves like us 'Oh they're working with that, the World Food Program or whatever'. They just want attention to be told that they're doing well because I can tell you that this coat " by respondent 4		
"It does good. And it's not just for creating revenue for the company, but also like a social aspect behind it" by respondent 7	Positive feelings	Ethics
"think, if every brand, which is step do like little steps, and would start doing something like that, first of all, would help consumers be more aware of it. And, and second of all, I mean, they are still contributing somehow. " by respondent 9		
"I feel like I don't have to compromise my beliefs for example, in animal testing or things like that in order to have a quality product" by respondent 4		
"if you feel like you're doing the responsible choice usually or the ethical choice you feel happier, right? Like you feel like, if I had the choice of working for Greenpeace or working for Maersk, if I can work for Greenpeace, I'm going to feel way more ethical way more responsible for the world we live in" by respondent 4		
"Which I like way better than the color [World Food Programme logo], well, the World Food Program. So that sounds like a positive, like a good cause. This is a positive attribute for me " by respondent 2		
"I think that's really good. That makes a pretty big difference. If we just look at two traditional luxury brands, and one of them does something like that. Yeah, immediately stands out or something positive. " by respondent 2		

<p>"But it's, it's making me feel positive [...] So the fact that the top tier is also moving towards that, is make me think 'Oh, the world is, you know, politically moving towards a place that I like better. And so in that sense, it makes me feel more positive about society in general. I see it as a sign of things moving along " by respondent 8</p>	Positive feelings	
<p>"I guess it's basically the same. It's also for a good cause. So yeah, that's a good thing as well. And, yes, I would also if I have the money pay extra for luxury company that does that. " by respondent 7</p>		
<p>"I wouldn't necessarily buy to show others that I'm super sustainable and ethically correct and whatever. But as a side effect, I think it's not bad because probably, I could also influence the behavior of others. So I think that is the positive side effect, if you can influence probably other people to buy a brand where you believe in and they are just better and all. " by respondent 5</p>		
<p>"Yeah, I think it would help me to express myself. [Buying a luxury brand that supports ethics and sustainability and has nice products] " by respondent 5</p>		
<p>"I also like to purchase most of my clothes from a brand called Closed. They are also like a German brand more like stylish and very expensive. And they always use like, animal fibers. And it was produced in Europe" by respondent 9</p>	Secondary Feature	Ethics
<p>"But I think it's really nice if it's made in Europe, but then this would also be more like a lesser extent important to me, I think then I would always ..." by respondent 9</p>		
<p>"Because we all know the working conditions and the workers in China, right? They do not earn a lot of money so, for instance, if I want to purchase a French luxury brand I think I would go to a brand where I could check that the products are made in Europe, " by respondent 3</p>		
<p>"it's like, fair sourced cotton. That's that's also something that adds to the luxury, kind of, I mean, you can buy the cheap H&M stuff, where the children are exploited in China" by respondent 5</p>		
<p>"I don't have that much money. So I am not always thinking about the things that [are] ethically correctly sourced and everything, although I might want to, but there are some restrictions on what you can afford. " by respondent 5</p>		

"So you might end up buying things even though you know that they're not, essentially, ethically aligned with your personal opinions. " by respondent 5		
" I think that will probably change in the future when I have the money" by respondent	Secondary Feature	Ethics

Inclusivity

Natural Unit	Subtopic	Central Theme
"It would be an added plus, I guess I'm assuming that I bought it because I really liked it in the first place. on top of that, it's good. Because, you know, because they're not as shitty as other brands can be, or they're doing something that's more than others are doing." by respondent 8	Added value	Inclusivity
"This doesn't really change my perspective. I mean, nice that they have a campaign about inclusivity, but that doesn't change the fact that most of their products are sold to rich white people. I mean, yes, it's good that I like of course, it's a good point that I want to raise awareness. And I hope that the campaign is successful in that sense. But that does not make them any more inclusive." by respondent 5	Authenticity	
"She talked about like feminist issues and society. So racial issues, and just the way that she's quite unapologetic, I guess about who she is, makes me like her as a character. You know what, what she is presenting yourself as, I don't know." by respondent 8		
"So I think for in order for actually raising awareness, and maybe also speaking to more like masses, it would need to have more information." by respondent 9		
"Because it's like, just this theme, like, because it's about like, racial stuff, getting people into the industry, it's a little bit far from what they actually can do" by respondent 10		
" you can change the way that beauty is seen. So you can actually change beauty. Like The beauty standards? So I guess in that sense, they are more they can really make a change. And they have to do a change, they really should. So the inclusivity of black people or different people or fatter people. I think it's very, very important. And they can really make a change in that. " by respondent 11	Beauty standard	
"I think that's different than the one from Stella McCartney. Because actually, they have a lot of things to do with the fashion industry. And fashion industry can change a lot in that way." by respondent 11		

"I would feel good to buy something which can contribute to like, more people, let's say." by respondent 3	Contriubution of participants	Inclusivity
"Because inclusion is really important and I know that the brand focuses on social inclusion and I'm just happy that I can like, I would say, contribute to through my luxury and I can also contribute to like a brand that actually has a deeper cause." by respondent 7		
"I think it's a good initiative from him. But in the sense that I believe that everyone in society should do that, so it doesn't impact, again, like the Stella McCartney thing, it doesn't impact my life That's a that's a good thing that's happening currently in an economy' but it doesn't touch me, you know?" by respondent 8	No personal connection	
"I'm like, that's good.But I don't feel personally connected to it. I'll be happy for everyone that is concerned with this. And it's a good step for the world in general." by respondent 8		
"So yeah, it's a positive, it's not really, it's a little difficult for me to relate specifically to that problem, because I'm not black. But still, I like the idea. So it's a positive thing." by respondent 2	Personally affected	
"I really think like we should really emphasize this, I mean, this is some values really are some issues that we really should put, like more. More focus on. So yeah, so I think this this is a nice, nice campaign. This is a nice one." by respondent 1	Positive feeling	
". And that's actually true that there are not enough black people in the luxury fashion industry." by respondent 3		
"Actually like better. Like it creates a better image in my head than before. " by respondent 11		
"And very few people know about this “new angle” that they are trying to put on it. And the same for the other ones we talked about, where they have some positive spin and sustainability and actually supporting a good cause." by respondent 2		
"And I think you can see more diverse people. So and I think that's a really really good thing." by respondent 3		
"I think it's positive, I would be more into buying the products, than maybe with other ads like that" by respondent 3		

"Yeah, that's pretty, pretty amazing. Like I said, when you know, the story of the designer, you really look at it in a different way. That's not at all what I saw here. But when you tell me this by when you hear this story, yeah, it's pretty amazing." by respondent 6	Positive feeling	Inclusivity
"But Virgil, I heard about him once. But when you tell me that, it speaks for a story that he for values and things that he wants to fight for with fashion. Yes, it changes completely." by respondent 6		
"B: I would say more positively." by respondent 7		
"B: I guess with this, it would make me feel better because I know like the brand's inclusive as well and includes the social aspect. I guess this would make me feel a little better than just this one." by respondent 7		
"Yeah, because basically, if you have all these media buzz around, brands not using, like black models, or Chinese models or whatever, Indian models, they need to respond to that. They need to respond to that. So it's sometimes not even, it doesn't even feel like they do it for a reason other than we kind of have to do it." by respondent 6	Responsibility of the brands	

Traditional Branding

Natural Unit	Subtopic	Central Theme
"it seems like more normal for Louis Vuitton of here you see what a luxury brand is trying to sell you: a product with an actress with a nice dress." by respondent 4	Meaning	
"So seriously, I don't think luxury brands add anything especial." by respondent 3		
"Whereas this one [Louis Vuitton 2] is just classic, luxury, commercial." by respondent 2		
"Like, I mean, just the picture of Charlize Theron there and like running in a very luxurious museum or...Ah, no its Versailles. you can tell that it's not going for millennials right now. " by respondent 11		
"But a lot of them are just selling the fact that is luxury. They're selling the fact that they're offering a product that's over the price range of other things. " by respondent 8		
"Like in my mind, they are luxury because someone has just decided that those brands are luxury, I have no idea if they are higher quality, as I described earlier" by respondent 2	Not identified	Traditional Branding
"So I kind of feel that this is why it's classic also, because it doesn't make me think of anything else, I think here we just purely see the luxury brand on display, and then I can move on, because it doesn't really speak to me." by respondent 2		
"The other one again is like Dior they go for the traditional way of luxurious brands like associating it with very rich, very beautiful woman. So when you would see that, you would think that you are Uma Thurman...but as I said, I don't feel very identified with that." by respondent 11		
"Then here Dior literally is about luxury, it is literally about the fact that what you're buying is expensive, and diamonds and gold and awesome. And if you're wearing that, then you're like a queen. Right? That's sort of what they're selling, which is something that I don't care for." by respondent 8		

<p>"I actually consider Louis Vuitton to be more for like the older crowd. It's something like my mom has or my grandparents had? So it's like, I'm not that fascinated about it. I think in general like within my family and friends it's like the plus 40 that have Louis Vuitton. And the young I relate more with like Gucci and Chanel. Chanel is actually old and young. But Gucci I think is for a bit younger people." by respondent 10</p>	Old fashion/Outdated	Traditional Branding
<p>"I consider Louis Vuitton a little bit more conservative, because of the style and especially the colors. Very limited." by respondent 10</p>		
<p>"Dior we are definitely going for older people and more luxurious people, higher class, higher income." by respondent 11</p>		
<p>"I don't feel really attracted I feel again, it's like more traditional so it is kind of out of my league. Right now. I feel kind of bad, it is maybe the life I want to have, but it's not the one I have definitely. And if I was to, like, if I were to buy a cologne, I would never buy that. Because you You got it. I mean, if maybe smells great, but not through the internet, for example, because I associate it with more traditional values. " by respondent 11</p>		
<p>'</p> <p>Just feel like sometimes brands have to, like, update a little bit? And that's why they are trying to do now as a change from the typical marketing way of branding to more like a trendy one. " by respondent 8</p>		

Modern Branding

Natural Unit	Subtopic	Central Theme
"I mean, honestly, I think it's just image. I don't think they give a damn. I don't think they are actually doing anything for changing is like, they are just like, going with the trend of sustainability. Like a trend. It is trendy, it really sells, its money." by respondent 11	Authenticity	Modern Branding
"And even though I know it, because I’ve heard that story, and I bought it because of that story, if it just has Louis Vuitton on it, what I communicate to everyone else I meet is still the classical understanding of Louis Vuitton. That's what I would think at least. So I wouldn't want to wear that." by respondent 2		
"LV2] It's just a good looking model. Showing a bag. And, yeah, it's just a basic. Like, you would have it in front of the store, like really big. And then you will see it and be like, Oh, this is nice. And then you will just walk past, I think. [LV2] But I don't really, there's not meaning to it. I feel like, I mean, I can see it's kind of like in your face. It's very powerful. But I don't think that there’s meaning with it. I don't really see any, any story or any meaning with it" by respondent 1	Meaning	
"But there's still placing themselves as luxurious brands. And so I think that people would maybe then develop an affinity for certain way, because it stands for what they like, but they'll still at the end of the day buy it, because, it is, you know, a sign of wealth. And that's why it doesn't make me feel better about them." by respondent 8		
"Because if it's not, the fact that it doesn't compromise my beliefs is the addition of this quality, kind of gives me a sense of more luxury, because then I know that if the price tag of the shampoo is a little more expensive than one that is bottled, the quality, then the price reflects the quality." by respondent 4	Positive perceptions	

<p>"I mean, if you can buy two types of brands but you can buy a more expensive one but you can contribute to sustainable developments or other political or social things, yeah I would be better actually. If everyone could actually do that, I think there could really be a difference." by respondent 3</p>		
<p>"Because she [Rihanna] has the style. And she knows how to combine things. And I think if she's there, she's gonna like kind of make some inputs to the design and, again, it's like the brand Rihanna is herself, she's kind of cool.</p> <p>Yeah, I think even though if the image was Rihanna or Beyonce, I would definitely buy something [excited] Yes, I mean, not the perception but just want to buy it more because this one is closer to you than just like the traditional kind of luxury brand as I said before.</p> <p>" by respondent 11</p>	Positive perceptions	Modern Branding
<p>"[Gucci] there is a singer that I really like that mentioned that he liked it and so I so I got this like little affinity for it.</p> <p>I think they've done some cool things. Like they've just because there have been more products that I saw from them that I thought were pretty. So it's more because of the design yeah." by respondent 8</p>		
<p>"Well, I mean, I like Rihanna. So I will probably look on it a bit more kindly than other brands.[...] But probably I would feel a little positive about it. The way that I'm a little positive about McCartney, because they're doing something good, you know, that I care about this is, I think Rihanna is a really cool person. [...]but I think as a person, she said some cool like, she stood for some interesting things, that I like" by respondent 8</p>		
<p>"So the fact that the top tier is also moving towards that, is make me think 'Oh, the world is, you know, politically moving towards a place that I like better. And so in that sense, it makes me feel more positive about society in general. I see it as a sign of things moving along" by respondent 8</p>		
<p>"Well the Rihanna and the Balenciaga photos I think they are trying to attract other kind of people maybe." by respondent 11</p>	Younger audience	

<p>"Yeah, based on like not this one but this one is very clear [Balenciaga + World Food Program]. Like definitely even if it's the World Food Program even if it's like that they are trying to attract some kind of like the new, the young people right now and you relate this a lot of with music and Rihanna of course. You do. But there was this one is like very "trap" right now. You could see these and say, you can relate it with music, for sure." by respondent 11</p>		
<p>"so more kind of millennial right now like going for trap music and trying to relate these two industries a little bit?" by respondent 11</p>	Younger audience	Modern Branding
<p>"Because you don't see this type of this kind of style in older person? Like, I don't think you can wear this when you are 40. on the other side, like the other. But Balenciaga, I think it's more for young people, even if this doesn't look like that [Balenciaga without WFP]. " by respondent 11</p>		
<p>"So, for now, there is an interest that is taking in the urban kind of idea. And in that sense there, this more traditional [Dior], I would say, and this is more feeding into what right now, the youth likes. " by respondent 8</p>		
<p>"I mean, I guess it's their idea behind what they're selling is different, just from looking at this Balenciaga wants to be more like cool for young people who are rich." by respondent 8</p>		
<p>'But the fact that they chose Rihanna is very telling. It's like Balenciaga. Because she is that person. That's why I like her, you know that she's very representative of the youth." by respondent 8</p>		

Appendix 6 - Respondent overview

	Respondent 1	Respondent 2	Respondent 3	Respondent 4	Respondent 5	Respondent 6	Respondent 7	Respondent 8	Respondent 9	Respondent 10	Respondent 11	Respondent 12
Age	22	27	24	25	25	23	25	23	27	24	27	28
Degree	Int. business in Asia, Bachelor Degree	Service Management	Int. Business	Int. Business Communications - Multicultural Communication	Business Development Studies	Int. Marketing	Int. Marketing	Service Management	Brand and Communications Management		Int. Marketing	Business Administration and Information Systems- Data Science
Nationality	Danish/Chinese	Danish	French	French/Swiss	German	Portuguese	German	French-Danish	German	Danish	Spanish	Dutch
Gender?	Female	Male	Male	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Male