

**The role of hedonism as a mediator of the
relationship between materialism & bandwagon
effect on the purchase intention of luxury products:
A cross-cultural study of Brazil and the United States**

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THE ROLE OF HEDONISM AS A MEDIATOR OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MATERIALISM &
BANDWAGON EFFECT ON THE PURCHASE INTENTION OF LUXURY PRODUCTS:
A CROSS-CULTURAL STUDY OF BRAZIL AND THE UNITED STATES

ABSTRACT

The demand for luxury goods has risen among Gen Y (millennials) and Gen Z consumers. As a result of this trend, brands and businesses have developed effective strategies to engage and captivate this growing audience. Given this group's digital orientation and heavy influence of social media, one specific application has notably gained immense popularity within this generation: TikTok. Four nationalities concentrate the highest number of active users on the platform, and two of these countries were studied in a cross-cultural approach by utilising Hofstede's cultural dimensions of collectivism and individualism. Moreover, Brazil and the United States are not only leading economies in the luxury industry, but they account for almost 200 million active users on TikTok. Thus, within the context of TikTok and luxury goods, this study examined the mediating role of hedonism on the relationship between materialism and purchase intention of millennials and Gen Z consumers, as well as bandwagon and purchase intention of millennials and Gen Z consumers. Furthermore, it explored the moderating role of nationality (Brazilians vs US Citizens) on the relationships between materialism, hedonism, and bandwagon with purchase intention of millennials and Gen Z consumers. Primary data were collected through an online questionnaire in Qualtrics with 457 valid respondents and analysed on SPSS and the MACRO process extension. The research findings revealed that materialism, bandwagon, and hedonism positively influence luxury products' purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok. Moreover, the results indicated that hedonism partially mediates the relationships of bandwagon and materialism on luxury products' purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok. Lastly, the study demonstrated that nationality moderates the three relationships between materialism, hedonism, and bandwagon on purchase intention. Further, the findings discovered that the United States, a country characterised by an individualist culture, scores higher on materialism, hedonism, and bandwagon than Brazil, a country characterised by a collectivist culture. This research can help marketers and marketing managers better understand millennials and Gen Z consumer behaviour within the TikTok platform. In addition, it enhances the current literature on the role of social media in influencing consumers and how they behave and their intent to purchase luxury goods.

KEYWORDS: *Hedonism, Purchase Intention, Luxury Market, TikTok, Cross-cultural Marketing*

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1. Introduction

The understanding of luxury consumption was significantly enhanced by Sheth et al. (1991), who emphasized that consumers are not solely attracted to the physical attributes of luxury goods. Instead, they are powerfully influenced by their symbolic and emotional value. This perspective offers a compelling lens for comprehending the ever-evolving landscape of luxury purchase motivations (Sheth et al., 1991). Motivations which are deeply rooted in hedonic processes, manifested by the sensory gratification and pleasure that is expected from buying a product (Hirschman et al. 1982; Percy & Rossiter, 1997). According to Vigneron & Johnson (2004), luxury-seekers are considered hedonic consumers since they look for personal rewards and fulfilment when shopping. In other words, they consume luxury goods to satisfy their hedonic needs (Sun et al., 2016). However, hedonic needs are not only tied to the luxury landscape, but also present in other areas such as wellbeing in which one can simply satisfy their own needs for a pleasant life (Giuntoli et al., 2021). Moreover, when looking at hedonic processes there are other theories that are important to consider: materialism and the bandwagon effect. According to Sun et al. (2016), luxury products can bring a hedonic experience to materialistic buyers. Kastanakis and Balabanis (2014) highlight another factor crucial to hedonic processes: the bandwagon effect. This refers to the tendency to acquire a product to create a connection with a group (Leibenstein, 1950). Thus, consumers that engage in symbolic consumption may feel welcomed by a specific social group. This effect is directly related to luxury goods and Bahri-Ammari et al. (2020) highlight the importance of the connection between hedonism, luxury goods and the bandwagon effect.

The consumption of luxury goods has become more widespread among consumers (Shammout et al., 2022). Therefore, brands and companies aware of this advance have developed strategies to reach and captivate this audience increasingly. The concept of luxury can be different in consumers' minds in similar environments, which means that each individual considers it differently. However, what is certain is that consumers in modern society have started to consume luxury products, transforming this practice into something of great relevance, through the perception of quality that this segment of products shows (Aleem et al., 2022; Veloutsou et al., 2022). The luxury market is a sector characterised by the sale of high added value products, aimed at a selected audience with high purchasing power (Aleem et al., 2022; Miller et al., 2012; Veloutsou et al., 2022). Upon entry into the new millennium, this clientele's purchasing power began to rise beyond traditional developed markets such as the United States (US), France, UK, which were previously the main source of luxury brands' sales (Veloutsou et al., 2022). New consumers have been embracing luxury brands as a means to express their personal achievements and elevate their social standing,

particularly, those who come from emerging economies such as BRIC nations which include Brazil, Russia, India, and China (Kapferer & Bastien, 2012; Veloutsou et al., 2022).

The luxury market holds a critical position in the global economy, with its impact reaching beyond mere economic metrics (Bernardi et al., 2022). It has witnessed significant growth over the years, thanks to its unique value proposition and distinct characteristics that appeal to an affluent clientele (D'Arpizio et al., 2023). Financially, the luxury market is highly lucrative, growing by 21% in 2022, despite global economic turmoil. The global industry in these segments reached €1.38 trillion in sales last year, according to an analysis by consultancy Bain & Company in conjunction with Fondazione Altagamma, the trade association of Italian luxury goods manufacturers (D'Arpizio et al., 2023). Beyond its economic impact, the luxury market influences consumer behaviour and societal trends. Luxury brands often set fashion and design trends that eventually trickle down to mass markets (Kapferer & Bastien, 2012).

However, luxury brands have historically been hesitant to integrate their activities into the online environment and communicate with their consumers via social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok (Dobre et al., 2021). This can be explained as brand executives may have sensed that the characteristics of luxury (being authentic, exclusive, expensive, and hedonic) may not align with the ones for the internet and online environments as these are available to all people, there are no sensory experiences and are primarily low pricing (Dobre et al., 2021). Yet, research on luxury goods has shown that the market is shifting and has largely changed over the last few years due to Generation Y (Millennials) and Generation Z consumers. According to D'Arpizio et al. (2023), Millennials and Gen Z contributed to the entire luxury market growth in 2022, accounting for 72% of the global luxury market (Lin, 2022). Additionally, Millennials and Gen Z are not only heavy users of social media, but luxury is highly attractive to both generations, which creates a compelling case for luxury brands to take part in social media platforms (Dobre et al., 2021; Sayyed & Gupta, 2020). The platform that has succeeded in pushing itself among the strong existent ones such as Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook is TikTok.

Between 2019 and 2020, the TikTok platform grew to become the most popular app, downloaded over 1.5 billion times (Iqbal, 2023). TikTok first began as a short-form video-sharing platform (videos from 15 to 60 seconds), particularly for lip-syncing and dance videos, but has since evolved into a complete video service with content for all types of users. The app had 1.4 billion monthly active users in 2022 and the expectation in 2023 is to reach 1.8 billion by the end of the year (Iqbal, 2023). In addition, TikTok's revenue has increased over the past few years and only in 2022, it generated about \$9.4 billion (Iqbal, 2023). As of 2023, the United States (113 million) was

the country with the largest TikTok audience followed by Indonesia (110 million), Brazil (82 million) and Mexico (58 million) (Iqbal, 2023).

Given that Brazil and the US are economies that are predominant in the luxury sector as well as have two of the largest TikTok audiences globally, a cross-cultural study is proposed between these two countries. This study will examine the mediating role of hedonism in the relationship between materialism and purchase intention and the relationship between bandwagon and purchase intention within the realm of luxury goods consumption. Moreover, the moderating role of nationality (Brazilians vs US citizens) on the relationships of materialism, hedonism and bandwagon with purchase intention will also be studied. According to Hofstede's differentiation of these countries using his cultural dimension of "individualism", the US scores exceptionally high with a 91, while Brazil scores a mere 38 (Hofstede Insights, 2022). Hence, this research poses the following research question:

To what extent does hedonism influence luxury products' purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers on TikTok between Brazil and the United States?

A subresearch question is proposed to further examine the mediation effects of hedonism; thus, the following question is identified:

To what extent does hedonism mediate the relationships of materialism on purchase intention and bandwagon on purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers?

1.1) Relevance

Several studies have explored materialism by itself (Richins & Dawson, 1992) as well as materialism with hedonism and purchase intention (Chen & Kim, 2013) or even just hedonic value (Sun et al., 2016). For instance, Chen and Kim (2013) examined how consumers' personal values (which included materialism and hedonism) influence their purchase intention towards luxury brands. On the other hand, Sun et al. (2016) examine hedonic value differently by looking at its mediating role in the relationship between materialism and luxury purchase intention. Other studies have also explored the bandwagon effect as a social value and the hedonic effect as an emotional value (Sun et al., 2017; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999;) or have studied the concept by itself with luxury brands (Shaikh et al., 2017). However, even though there is a significant number of studies on each of the concepts, most research in the luxury market field lacks the exploration of looking at all of

these four concepts together (materialism, bandwagon effect, hedonism, and purchase intention). Hence, the current study seeks to contribute to the domain of luxury consumption by unveiling the motivation that leads consumers' purchase intention towards luxury products; it will do so by analysing the mediating role of hedonism between, first, materialism and purchase intention, and second, the bandwagon effect and purchase intention.

Furthermore, a cross-cultural research is suggested to address a gap of comparison between different types of cultures and their distinctions regarding the motivation of consumers and factors that may drive purchase intention of luxury products in the TikTok context (Cho et al., 2022; Kastanakis & Balabanis, 2014). These will be examined by analysing two approaches: individualist (US) vs collectivist (Brazil). Although current literature provides various research in the luxury market field comparing countries from collectivist and individualist natures, most include a comparison of countries from Western vs Eastern cultures (Shaikh et al., 2017; Want et al. 2021; Workman & Lee, 2011). The present research presents Brazil and the US, characterised by two different cultures, however, both are part of the Western world.

Finally, this being a study focused on TikTok new factors are brought into play. First, TikTok is a rapidly expanding social media with millions of active members, most of whom are young and tech-savvy consumers. This opens up a new form for luxury brands to engage with this audience in ways that can boost brand awareness and loyalty with younger cohorts. Hence, managers are given a competitive advantage in a highly competitive market if businesses understand how to use the app properly and how it is crucial among this audience even within a luxury context. Moreover, given TikTok's strong engagement, the platform has the potential to influence brand perception and image heavily. Managing a premium brand's image on TikTok can aid in the preservation of its exclusivity and attraction. A study done by Gesmundo et al. (2022) analyses the platform by incorporating the AIDA model which stands for Interest, Desire and Action as well as the Selective Exposure Theory (SET). The researchers found that consumers are triggered by marketing campaigns launched in the app and that this messaging prompts consumers' intent to purchase a product (Gesmundo et al., 2022). Therefore, using TikTok is a marketing advantage for businesses.

In addition, the platform also has the ability to democratise the luxury market by bringing it to a larger audience. This trend has societal effects since it has the power to change people's conceptions of wealth, status, and consumer culture. TikTok, like other social media platforms, has the capacity to influence and reflect cultural trends. Investigating the connection between TikTok and the luxury market, particularly in regions like Brazil and the US, may unveil significant insights about contemporary cultural trends.

Yet, despite its popularity and promising path, TikTok requires individual examination due to the significant gap between theory and practice that exists in the marketing literature. Hence, this research attempts to study the platform to fill this gap and enhance the current theoretical understanding and utilization of the app for marketing agencies, businesses, and luxury brands. As stated, TikTok differentiates itself from other applications present in the market, therefore it is crucial to understand it as the algorithm, audience and even culture differs.

1.2) Chapter Outline

The chapters of the current study will guide the reader to all stages that were required to test all hypotheses and answer both research questions fully. Chapter 2 will highlight all theoretical frameworks behind the theories and concepts explored. Relevant articles and empirical findings were utilised to introduce to the reader the context of the study, which will start with background theory on the luxury market, followed by the importance of Millennials and Gen Z and then unveiling TikTok. The rationale will continue with the main concepts, starting with the foundations of materialism, then the bandwagon effect followed by hedonism. Moreover, both the mediator and moderator are introduced as well as all hypotheses that are proposed in the study. Chapter 3 presents the methodological approach utilised to test the hypotheses and answer the research questions. Chapter 4 discusses the findings and results from the statistical analyses and indicates whether the hypotheses were accepted or rejected. Lastly, chapter 5 presents an interpretation of the findings along with the meaning behind and answer to the research questions.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1) Context of the Study

2.1.1) *The Luxury Market*

Defining the true meaning of luxury and its value is complex since it is a somewhat subjective concept. Therefore, the depth and richness of the term's meanings are verified with diverse perspectives when conducting a literature review on luxury.

Etymologically, the word luxury derives from the Latin *luxus*, having its roots in the agricultural sector, meaning “excess” (Macmillan Dictionary Blog, 2018). According to Featherstone (2014), luxury can be defined as everything that is consumable or not, which goes beyond everyday reality, and which has a potent symbol of pleasure and personal fulfilment or social admiration. Similarly, Wiedmann et al. (2007) agree that luxury relates to non-essential goods and services that contribute to luxury living beyond what is essential in everyday life. According to Okonkwo (2009), however, luxury is not an object, service, product, concept, or lifestyle. Instead, the author states that luxury “is an identity, a philosophy and a culture” (Okonkwo, 2009, p. 302).

The luxury market consists of high-end goods and services designed for individuals willing to pay a premium price for excellent quality, exclusivity, and unique brand identification (Kapferer & Bastien, 2019). This market includes various categories of goods and services ranging from clothing, jewellery and makeup to cars, tourism and gastronomy (D'Arpizio et al., 2023). These luxury products and services play a significant part in the luxury industry as they cater to buyers seeking higher standards and craftsmanship as well as serving as status and wealth symbols, enhancing the consumer's self-identity and societal image (Kapferer & Bastien, 2019). In addition, consumers in this segment seek to be part of a selected community (Ngai & Cho, 2012; Wang, 2022). For this, luxury brands usually work with the limitation of producing goods or access to services, generating restrictions for the experiences offered. In the same sense, personalisation, customer loyalty and differentiated service are also strategies intrinsically applied to this market (Wang, 2022).

Luxury has been identified as a multi-dimensional construct in the consumer behaviour literature. Vigneron and Johnson (2004) proposed a framework that categorises luxury goods based on five perceived value dimensions: functional, financial, social, individual, and hedonic. The functional value relates to the product's utilitarian benefits, including quality and reliability (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). The financial value is associated with the product's price premium and potential as an investment (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). Social value is tied to the product's ability to signal status and wealth, whereas individual value is linked to self-identity and self-expression

(Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). Finally, the hedonic value pertains to the sensory pleasure and emotional experiences derived from the product (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). Each of the values Vigneron and Johnson (2004) developed is linked with consumer behaviour, societal trends and brand communities.

First, the functional value is derived from a product's practical utility (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). Societal trends, such as an emphasis on quality and product lifespan, influence this component. For instance, brand communities can increase a product's perceived functional value by sharing experiences and testimonials about its performance. Second, regarding financial value, while luxury items tend to be expensive, some consumers may view their elevated cost as an acceptable sacrifice for the excellent quality and long-term value these products offer (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). Societal attitudes toward spending and value may influence this perception. Third, societal trends are directly connected to social value as it refers to how owning or using a luxury brand enhances a consumer's social status (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). Trends, such as celebrating wealth and status, reinforce this dimension, especially with society and communities creating a sense of exclusivity and status around luxury brands. Individual value is aligned with consumer behaviour and personal identity as it originates from a consumer's personal connection with a particular brand (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). Societal trends highlighting individualism, self-expression, and brand communities can reinforce this component by building a sense of belonging and connection to the brand. Finally, hedonic value is linked to the pleasures consumers gain from luxury consumption (Husic & Cacic, 2009; Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). This dimension is heightened by consumer behaviour centered on self-indulgence, pleasure-seeking, and cultural tendencies that value enjoyment and luxury experiences. Brand communities boost this pleasure even further through shared experiences and collaborative satisfaction with the brand.

Overall, purchasing luxury goods often involves a psychological element, as consumers seek high-quality products and the prestige, status, and personal satisfaction associated with luxury consumption (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). The concept of luxury is extensive and will continue to have meanings that vary with each consumer's personal experiences and goals. In this sense, considering the above literature, luxury has continually assumed great importance and impact on society, always present as a form of differentiation and achievement of social status, and constituting itself as an instrument in obtaining quality, beauty and pleasure on the part of those who consume luxury products (Miller & Mills, 2012). Moreover, luxury has composed its market over time which stems from the interplay of consumer demand, brand strategies, and societal and cultural factors.

2.1.2) Importance of Gen Y and Gen Z in the Luxury Market

Generational shifts, particularly the rise of Generation Y (Millennials) and Generation Z, are significantly reshaping the luxury market. These generational trends will continue to reshape the market between now and 2030 as both Generation Y and Generation Z contributed to the entire market growth in 2022 (D'Arpizio et al., 2023). With their distinct values and consumption patterns, these younger cohorts are increasingly becoming critical consumers of luxury goods and experiences. The use of digital channels by consumers to communicate with one another and the manifestation of their behavioural reactions to brands are two examples of how consumer behaviour and patterns have changed (Dobre et al., 2021). Gen Y and Gen Z are digital natives, highly comfortable and adept at using digital technologies. This has implications for how they discover, evaluate, and purchase luxury products. E-commerce and social media platforms have become vital channels for reaching and engaging these consumers (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). Luxury brands have had to innovate their digital strategies to cater to these digital-savvy generations. This illustrates the growth of social media and precisely one newer platform, TikTok.

Generation Y, born between 1982 and 1994, and Generation Z, born from 1995 to 2010, collectively constitute a significant portion of the consumer population (Butcher et al., 2017; Jain, 2021). Importantly, their purchasing power is projected to increase significantly in the coming years. According to a report by Bain & Company (2020), Millennials and Gen Z will represent more than 60% of the global luxury market by 2026. These generations are reshaping the luxury landscape through their unique consumption behaviours and expectations. In this sense, Gen Y and Gen Z are expected to spend three times more than previous generations until 2030, which accounts for one-third of the market. This shows how the attitude towards luxury is more precocious every year, with Gen Z consumers buying products three to five years earlier than millennials. Gen Y consumers began shopping for luxury goods between 18 and 20 years old, in contrast to Gen Z consumers who start at the age of 15 (D'Arpizio et al., 2023).

2.1.3) Unveiling the TikTok Social Media Platform

TikTok is a social media platform that allows users to create and share short-form videos, often set to music. Launched internationally in 2016 by the Chinese tech company ByteDance, TikTok quickly gained widespread popularity, especially among younger demographics. Initially, the platform had a completely different name (Douyin) and it only started growing when it merged with another social media service from China (Musical.ly) in 2018 (Bhandari & Bimo, 2022). As of 2021,

the platform boasts over 1 billion active users worldwide, making it a significant arena for communication and engagement (Sensor Tower, 2021).

TikTok's unique format distinguishes it from other social media platforms, focusing on creativity, authenticity, and user-generated content. This has significant implications for how brands, including luxury brands, engage with consumers on the platform. One differentiating feature that sets TikTok apart from other social media platforms like Instagram, is its enhanced reliance on “the algorithm” (Xu et al., 2019). This algorithm drives the entire platform through the commonly called “For You Page” where videos from people from all over the world are shown to the user according to what kind of content the user interacts with by liking, commenting, sharing the video, or even searching for a specific content in the search bar (Anderson, 2020; Xu et al., 2019). The application gives the opportunity for any user to have a viral video and end up in the “For You Page”, meaning that it does not limit that feature for only famous individuals. This factor is one of the reasons why users resonate with the platform so much since it concedes the same opportunities to every user (Bhandari & Bimo, 2022). TikTok promotes a personal experience between the user and the creator in a short period of time but still contains rich content and enough space for creators to show their luxurious lifestyle, hauls and “get ready with me” videos which can lead to consumption (Xu et al., 2019; Cho et al., 2022).

For the luxury market, TikTok has emerged as a potent tool for reaching and engaging with younger consumers, particularly those from Generation Y and Generation Z. According to a report by McKinsey & Company (2021), TikTok is an essential platform for luxury brands to communicate their brand stories, showcase their products, and engage with consumers more informally and creatively. Moreover, TikTok's algorithm, which prioritises content virality over follower count, allows luxury brands to reach wider audiences, beyond their traditional consumer base (Xu et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2021). This democratisation of visibility can be especially beneficial for luxury brands seeking to enhance their reach and relevance among younger consumers.

2.2) The Foundations of Materialism in the Luxury Market

Materialism is present in consumers' daily lives and therefore, unsurprisingly, is a personal value that has aroused interest among scholars and researchers over the last few decades (Tarka et al., 2022).

Scholars with distinct perspectives have widely defined materialism. Belk (1985) refers to materialism as “the importance a consumer attaches to worldly possessions”(p. 291) while Browne & Kaldenberg (1997) define materialism as a set of values and characteristics that are centered

around possessions. Rassuli and Hollander (1986) characterise materialism as “a mind-set... an interest in getting and spending” (p. 10). Richins and Dawson (1992) define materialism as a “set of centrally held beliefs about the importance of possessions in one's life” (p. 308). The authors argue that materialism is composed of three dimensions: (a) centrality, which refers to the acquisition of goods occupying a central place in people's lives, that is, acquiring goods as a lifestyle; (b) happiness, which concerns personal satisfaction, achieving happiness through acquisitions; and (c) success, which refers to the direct relationship between the accumulation of goods and being successful, essentially summarising the idea that having possessions is being successful.

Additionally, materialism is heavily connected to social media. Kamal et al. (2013) have found that the usage of social networks positively affects materialism in the context of Arabian and US students. Moreover, the researchers found that when consumers participate more in social networking activities, their levels of materialism tend to be higher (Kamal et al., 2013). Similarly, Thourmrunroje (2018) discovered that social media intensity increases materialism across both the US and South Korea. Neve and Trivedi (2020) also had similar findings in which they state that “social media is one of the major causes of materialistic thinking among youth” (p. 2432). Moreover, they found a significant relationship between celebrities that endorse products and the increase in levels of materialism (Neve & Trivedi, 2020). This means that the youth is more drawn to the idealised celebrity lifestyle which increases their materialistic value (Neve & Trivedi, 2020). In addition, Koay et al. (2022) revealed important results when it came to materialism's relation to both social media and purchase intention. The researchers found that the relationship between social media attractiveness and purchase intention is moderated by materialism. This implies that whether or not the appeal of a social media post or platform leads to an intention to purchase can depend on how materialistic a person is. If one is highly materialistic, they might be more likely to buy an item if they find it attractive on social media. Conversely, a less materialistic person may not be as influenced. According to Koay et al. (2022) and Riquelme et al. (2011) this is feasible given that individuals who are materialistic might be more drawn to superficial consumption.

Richins and Dawson (1992) also examined the role of materialistic values in influencing consumer behaviour within the luxury market. They found that individuals with high materialistic values often show a stronger intention to purchase luxury goods, viewing such acquisitions as a means to achieve happiness, demonstrate success, or enhance their self-image (Richins & Dawson, 1992). Subsequent studies have further expanded on these findings. Empirical evidence has proven that materialism and consumers' intent towards luxury products are strongly correlated (Gil et al. 2012). Scholars suggest that individuals can use luxury goods to symbolise their success and possibly

raise a person's social standing (Mandel et al., 2008). Individuals with materialistic characteristics believe that personal possessions are a sign of one's success and that these people are more prone to value the purchase of expensive luxury goods to convey their achievements (Park et al., 2008; Wong & Ahuvia, 1998). Nevertheless, even though individuals might utilise luxury goods to enhance their position within society, Schudson (1991) and Belk (1988) suggest that the need for material possessions reflects the importance of individual choice, and that materialism contributes to a loss of a sense of community, leading people to indifference when it comes to their actions negatively affecting others. For some, possessions can take precedence over religion, friends, and achievements (Richins & Dawson, 1992).

Furthermore, Park et al. (2008) found that materialistic values significantly influenced the purchase intention of luxury fashion brands among young consumers. They posited that these consumers perceived luxury goods as status symbols and used them to communicate their identity and social standing. In the context of consumers and purchase intention, materialism refers to the importance individuals place on worldly possessions and the belief that owning and acquiring material goods leads to happiness and success (Belk, 1985). In recent years, researchers have increasingly turned their attention to the impact of materialistic attitudes on consumer behaviour, particularly concerning the purchase of luxury products. Previous studies have shown that consumers' intentions towards luxury products are strongly linked to materialism (Chen & Kim, 2013; Gil et al., 2012). Kaur et al. (2022) found a positive relationship between materialism and the purchase intention of luxury products which consists of other empirical evidence found by Goldsmith & Clark (2012). Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Materialism positively influences luxury products' purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok.

2.3) The Social Psychological Underpinnings of the Bandwagon Effect

The bandwagon effect is a psychological phenomenon in which those of others influence individuals' attitudes, beliefs, or behaviours (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). Leibenstein (1950), one of the first researchers to explore the concept, defined it as an effect that “we refer to the extent to which the demand for a commodity is increased due to the fact that others are also consuming the same commodity” (p. 189). This phenomenon was further examined later by other scholars who have also referred to it as an effect in which people follow trends and try to consume what the masses or reference groups consume, to feel that they belong to these groups (Kastanakis & Balabanis, 2012). Sun et al. (2016) introduce a distinct way to analyse this concept by looking at

social psychology theory, in which people are seen as social animals, conforming to social forms and norms, and having their behaviour influenced by their group members. As a result, they conform to the majority opinion of the prestige groups with whom they communicate and purchase luxury items based on membership associations (Sun et al., 2016). These consumers who are part of the “bandwagon” group are more concerned about conforming and fitting in and less worried about the price of products (Eastman et al., 2018; Hudders, 2012; Mason, 1992). Furthermore, these individuals are inclined to adopt the majority's point of view even if their own opinion differs (Barrera & Ponce, 2021; Kessous & Valette-Florence, 2019; Leibenstein, 1950; Shaikh et al., 2017).

This effect commonly occurs in luxury markets as individuals buy certain products because of their popularity and the chance of being associated with the group which can generate further demand (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). According to Leibenstein (1950), the appeal of luxury goods in any consumer market is defined by a product that is both well-known and desired, due to the value derived from interactions with other consumers (Kastanakis & Balabanis, 2012). For the purpose of this research, this interaction was analysed in the TikTok environment, observing how users examine the purchase behaviour of other users. When they perceive a particular product as “trending” or as a “must-have,” they too are motivated to purchase, resulting in a bandwagon effect within the TikTok context (Kastanakis & Balabanis, 2012). This can occur especially among young adults who are susceptible to following their social groups since they have the desire to “fit in” and raise their status based on certain products that they believe will make it easier for them to be included (Eastman et al., 2018; Kim & Jang, 2014; Martin & Turley, 2004).

Subsequent research has further examined the bandwagon effect in the context of luxury goods. Bearden et al. (1989) found that the bandwagon effect significantly influences consumers' purchase intention towards luxury products. The researchers concluded that many consumers buy luxury goods because they believe others admire and approve of them, possibly enhancing their social standing (Bearden et al., 1989). Furthering these findings, Amaldoss and Jain (2005) investigated the effect on consumers who purchase this type of good. They observed that consumers are influenced by what other consumers buy. As a result, they purchase luxury goods to fit in their social group or to raise their status, similar to Bearden et al.'s (1989) findings. Adding to these observations, Leibenstein (1950) suggested that the desire behind wanting to join a crowd and feel part of the group was to be “one of the boys” (p. 189). Sun et al. (2016) emphasise other crucial aspects related to social psychology theory in which people are viewed as social animals. In this theory, people conform to both social forms and norms that are led by their social group. As a result, these individuals conform to the general opinion of their groups and purchase items based on the

group's status (Sun et al., 2016). Essentially, one's purchase decisions are directly influenced by what other group members may think of them or how they treat them, consequently impacting which products they buy.

In the context of purchase intention, the bandwagon effect implies that people are more likely to purchase a product if they perceive that others are also doing it (Leibenstein, 1950). Moreover, an empirical investigation done by Anantharaman et al. (2022) in the context of social media platforms revealed that the bandwagon effect has a strong influence on consumer purchase intention. As observed, the occurrence of bandwagon tendencies in the luxury market and purchase intention is reinforced by existing research. However, even though bandwagon is a significant aspect of luxury consumption, more studies are needed to comprehend the phenomenon entirely. Hence, to tackle this matter, the present study investigates the effect of bandwagon on the purchase intention of luxury goods in the context of TikTok and two generations: Millennials and Gen Z. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Bandwagon positively influences luxury products' purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok.

2.4) Understanding Hedonism: A Conceptual Framework

Hedonism, derived from the Greek word *hedone* meaning pleasure, is a philosophical doctrine that posits pleasure or happiness as the ultimate good (Weijers, 2012). Perceived hedonism, as defined by scholars, refers to the personal interpretation and subjective feelings of pleasure associated with specific activity, such as the consumption of goods and services (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). This behaviour has a direct connection to a product's symbolic attributes, and luxury goods provide a perfect setting for this consumption notion (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). Consumers who are set in such environments seek to gain pleasure and emotional arousal by emphasising hedonistic enjoyment and self-awareness instead of fulfilling others' satisfaction (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Shukla, 2012; Tsai & Liu, 2013). These emotions motivate phenomena with neurophysiological, expressive, and sensory components which may encompass feelings such as joy, fear, jealousy, and rage (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982).

Workman and Lee (2011), refer to hedonism as a value related to seeking pleasure, enjoyment of life and self-gratification. As mentioned by Vigneron and Johnson (2004) and Sun et al. (2016), one of the reasons why consumers purchase luxury products is to satisfy their hedonic needs. Many studies have shown that luxury items are directly related to emotional responses that involve pleasure and excitement (Chen & Kim, 2013; Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). Consumers who feel

emotional responses as such have the tendency to assess products based on the benefits and intrinsic pleasure they provide (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). Hence, hedonic consumers may be more inclined to appreciate luxury products because emotional value is an essential component of them (Chen & Kim, 2013).

In addition, past research has confirmed that consumers' perceived hedonism has been found to significantly influence their attitudes and behaviours towards luxury goods (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). Luxury products, by their nature, provide more than just utilitarian benefits; they cater to the consumers' hedonic needs by providing pleasure, satisfaction, and a sense of self-identity (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999; Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). This aspect is particularly prominent in the luxury market, where the consumption experience often involves a high degree of personal pleasure and emotional satisfaction (Chen & Kim, 2013). This consumption experience is further expanded when hedonism is analysed within the context of social media. Through these platforms, users of social media networks have access to a wide range of hedonic experiences. Users derive pleasure from connecting with others, sharing personal content, engaging in online communities, and consuming entertaining or emotionally appealing content (Hoffman & Novak, 2018). Furthermore, Martín-Consuegra et al. (2019) found that hedonic motives not only increase social media browsing but also establish a positive tendency for appropriate marketing messages and connection with brands which further drives purchase intention. Moreover, hedonic consumers are more involved with luxury brands as they elicit emotional responses through their engagement with the brand on social media (Chan et al., 2015; Martín-Consuegra et al., 2019).

Accordingly, the role of perceived hedonism in the purchase intention of luxury goods is emphasised by Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) who discuss that consumers often derive pleasure from the mere act of buying and owning luxury items, which provides a sense of satisfaction that goes beyond the functional utility of the product. Dubois et al. (2001) similarly argued that luxury goods often function as symbols of personal achievement and self-indulgence, appealing to consumers' hedonic demands. Wang et al. (2021) further corroborated these findings that emotional need is linked to sensory pleasure, satisfaction and is a crucial aspect of the purchase intention towards luxury products.

Hence, considering past research and that hedonism significantly impacts consumers' purchase intention towards luxury products, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Hedonism positively influences luxury products' purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok.

2.5) The Role of Hedonism as a Mediator

The interplay between materialism and purchase intention is multifaceted and influenced by various psychological factors, one of which is hedonism. Hedonism, or the pursuit of pleasure and self-indulgence, is proposed to mediate the relationship between materialistic tendencies and the intention to purchase, particularly in the context of luxury goods. Richins (2004) identified a correlation between materialism and hedonic values. Individuals with high materialistic values often seek pleasure and satisfaction in the acquisition of material possessions, thereby implicating hedonism as a potential mediator in the relationship. Further exploring this relationship, Sharma and Sonwane (2014) demonstrated that hedonic consumption behaviour, a direct offshoot of hedonism, could mediate the influence of materialistic attitudes on the intention to purchase luxury brands. Their findings suggest that materialistic consumers, driven by their pursuit of pleasure and personal gratification, are more likely to express the intention to purchase luxury goods. Similarly, Husic and Cicic (2009) found that hedonic motivations could significantly mediate the relationship between materialism and the intention to purchase luxury goods. They argued that materialistic individuals often seek self-indulgence and pleasure from owning and using luxury goods, increasing their likelihood of intending to purchase such items. Therefore, since hedonism plays a significant role in mediating the relationship between materialism and purchase intention according to literature, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Hedonism mediates the relationship between materialism and luxury products' purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok.

A foundational study by Leibenstein (1950) first postulated the bandwagon effect, which proposed that consumers are likely to purchase products if they perceive that others are doing the same. However, it is hedonism that often bridges this connection to purchase intention, as consumers derive pleasure from conforming to trends and norms signified by others' purchasing behaviours. Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) further suggested that the joy, satisfaction, and emotional gratification derived from purchasing and owning products - key aspects of hedonic consumption - can mediate the relationship between bandwagon and purchase intention. Additionally, Chan et al. (2015) found that the hedonic values associated with fitting in with social trends (the bandwagon effect) significantly increased the intention to purchase luxury products. As well as mediating the relationship between materialism and purchase intention, hedonism also mediates the effect between bandwagon and purchase intention of luxury goods. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Hedonism mediates the relationship between bandwagon and luxury products' purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok.

2.6) The Role of Nationality as Moderator

Materialism has been regarded as a core element of individualistic culture and is notably prevalent in the United States (Hofstede, 1980). This high level of materialism, driven by the country's strong consumer culture, has significant implications for purchasing behaviours, notably in terms of moderating the relationship between hedonism and purchase intention. Richins (1995) examined the evolution of materialism in American society. The researcher's findings highlighted a marked increase in materialistic values over the century, reflecting a societal shift towards consumption and the accumulation of goods as a measure of success and happiness (Richins, 1995). In addition, this heightened level of materialism has been found to moderate the relationship between hedonism and purchase intention. Kasser and Ryan (1993) suggested that individuals with high materialistic values are more likely to pursue hedonic pleasures through the acquisition of goods, thus strengthening the relationship between hedonism and purchase intention.

Further, in a study specifically focused on the role of materialism as a moderator, Keng et al. (2000) found that materialistic individuals tend to perceive a greater hedonic value in acquiring goods, enhancing their intention to make purchases. This suggests that high materialism, as seen in the United States, strengthens the link between hedonic motives and purchase intention. Moreover, Burroughs and Rindfleisch (2002) have found that materialism is negatively correlated to collectivist values whereas is positively correlated to individualistic values (such as hedonism) (Workman & Lee, 2011).

On the other hand, Brazil, a country which is characterised by lower levels of materialism when compared to countries like the United States, exhibits a collectivist culture (Hofstede, 1980). Bian and Forsythe (2012) highlighted that China, also a country with collectivist culture, scores lower on materialism scales, suggesting a lesser emphasis on the acquisition of material possessions as a measure of success or happiness compared to more materialistic societies like the US. Additionally, a study done by Zici et al. (2021) examining the role of individualism-collectivism cultural aspect on luxury purchase intentions, found that individualism positively influences materialism. Yet, no scientifically relation was found between collectivism and materialism (Zici et al., 2021). Furthermore, Burroughs and Rindfleisch (2002) suggest that materialism is inherently the opposite to collectivist values. Similarly, Clarke III and Micken (2002) found that collectivist cultures score

lower on materialism in comparison to respondents from individualist cultures. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H6a: The influence of materialism on purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok will be higher in the United States in comparison to Brazil.

Notably, hedonism is often reported to be higher in the United States than in Brazil, and this difference has significant implications for purchase intentions in these countries (Adams, 2011; Wang et al., 2021). In the United States, a culture characterised by high levels of individualism and consumerism, hedonism has a profound influence on purchase intention. In their study, Sharma and Sonwaney (2014) found that US consumers, driven by hedonism, often seek personal satisfaction and pleasure from the acquisition and consumption of goods, leading to a higher intention to purchase. Comparatively, Brazil, a culture marked by lower levels of materialism and a more collectivist orientation, may exhibit lower levels of individual hedonism. Bian and Forsythe (2012) suggested that while hedonic motives are present among collectivist consumers such as Brazilians, they may be tempered by other cultural values, such as the emphasis on communal enjoyment and shared experiences. This could lead to different patterns of purchase intention, with a greater focus on goods that can be enjoyed collectively. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H6b: The influence of hedonism on purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok will be higher in the United States in comparison to Brazil.

As mentioned, the bandwagon is an effect related to individuals buying certain luxury products, so they feel they belong to specific groups. In previous research done by Tascioglu et al. (2017), the authors suggest that consumers from collectivist cultures are more concerned with fitting in with other individuals which aligns with the bandwagon effect. Furthermore, according to a study done by Sun et al. (2016), the bandwagon effect is significant among collectivist cultures in which individuals are more likely to conform to the preferences of their group when making a decision to purchase a product. Thus, Brazil's more collectivist cultural orientation encourages conformity and harmony, often leading to a stronger bandwagon effect. In the context of purchase intention, this means that Brazilian consumers might be more likely to adopt popular trends and align their purchase intentions with prevailing consumer patterns (Faschan et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2018). Brazilian society with its collectivist characteristics may be more motivated to replicate the group's behaviours, attitudes, or choices which can increase susceptibility to the bandwagon effect since in this effect, individuals are more inclined to adopt a certain attitude because other members of the

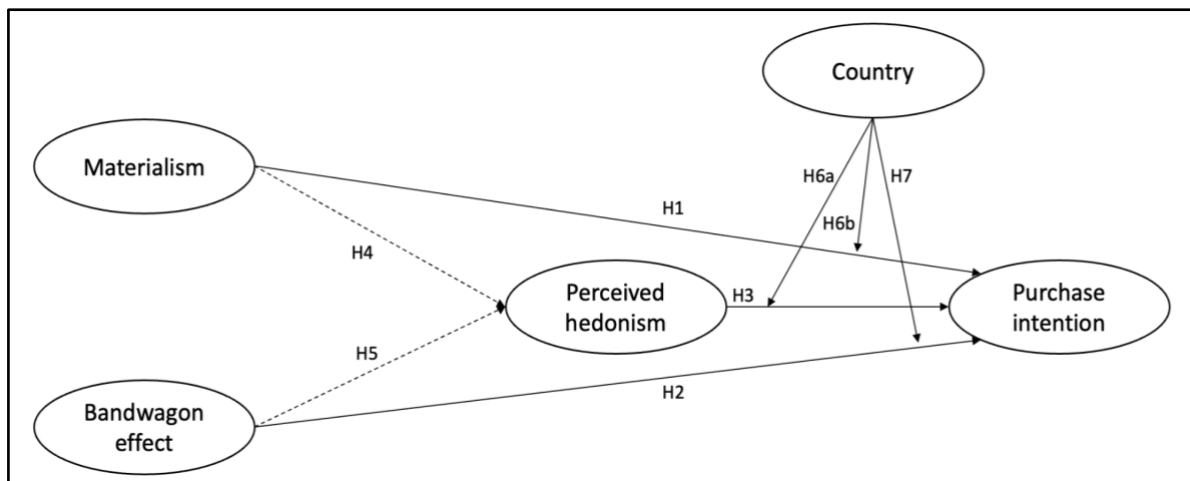
group are doing the same (Eastman et al. 2018; Hofstede, 1980; Sun et al., 2015). On the other hand, the United States, with its individualistic culture, may exhibit a weaker bandwagon effect (Faschan et al., 2020; Hofstede, 1980). American consumers valuing independence, and personal preference, might be less likely to conform their purchase intentions to popular trends (Hofstede, 1980).

Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H7: The influence of bandwagon on purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok will be higher in Brazil in comparison to the United States.

The proposed conceptual model of the current research can be seen below in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Conceptual Model



3. Method

This research design provides valuable insights by analysing the effect of hedonism on the purchase intention of luxury goods of Millennials and Gen Z within the context of TikTok. More specifically, it assesses the mediating role of hedonism in the relationship between the two independent variables – materialism and bandwagon - on the dependent variable, purchase intention. Finally, it utilizes the moderating role of nationality in the relationship between materialism and purchase intention, bandwagon and purchase intention, and hedonism and purchase intention.

First, given the focus of this study on understanding the relationship between multiple variables and the mediating and moderating effects, a quantitative survey research approach was taken for this study. Through a quantitative approach it is possible to provide enough statistical and systematic collection of numerical data to answer one main research question and a subresearch question, respectively: *to what extent does hedonism influence luxury products' purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers on TikTok between Brazil and the United States?* and *to what extent does hedonism mediate the relationships of materialism on purchase intention and bandwagon on purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers?*

Second, a quantitative approach method provides tools like mediation and moderation analyses to test particular hypotheses and investigate underlying mechanisms and conditions (Hayes, 2022). This is a type of research method that is used to collect data from a large number of participants using standardized measures (Babbie, 2016; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Quantitative research aims to quantify an issue, collecting numerical data and using them to better understand a given situation, such as, for instance, the purchase intention of Gen Y and Gen Z consumers towards luxury products in the TikTok context (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Additionally, it allows for exact measurement and statistical study of variable relationships. In general, the method is used to test a hypothesis and better understand patterns and habits of the public, among other possible applications (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Third, this type of research serves to gather and measure a set of data, sufficient to draw conclusions about the objects of the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this particular context, it involves comparing individuals from two different nationalities: namely, Brazil and the United States. Hence, due to participants being from different geographic locations, an online survey provides accessibility and convenience since it allows access to respondents at any time and from anywhere (Babbie, 2016). Moreover, larger sample sizes are frequently used in quantitative research, allowing for more robust statistical analyses, and increasing the generalizability of the findings (Babbie, 2016).

At last, the questionnaire consisted of standardized measures of hedonism, purchase intention, materialism, and the bandwagon effect of luxury products and the collected data was analysed using statistical methods.

3.1) Sampling and Procedure

The survey was collected in two countries, Brazil, and the United States. Hence, it is important to mention that the Brazilian survey was sent in Portuguese, the country's native language for ultimate understanding. Two experts who are bilingual researchers translated the survey. A translation-back-translation method was utilized, thus one researcher translated it from English to Portuguese and then it was translated back to the Portuguese language by the second researcher in order to achieve a credible translation.

Millennials and Gen Z were the target consumers for the current study as they have fuelled the growth and development of the luxury sector (Cho et al., 2022; D'Arpizio & Levato, 2022). Gen Y is formed by individuals born between the years of 1982 to 1994 and Gen Z by individuals born between 1995 to 2010. However, this study focused solely on participants who had already completed 18 years old, hence consumers born between 1982 to 2005 were considered. The individuals who participated in the study had to meet certain criteria before answering the survey, therefore this research utilized two sampling methods: purposive sampling and snowball sampling. Purposive sampling refers to a non-probability sampling technique in which the respondents are chosen based on certain characteristics needed for the study whereas snowball sampling refers to initial respondents recruiting future participants among their acquaintances (Palinkas et al., 2015). Hence, as the number of respondents increase, so does the number of participants, mimicking the nature of a snowball as it rolls (which is the origin of its name) (Palinkas et al., 2015). Particularly for this research, the criteria required that participants had to be TikTok users, had to be consumers of luxury goods and be either from Brazil or the United States. The survey was sent to participants through "Qualtrics", and it utilized an anonymous link. This anonymous link was posted on three social media platforms (TikTok, Instagram and Facebook) as well as spread by initial respondents to their own community.

As the survey link opened respondents were encountered with an introduction giving all necessary information and a consent form. It first explained what the research was about and that it was focused on two different countries, Brazil, and the US. It then proceeded to inform participants of the average time it would take to complete the survey (7 minutes) and that the collection of data was done in a completely anonymous and confidential way. The goal with writing this introduction

was to make participants as comfortable as possible and remind them to be sincere with their answers. To recognize their effort and serve as an incentive, participants in Brazil were offered to participate in a draw to win R\$200 and participants in the United States were given the same proposition but to win \$50. Finally, all participants were thanked and if there were any further clarifications or questions, they could contact the responsible researcher through email. Below, they were offered to consent or not to respond to the survey. In the case of a participant's disagreement, they would be led to the end of the survey.

Following to the next page, participants were able to answer the criteria in which they had to be both users of TikTok as well as some kind of luxury product. To facilitate any misunderstanding, a definition of luxury good by the Cambridge dictionary was given: "luxury goods are products which are not necessary, but which tend to make life more pleasant for the consumer. This can include expensive items such as handbags, clothes, jewellery, makeup, watches etc." (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). Participants who selected "yes" were able to continue the survey and those who answered "no" were taken to the end of the questionnaire.

The survey was divided into five parts: first hedonism which was then followed by the bandwagon effect, purchase intention, materialism and lastly demographics. The first section contained the scale that measured hedonism. Participants were informed that in that first part the researcher was interested in learning more about their purchase experience in the context of TikTok. After that the scale that measured both the bandwagon effect and purchase intention were introduced and respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with each of the statements. The fourth section was for the materialism scale, in which the participants were informed that the researcher was interested in learning more about their general behaviour. The fifth and final section were intended for participants to answer demographics, among them gender, age, highest level of education and family's income (monthly income for Brazil and annual income for the United States).

In total, 838 respondents answered the survey. 151 participants had to be excluded because they did not meet the initial criteria (utilizing TikTok or consuming luxury goods). Of the remaining 230 participants, 19 were deleted because they did not meet the age criteria (18 - 41) and 211 were deleted because they only partially completed the survey. Hence, the final sample for the study of participants with both valid responses and that are users of TikTok and consume luxury goods is 457. Out of 457 participants, 302 identified as Brazilians and 155 identified as US citizens. As for the age, in Brazil there was a range of 18.00 to 36.00 ($M = 22.86$, $SD = 3.30$) whereas in the United States the range was of 18.00 to 40.00 ($M = 23.54$, $SD = 2.71$). Regarding gender, both countries had more

females than males. In Brazil, 93.0% identified as females while 7.0% identified as males and in the US 88.4% identified as females whereas 11.6% identified as males. These demographics can be described by TikTok's world audience which is composed mostly of females (Howarth, 2023).

Furthermore, most Brazilians have completed their bachelor's degree (80.5%) in comparison to the US (65.2%). However, the United States has a higher number of master's degree completion (21.9%) in contrast to Brazil (4.0%). The remainder of the respondents scatter across both high school degrees and PhD: in Brazil 15.2% were high school graduates while in the US 12.3%. 0.3% of Brazilians and 0.6% of US citizens selected PhD for their highest educational level. Most respondents in both countries selected the highest option for household income (Brazil = 61.3%; US = 54.2%) which aligns with luxury product consumption. In Brazil it corresponded to more than 12 minimum salaries per month (R\$15.624,00) and in the US it corresponded to \$150.000,00 or more annually. All demographics provided can be found in Appendix A.

3.2) Measures

Materialism. This variable's objective was to look at the effect both on hedonism and on the purchase intention of luxury goods and it was not adapted into the TikTok context. It was measured with the Material Values Scale (MVS) developed by Richins and Dawson (1992). The scale consists of three subscales of materialism: success, centrality and happiness as mentioned in the literature. This scale has been used in past studies like the research conducted by Workman and Lee (2011) who investigated the relationship among materialism and fashion consumer groups. Items from each subscale include "I admire people who own expensive homes, cars, and clothes" (success), "I usually buy only the things I need" (centrality), and "I have all the things I really need to enjoy life" (happiness) (Richins & Dawson, 1992). The scale contains 18 items and was rated by a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The Cronbach's alpha for the scale is $\alpha = .88$ ($M = 62.55$, $SD = 11.51$) which demonstrates a strong internal consistency reliability.

The 18 items were entered into an exploratory factor analysis using Principal Components extraction with Direct Oblimin rotation based on Eigenvalues (> 1.00), $KMO = .89$, $\chi^2 (N = 457, 153) = 3075.725$, $p < .001$. The resultant model explained 34.9% of the variance in materialism. As expected, items were loaded into different factors. However, differently from what is proposed by the original researchers, a new factor was revealed. The factors found were *success*, *happiness*, *possession indifference and centrality*. The first factor (success) included the 6 items all related to success as originally proposed by the researchers (Richins & Dawson, 1992). The second factor (happiness) included the 5 items that were linked to any kind of happiness certain goods provide, also as

proposed by the researchers. The third factor (possession indifference) was the one that was revealed, and it is connected to an individual's feeling of detachment when it comes to products/goods. The fourth factor (centrality) lies somewhere in between a more materialistic individual or a more minimalist one. Factor loadings of individual items onto four factors are presented in Table 2. The full survey with the exact items for each scale can be found in Appendix A.

Table 3.1. Factor loadings, explained variance and reliability of the four factors found for the 'Material Values Scale (MVS)'.

	Success	Happiness	Possession Indifference	Centrality
Some of the most important achievements in life include acquiring material possessions	.80			
I admire people who own expensive homes, cars, and clothes	.72			
The things I own say a lot about how well I'm doing in life	.71			
I don't place much emphasis on the amount of material objects people own as a sign of success	.69			
I like to own things that impress people	.63			
I don't pay much attention to the material objects other people own	.56			
My life would be better if I owned certain things I don't have		.83		
I would be happier if I could afford to buy more things		.80		

It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I can't afford to buy all the things I would like	.76			
I wouldn't be any happier if I owned nicer things	.54			
I have all the things I really need to enjoy life	.50			
I put less emphasis on material things than most people I know		.68		
The things I own aren't all that important to me		.51		
Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure			.43	
I usually buy only the things I need			.80	
I enjoy spending money on things that aren't practical			.75	
I try to keep my life simple, as far as possessions are concerned			.64	
I like a lot of luxury in my life			.36	
<hr/>				
<i>Eigenvalue</i>	6.28	1.75	1.35	1.14
<hr/>				

Bandwagon. The research done by Kastanakis and Balabanis (2012) examined the bandwagon type of luxury consumption. According to the authors, until 2012 not much research had been conducted or progressed much beyond this type of luxury consumption. Hence, Kastanakis and Balabanis (2012) suggest a model for bandwagon consumption behaviour and suggest items for a

scale that measures the effect. The scale was developed with indicators that described that luxury goods depended on the increased consumption behaviour of others. The items were adapted to fit the TikTok context. For instance, "I choose luxury brands that are recognized by many people" was changed into "I choose luxury brands that are recognized by many people on TikTok" (Kastanakis & Balabanis, 2012). A 4-item scale was utilized and was rated by a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The Cronbach's alpha for the scale is $\alpha = .83$ ($M = 13.77$, $SD = 3.72$) which demonstrates a strong internal consistency. The 4 items were entered into an exploratory factor analysis using Principal Components extraction with Direct Oblimin rotation based on Eigenvalues (> 1.00), $KMO = .76$, $\chi^2 (N = 457, 6) = 751.818$, $p < .001$. The resultant model explained 66.0% of the variance in bandwagon. As anticipated, all items loaded into a single factor.

Hedonism. The objective with this variable was to look at its role of mediation between materialism and bandwagon effect with purchase intention and further explore respondents' hedonic values. In order to measure this variable, the hedonic and utilitarian shopping value scale created by Babin et al. (1994) was utilized. The scale has two subscales, one for hedonic values and the other for utilitarian. Since this research is focused solely on hedonism, only the hedonic values subscale was used. Multiple studies have also utilized this scale developed by Babin et al. (1994), such as the investigation done by Cho et al. (2022) or by Chen and Kim (2013), in which both studies adapted the scale for their research. The same was done for the current study. Items were adapted into the social media and TikTok context. For instance, item 1 was "this shopping trip was truly a joy" and it was transformed into "scrolling on TikTok for luxury products is truly a joy". This is a 11-item scale rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The Cronbach's alpha for the scale is $\alpha = .89$ ($M = 41.35$, $SD = 8.17$) which demonstrates a strong internal consistency.

The 11 items were entered into an exploratory factor analysis using Principal Components extraction with Direct Oblimin rotation based on Eigenvalues (> 1.00), $KMO = .93$, $\chi^2 (N = 457, 55) = 2193.113$, $p < .001$. The resultant model explained 49.5% of the variance in hedonism. The factors found were *escapism* and *joy of exploration*. The first factor (escapism) included 4 items all related to TikTok being a form of an escape or a space to being able to act freely. The second factor (joy of exploration) included 7 items that were linked to joy, excitement, fun or having a nice time while exploring TikTok. Factor loadings of individual items onto two factors are presented in Table 1. The full survey with the exact items for each scale can be found in Appendix A.

Table 3.2. Factor loadings, explained variance and reliability of the two factors found for the 'Hedonic Shopping Value Scale'.

	Escapism	Joy of Exploration
I feel a sense of adventure while looking for luxury products on TikTok	.82	
I am able to forget my problems while looking for luxury products on TikTok	.80	
I have a good time scrolling on TikTok for luxury products because I am able to act on the “spur-of-the-moment”	.75	
Scrolling on TikTok for luxury products feels like an escape	.62	
I feel the excitement while on the hunt for luxury products on TikTok		.47
Scrolling on TikTok for luxury products is not a very nice time		.82
I enjoy scrolling on TikTok for luxury products for its own sake, not just for the items I may have purchased because of it		.72
I enjoy being immersed in exciting new products on TikTok		.62
Scrolling on TikTok for luxury products is truly a joy		.61

I continue to look for luxury products on TikTok, not because I have to, but because I want to .57

Compared to other things I do, the time I spend scrolling on TikTok for luxury products is truly enjoyable .48

<i>Eigenvalue</i>	5.46	1.06
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Purchase Intention. Purchase intention was measured through the Purchase Intention (PI) scale used by Kim and Park (2012). This scale was developed based on multiple purchase intentions and willingness to buy scales developed by Macintosh and Lockshin (1997), Kim et al. (1998), Gefen (2000), Jarvenpaa et al. (1999). Furthermore, the scale adaptation by Kim and Park (2012) was done in the context of social networking sites (SNS) therefore the items were adapted to fit the TikTok context. Hence an example of an item is that it was originally “I am likely to purchase products/services on this s-commerce site” and it was transformed into “I am likely to purchase luxury products because of TikTok”. The scale is composed of 4 items and is rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The Cronbach's alpha for the scale is $\alpha = .89$ ($M = 15.44$, $SD = 3.57$) which demonstrates a strong internal consistency. The 4 items were entered into an exploratory factor analysis using Principal Components extraction with Direct Oblimin rotation based on Eigenvalues (> 1.00), $KMO = .84$, $\chi^2 (N = 457, 6) = 1001.438$, $p < .001$. The resultant model explained 75.0% of the variance in purchase intention. As anticipated, all items loaded into a single factor.

Demographics. At the end of the survey demographic data was collected in order to create a more thorough sample description. Demographics enable the researcher to examine whether any characteristics of the sample might have on the results along with the differences the sample may present itself. Furthermore, since this is a research with a cross-cultural context, demographics are an important form of analysis to compare both nationalities. Respondent's gender, age, educational level, and household income were asked. The last demographic mentioned, is crucial for the current study as well, since it is focused on the consumption of luxury products which tend to be more expensive and would require more income.

3.3) Data Preparation

Data Preparation and Cleaning. The data was reviewed for missing or incorrect observations before continuing with the analysis. The first step was to download the separate datasets from each nationality and combine both. After that, each nationality was given a number: '1' corresponded to Brazilians and '2' corresponded to US citizens. Later, any respondent who did not reach the end of the survey or did not meet with the criteria given were deleted. Furthermore, to guarantee the participants' anonymity and confidentiality, the IP addresses and location were removed from the dataset.

Checks for Normal Distribution. Tests were run to check for normal distribution. Strict guidelines were used, for skewness values between -1 and 1 and for kurtosis values between -2 and 2. The first independent variable *materialism* is continuous and normally distributed with a skewness of 0.01 and a kurtosis of -0.42 which fall within the strict guidelines for normality ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 0.64$). The second independent variable *bandwagon effect* is continuous and normally distributed with a skewness of -0.04 and a kurtosis of -0.46 which fall within the strict guidelines for normality ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 0.93$). The mediating variable *hedonism* is continuous and normally distributed with a skewness of -0.80 and a kurtosis of 1.10 which fall within the strict guidelines for normality ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 0.74$). The dependent variable *purchase intention* is continuous and normally distributed with a skewness of -0.82 and a kurtosis of 0.83 which fall within the strict guidelines for normality ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 0.89$). The moderating variable *nationality* is continuous and normally distributed with a skewness of 0.68 and a kurtosis of -1.54 which fall within the strict guidelines for normality ($M = 1.34$, $SD = 0.47$).

3.4) Validity and Reliability

In order to ensure validity and reliability, the operationalization process was done in a consistent and relevant manner. Furthermore, the measures that were used in the operationalization are both reliable and valid as it utilized scales that were developed by other researchers and have been used in multiple studies (Field, 2018). In addition, the operationalization followed both research questions appropriately, by exploring every single concept that was stated. Additionally, as mentioned, all scales were tested for internal reliability and exposed to a factor analysis using Principal Components extraction with Direct Oblimin rotation based on Eigenvalues (> 1.00). KMO values were high and above 0.7 which are considered accepted and indicate suitability for the analysis (Field, 2018). In regard to reliability, the four scales showed a high level of internal consistency as all values were above 0.8 (Pallant, 2016).

Table 3.3. Results from reliability analyses

Scale	<i>Cronbach's α</i>
Hedonic Shopping Value Scale	.89
Bandwagon Consumption Behaviour Scale	.83
Purchase Intention Scale	.89
Material Values Scale	.88

N = 457

4. Results

4.1) The Effects of Materialism, Bandwagon and Hedonism on Purchase Intention

The first step in the analysis was to test H1 and examine the relationship of materialism on purchase intention for luxury goods. Therefore, a simple linear regression analysis with purchase intention as criterion and materialism as predictor was conducted. The model was found to be significant, $F(1, 455) = 181.52$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .29$. Materialism ($\beta = .53$, $p < .001$) has a significant positive effect on purchase intention of luxury goods in the context of TikTok. Thus, H1 was accepted.

Similarly, to test H2, a simple linear regression analysis with purchase intention as criterion and bandwagon effect as predictor was conducted. The model was found to be significant, $F(1, 455) = 454.72$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .50$. Bandwagon Effect ($\beta = .71$, $p < .001$) has a significant positive effect on purchase intention of luxury goods in the context of TikTok. Thus, H2 was accepted.

A third simple linear regression analysis with purchase intention as criterion and hedonism as predictor was conducted to test H3. The model was found to be significant, $F(1, 455) = 479.73$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .51$. Hedonism ($\beta = .72$, $p < .001$) has a significant positive effect on purchase intention of luxury goods in the context of TikTok. Thus, H3 was accepted.

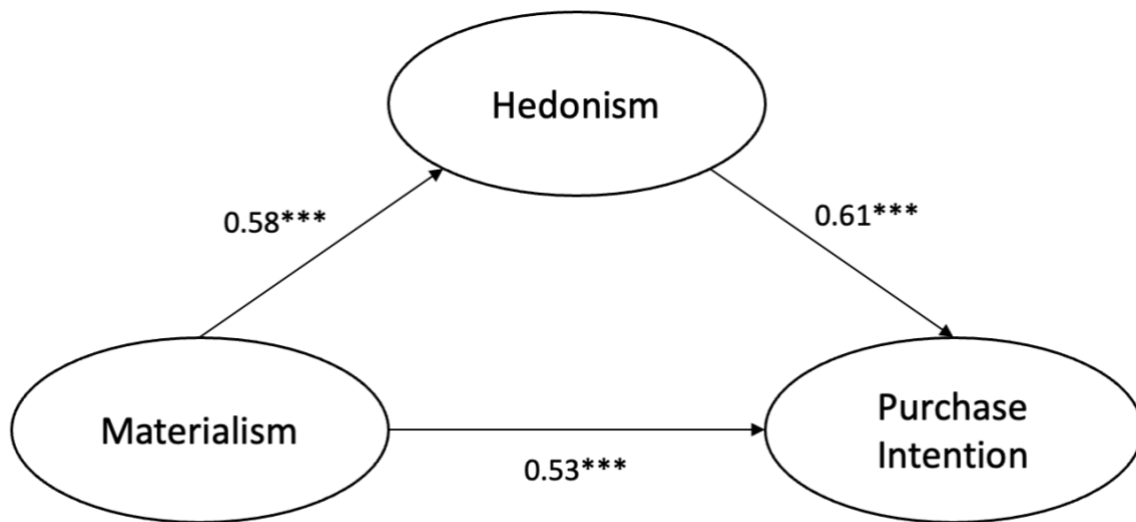
4.2) The Mediating Effect of Hedonism

The mediating role of hedonism in the relationships between materialism and purchase intention and bandwagon effect and purchase intention was assessed. To test H4 and H5 the macro PROCESS software plug-in for SPSS with model 4 was utilized as recommended by Preacher and Hayes (2008). In addition, as proposed, 5000 bootstrap samples with 95% confidence intervals were employed, as advised by Briggs et al. (1998) and Banjanovic and Osborne (2019).

For H4 a mediating analysis was conducted with purchase intention as criterion, materialism as predictor and hedonism as mediator. The overall model was found to be significant, $F(2, 454) = 259.44$, $p < .001$, with 53% of the variance in purchase intention being explained by it, $R^2 = .53$. The analysis further revealed that materialism has a significant positive effect on purchase intention with no mediator present, $\beta = .53$, $t(455) = 13.47$, $p < .001$, as can be observed in Figure 2. In addition, the results indicated that materialism also has a significant positive effect on hedonism, $\beta = .58$, $t(455) = 15.38$, $p < .001$. Furthermore, the analysis also showed a significant positive relationship between hedonism and purchase intention, $\beta = .61$, $t(454) = 15.54$, $p < .001$. The direct relationship between materialism and purchase intention, with the effects of hedonism, also proved to be significant, $\beta =$

.17, $t(454) = 4.42, p < .001$. The indirect relationship between materialism and purchase intention through hedonism was also significant $\beta = .50, CI95\% = [0.40; 0.60]$. These findings suggest that a partial media occurs. Hence, H4 was accepted.

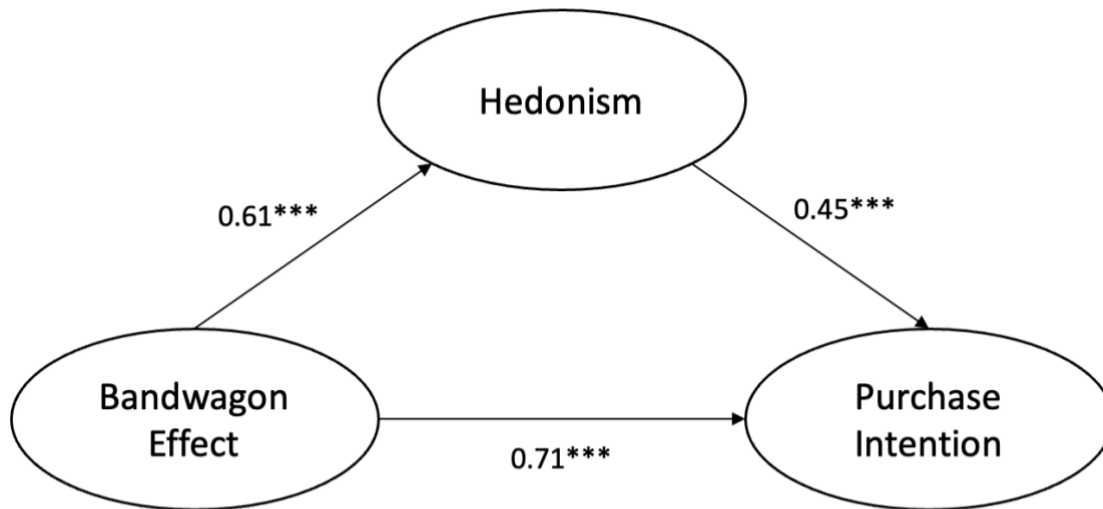
Figure 2. Mediation model of the relationship between materialism and purchase intention with hedonism as mediator



Note: $N = 457, p < .001^{***}$, standardised betas were reported

To test H5 a mediating analysis was conducted with purchase intention as criterion, bandwagon effect as predictor and hedonism as mediator. The overall model was found to be significant, $F(2, 454) = 385.16, p < .001$, with 63% of the variance in purchase intention being explained by it, $R^2 = .63$. The analysis further revealed that the bandwagon effect has a significant positive effect on purchase intention with no mediator present, $\beta = .71, t(455) = 21.32, p < .001$, as it can be observed in Figure 3. Additionally, the results indicated that the bandwagon effect also has a significant positive effect on hedonism, $\beta = .61, t(455) = 16.44, p < .001$. Furthermore, the analysis also showed a significant positive relationship between hedonism and purchase intention, $\beta = .45, t(454) = 12.58, p < .001$. The direct relationship between the bandwagon effect and purchase intention, with the effects of hedonism, also proved to be significant, $\beta = .43, t(454) = 11.92, p < .001$. The indirect relationship between bandwagon effect and purchase intention through hedonism was also significant $\beta = .27, CI95\% = [0.20; 0.33]$. These findings suggest that a partial mediation occurs. Hence, H5 was accepted.

Figure 3. Mediation model of the relationship between the bandwagon effect and purchase intention with hedonism as mediator



Note: $N = 457$, $p < .001$ ***, standardised betas were reported

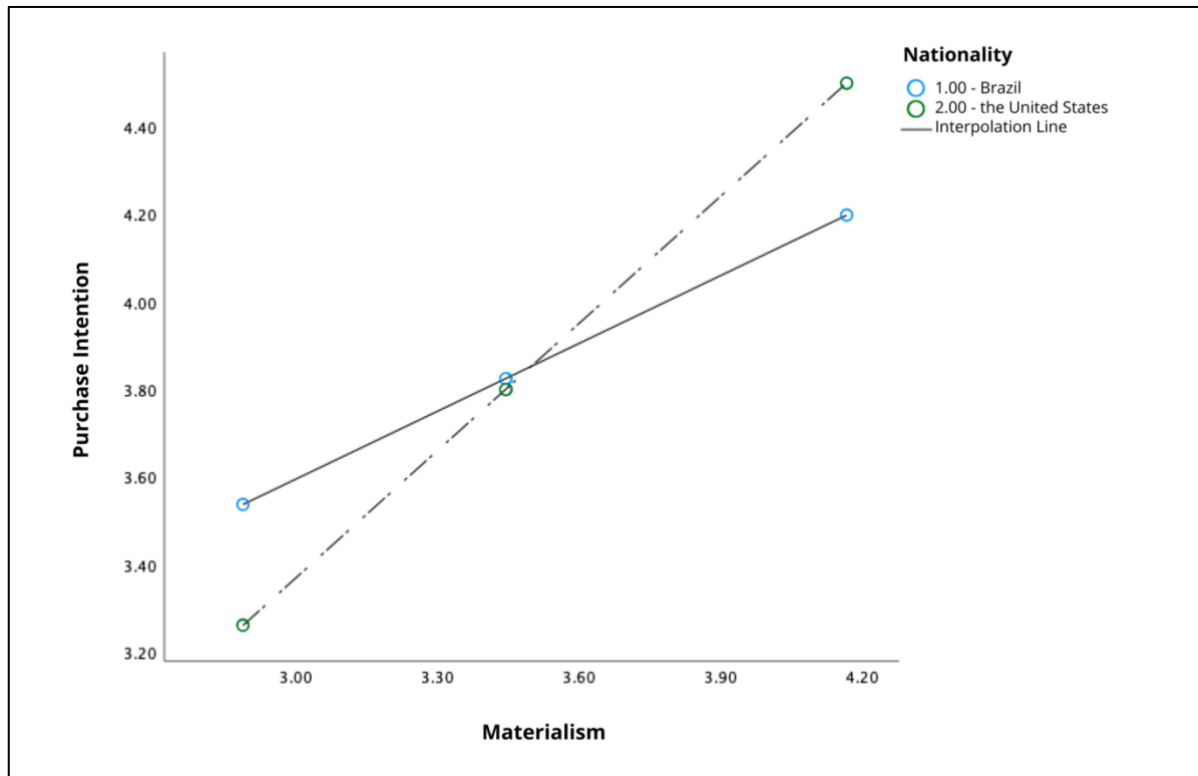
4.3) The Moderating Effect of Nationality

The moderating role of nationality (Brazilian vs US citizens) in the relationships between materialism and purchase intention, hedonism and purchase intention, and bandwagon effect and purchase intention were assessed. To test H6a, H6b and H7 the macro PROCESS software plug-in for SPSS with model 1 was utilized as recommended by Preacher and Hayes (2008). In addition, as proposed, 5000 bootstrap samples with 95% confidence intervals were employed, as advised by Briggs et al. (1998) and Banjanovic and Osborne (2019).

To test H6a a moderating analysis was conducted with purchase intention as criterion, materialism as predictor and nationality (Brazilian vs US citizens) as moderator. The overall model was found to be significant, $F(3, 452) = 67.89$, $p < .001$, with 31% of the variance in purchase intention being explained by it, $R^2 = .31$. The interaction between materialism and nationality was found to be statistically significant, $b = .45$, $t(452) = 4.09$, $p < .001$. Results of simple slope analysis conducted to better understand the nature of the moderating effects are also shown to be significant for both nationalities: Brazil, $b = .52$, $t(452) = 6.57$, $p < .001$ and the US, $b = .97$, $t(452) = 12.45$, $p < .001$. A further analysis can be seen in Figure 4. As it can be observed, nationality strengthens the positive relationship between materialism and purchase intention. For low materialism, the figure shows that Brazilians (1.00) score higher on purchase intention compared to US citizens (2.00). On the other hand, for high materialism it is clear that US citizens score higher

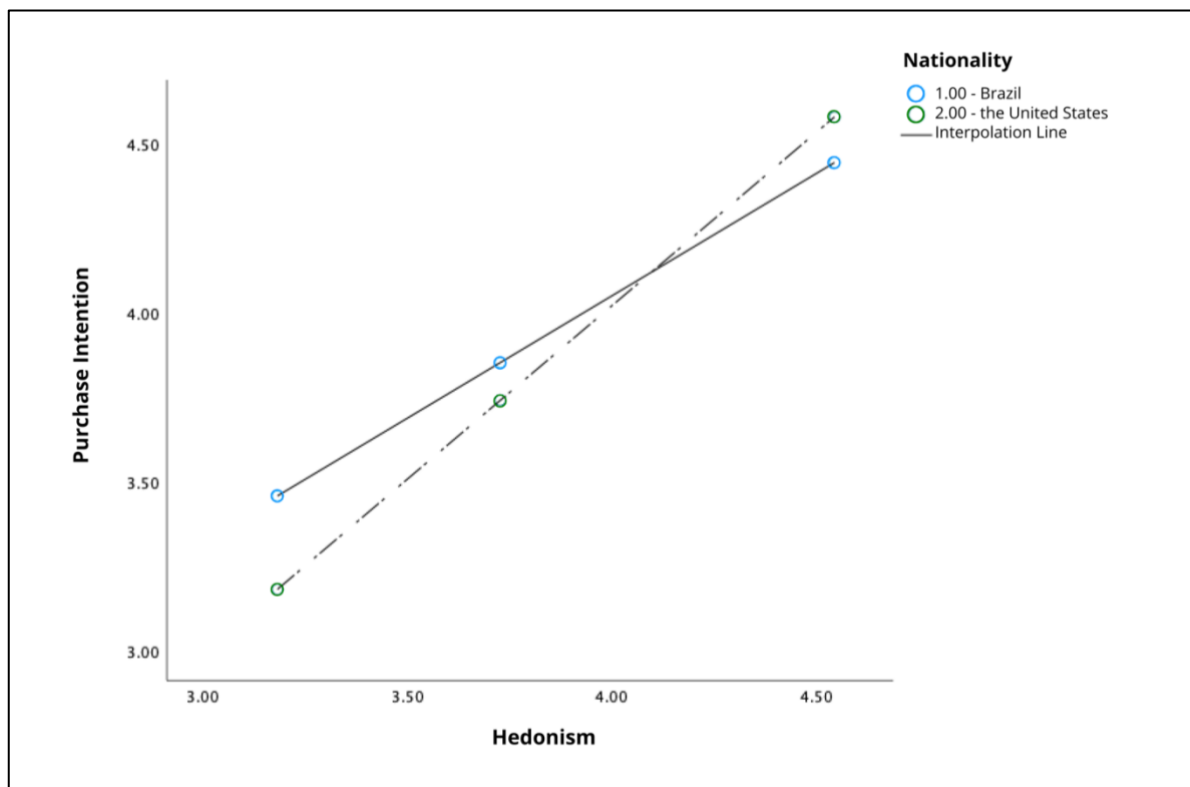
when it comes to purchase intention compared to Brazilians. Furthermore, the line is much steeper for the US in comparison to Brazil. Hence, H6a is accepted.

Figure 4. Simple Slope for Mediating Role of Nationality on Materialism and Purchase Intention



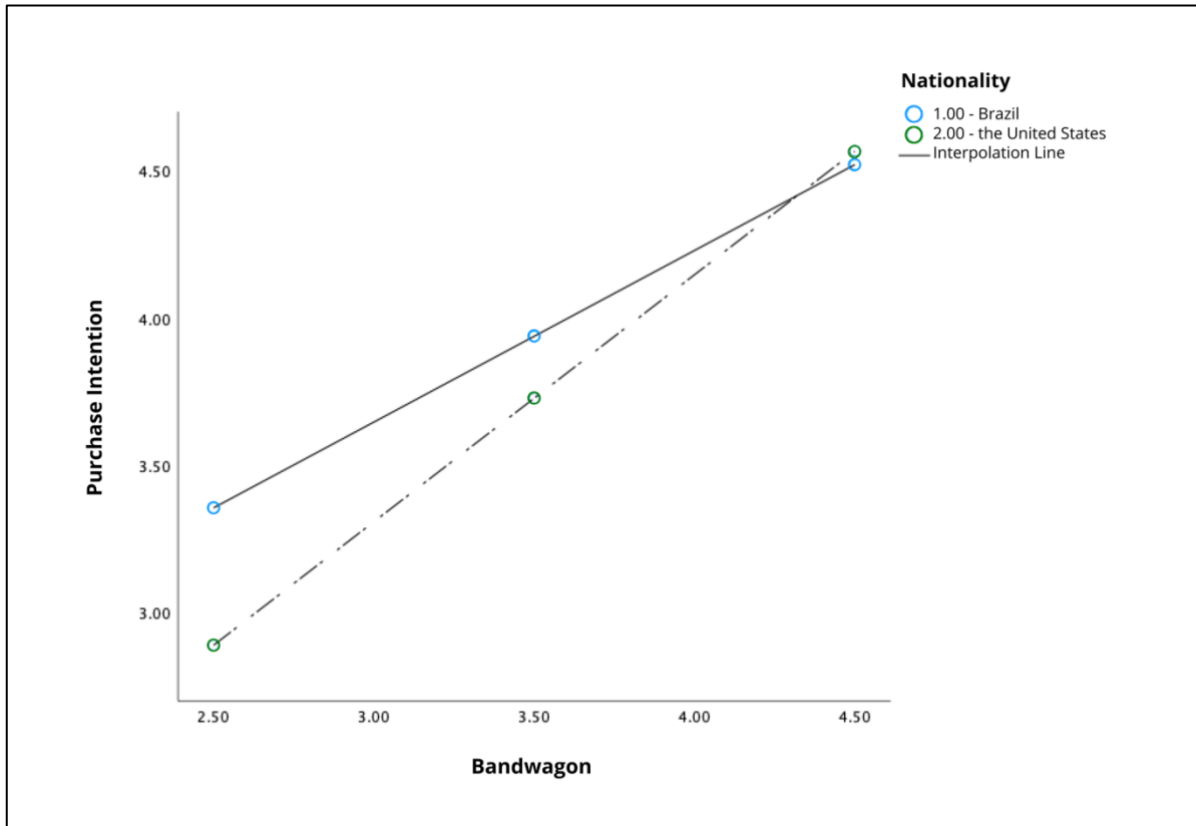
To test H6b a moderating analysis was conducted with purchase intention as criterion, hedonism as predictor and nationality (Brazilian vs. US citizens) as moderator. The overall model was found to be significant, $F(3, 452) = 170.93, p < .001$, with 53% of the variance in purchase intention being explained by it, $R^2 = .53$. The interaction between hedonism and nationality was found to be statistically significant, $b = .30, t(452) = 3.82, p < .001$. Results of simple slope analysis conducted to better understand the nature of the moderating effects are also shown to be significant for both nationalities: Brazil, $b = .72, t(452) = 13.01, p < .001$ and the US, $b = 1.03, t(452) = 18.31, p < .001$. A further analysis can be seen in Figure 5. As it can be observed, nationality strengthens the positive relationship between hedonism and purchase intention. For low hedonism the figure shows that Brazilians (1.00) score higher on purchase intention compared to US citizens (2.00). On the other hand, for high hedonism it is clear that US citizens score higher when it comes to purchase intention compared to Brazilians. Furthermore, the line is much steeper for the US in comparison to Brazil. Hence, H6b is accepted.

Figure 5. Simple Slope for Mediating Role of Nationality on Hedonism and Purchase Intention



To test H7 a moderating analysis was conducted with purchase intention as criterion, bandwagon as predictor and nationality (Brazilian vs. US citizens) as moderator. The overall model was found to be significant, $F(3, 452) = 167.76, p < .001$, with 53% of the variance in purchase intention being explained by it, $R^2 = .53$. The interaction between bandwagon effect and nationality was found to be statistically significant, $b = .26, t(452) = 3.97, p < .001$. Results of simple slope analysis conducted to better understand the nature of the moderating effects are also shown to be significant for both nationalities: Brazil, $b = .58, t(452) = 13.06, p < .001$ and the US, $b = .84, t(452) = 18.02, p < .001$. A further analysis can be seen in Figure 6. As it can be observed, nationality strengthens the positive relationship between bandwagon effect and purchase intention. However, for low bandwagon the figure shows that Brazilians (1.00) score higher on purchase intention compared to US citizens (2.00). On the other hand, for high bandwagon it is clear that US citizens score slightly higher when it comes to purchase intention compared to Brazilians. Furthermore, the line is slightly steeper for the US in comparison to Brazil. Hence, H7 is rejected.

Figure 6. Simple Slope for Mediating Role of Nationality on Bandwagon Effect and Purchase Intention



4.4) Hypotheses Overview

An overview of the hypotheses can be seen in the table below.

Table 4. Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Result
H1: Materialism positively influences luxury products' purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok.	Accepted
H2: Bandwagon positively influences luxury products' purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok.	Accepted

H3: Hedonism positively influences luxury products' purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok. Accepted

H4: Hedonism mediates the relationship between materialism and luxury products' purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok. Accepted

H5: Hedonism mediates the relationship between the bandwagon effect and luxury products' purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok. Accepted

H6a: The influence of materialism on purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok will be higher in the United States in comparison to Brazil. Accepted

H6b: The influence of hedonism on purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok will be higher in the United States in comparison to Brazil. Accepted

H7: The influence bandwagon on purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok will be higher in Brazil in comparison to the United States. Rejected

5. Discussion

5.1) Key Findings

The current research emerged from an investigation primarily aimed at understanding the mediating role of hedonism on the relationship between materialism and purchase intention and bandwagon and purchase intention. Additionally, the study explored the moderating role of nationality (Brazil and the United States) on the relationships between materialism, hedonism and bandwagon with purchase intention.

The findings from the study confirm that materialism positively influences luxury products' purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok. As mentioned in the literature, Park et al. (2008) also found that materialistic values significantly influenced the purchase intention of luxury fashion brands among young consumers. Moreover, Kamal et al. (2013) found that the use of social media has a positive correlation with materialism. This is in line with the results, given that the study context was TikTok, one of the biggest social media platforms currently.

Bandwagon was also found to have a positive influence on luxury products' purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok. Similarly, Anantharaman et al. (2022) also uncovered that bandwagon has a positive effect on consumer purchase intention in the context of social media. The reason for this can be that millennials and Gen Z consumers are influenced by the purchase behaviour of others on the TikTok platform. As previously referenced, the bandwagon effect suggests that individuals are more inclined to buy a product if they believe others are doing the same (Leibenstein, 1950). Hence, what bandwagon entails is that an individual's buying choices are strongly influenced by their perception of others' opinions about them or their treatment towards them in a group setting, which subsequently affects their purchase intention. This finding shows that the higher bandwagon is, the more it affects the purchase intention for luxury products on TikTok.

The results also showed that hedonism positively influences luxury products purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok. Vigneron and Johnson (1999) have also confirmed that hedonism was found to influence consumers' attitudes towards luxury goods and, Hoffman and Novak (2018) that hedonic consumers present on social media enjoy the experience by establishing social interactions and viewing content that is entertaining or emotionally resonant.

Hedonism was found to partially mediate the relationships between materialism and purchase intention and bandwagon and purchase intention. A partial mediation between materialism and purchase intention means that hedonism carries the influence of materialism to

purchase intention, but the direct effect of materialism on purchase intention still exists even outside of hedonism's influence. Similarly, hedonism also partially mediates the relationship between bandwagon and purchase intention. Thus, bandwagon has an effect on purchase intention partially through hedonism. This demonstrates that while hedonism carries some effect of bandwagon on purchase intention, there is still a direct relationship of bandwagon on purchase intention outside of hedonism's influence.

The moderating role of nationality (Brazilians vs US citizens) was explored in three different relationships. The first one, which entailed that the influence of materialism on purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok would be higher in the United States in comparison to Brazil, was proven. As Hofstede (1980) noted, materialism is often viewed as a component of an individualist culture, a culture which is prevalent in the United States. Moreover, materialism has been found to be negatively correlated to collectivist values, as explained by Burroughs and Rindfleisch (2002) and by Workman and Lee (2011). Brazil, however, is a country which scores high on collectivism and is characterised by lower levels of materialism (Hofstede, 1980). Further, the research also uncovered that nationality moderates the relationship of materialism with purchase intention. This demonstrates that, as predicted, US citizens are indeed more materialistic regarding the purchase intention of luxury goods among millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok (Bian & Forsythe, 2012; Clarke III & Micken, 2002).

The second relationship, the influence of hedonism on purchase intention of Millennials and Gen Z consumers within TikTok, was also found to be higher in the United States in comparison to Brazil. As mentioned previously, the United States culture has an emphasis on material success, personal achievement, and individualism. Therefore, US consumers manifest their symbol of both status and success through the consumption of luxury items. On that note, Sharma and Sonwaney (2014) discovered that consumers from the US who are driven by hedonism seek personal fulfilment and enjoyment by buying luxury goods that result in a higher intention to purchase. This finding shows that US citizens are consumers who may feel more emotional responses than Brazilians when assessing luxury products based on the benefits and pleasure they provide. Moreover, it shows that US citizens are more inclined to appreciate luxury products because of the emotional value they entail, in comparison to Brazilian consumers.

The third and last relationship tested uncovered different findings from the prediction. It was expected that bandwagon would be higher in Brazil than in the US since Brazilian culture is characterised by being a collectivistic culture. However, it was revealed to be higher in the US. Similarly, Wong and Park (2022) examined bandwagon as a perceived social value. In their study, the

researchers looked at Dutch and Korean millennials and their attitudes towards luxury goods. The Netherlands is a country characterised by individualism like the US, whereas Korea is characterised by collectivism like Brazil. Contrary to the existing literature on individualism and collectivism, Wong and Park (2022) found that Dutch millennials are more influenced on their attitude by perceived social value than Korean millennials. These results corroborate this research's findings as Dutch culture is similar to the one in the US, while Korean culture is similar to the one in Brazil.

5.2) Theoretical Contribution

This research enriches the literature by assessing the importance of the positive effects of materialism, bandwagon and hedonism on purchase intention of luxury goods of millennials and Gen Z consumers. Past investigations have highlighted a robust connection between consumer intentions towards high-end products and materialism, which aligns with the current results (Chen & Kim, 2013; Gil et al., 2012; Goldsmith & Clark, 2012; Kaur et al., 2022).

Furthermore, bandwagon's influence on purchase intention of luxury goods among millennials and Gen Z consumers demonstrates that users of TikTok conform with social groups within the platform. This aligns with Sun et al.'s (2016) social psychology theory, used as a way to interpret bandwagon, which is logical in its view of individuals as social animals. According to the theory, individuals adhere to societal conventions and standards established by their social group (Sun et al., 2016). Consequently, they align themselves with their group's prevalent views and make purchases reflecting the group's status (Sun et al., 2016). In this specific case for the current research, these social groups are other users in the app among the different communities, such as the beauty and fashion communities, that both fall within the luxury context.

In addition, similar to the current findings, past research has also found that hedonic value is a critical factor in influencing the intention to purchase luxury goods (Wang et al., 2021). Furthermore, hedonic motives are also behind the increase in social media presence and the establishment of a positive tendency for brands to spread their marketing messages which can increase purchase intention (Martín-Consuegra et al., 2019). This is in line with the current results, as hedonism was found to have an effect on purchase intention within TikTok. Consumers and users of the social media application have hedonic motives and characteristics that increase their intention to purchase a particular luxury item. This shows that these consumers feel emotional responses when it comes to assessing the products they want to purchase because of the pleasure and excitement they might provide (Chen & Kim, 2013; Vigneron & Johnson, 2004).

Hedonism was also revealed to partially mediate the relationship between materialism and purchase intention of luxury goods among millennials and Gen Z. This highlights the significance of hedonic motivations in consumer purchasing behaviour, providing a more nuanced understanding of how the pleasure derived from owning and purchasing products influences purchasing intentions. Similarly, Husic and Cicic (2009) also found that hedonic motivations significantly mediate the relationship between materialism and the intention to purchase luxury goods. In line with previous research, hedonism was also found to mediate the relationship between bandwagon and purchase intention of millennials and Gen Z. As stated, Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) proposed that the feelings of happiness, contentment, and emotional fulfilment attained through purchasing items (fundamental elements of hedonic consumption) could serve as a mediator in the relationship between bandwagon and purchasing intention. Hence, the current research confirmed the mediating effect in a new context of millennials and Gen Z within TikTok.

Furthermore, by exploring the moderating role of nationality in three different relationships between materialism, hedonism and bandwagon with purchase intention, this study adds to the growing body of cross-cultural research in the marketing field. The comparison between Brazilian and US citizens' consumers deepens the comprehension of how cultural contexts can shape and moderate consumer behaviour. The US was revealed to have higher materialism in comparison to Brazil. Past research on the US and China - a country that also comes from a collectivist culture - also found that materialism is higher in individualist cultures such as the US and lower in collectivist cultures such as China (Bian & Forsythe, 2012). These findings align with the current results, which have found that US citizens score higher on materialism than Brazilians. On the other hand, however, differently from what was predicted, bandwagon was found to be higher in the US than in Brazil; hence the results were not confirmed among these two new generations - millennials and Gen Z. Past studies had argued that countries with a collectivist orientation score higher on bandwagon in comparison to countries with an individualist orientation (Eastman et al., 2018; Sun et al., 2015; Sun et al., 2016). Nevertheless, the current findings suggest that bandwagon is higher in the United States.

Individuals residing in individualistic cultures often place great importance on independence, competition, and personal success (Escalas & Bettman, 2005; Nickerson, 2023). Therefore, these young consumers of the United States might be more inclined to make purchases and follow trends, viewing these actions as a means to participate competitively, signifying that they are in possession of the latest trends. In contrast to what was previously indicated, namely that Brazilians would have a higher bandwagon because they act cooperate and follow group trends, US citizens also follow

trends, but with a different objective; these millennials and Gen Z individuals are driven by competition and personal achievement. Contrarily, Brazilians are consumers who may feel the normative pressure to conform to the goals of a collective ingroup, which, as mentioned, is a crucial component of collectivist cultures (Hofstede, 1980).

However, people from individualist cultures (such as the US) follow social trends and adhere to what others are purchasing because acquiring a luxury item has less to do with social pressure and more with the materialistic aspect of owning something luxurious. According to Gary and Munch (1996), “people do not always behave in a strict individualistic or collectivistic manner” (p. 1). Instead, their conduct, particularly regarding acquisitions, often incorporates elements of both individualism and collectivism, contingent on the motivational objectives associated with a given purchase. In other words, bandwagon might be less robust of a concept that is shaped by specific cultural characteristics. In addition, the authors also mention how it is more likely that individuals might participate in purchasing behaviour motivated by their individualistic values without being influenced or conveying their group trend (Gary & Munch, 1996).

By integrating aspects of hedonism, materialism and the bandwagon effect, this research provides a more expanded understanding of the factors that may drive purchase intention among millennials and Gen Z consumers in the TikTok context. This multi-theoretical approach provides an in-depth, comprehensive view of the complex interplay of social and cultural factors. Moreover, given the novel context of TikTok, this study contributes to a better understanding of consumer behaviour on the app. It also complements to the developing literature on social media's role in shaping consumers and their intent to purchase luxury products.

5.3) Managerial Implications

The current research sheds light on the role of hedonism as a mediator of the relationship between materialism and purchase intention and bandwagon and purchase intention. Marketing managers and marketers of luxury brands could tap into this by accentuating the pleasure, satisfaction, and emotional gratification derived from owning their products. This could involve marketing strategies that highlight sensory pleasures, personal accomplishment and how much joy consumers could potentially feel from owning such a product. In order to achieve this, user-generated content could be done. For it, a brand can hire creators to produce more relatable content, and from a consumer perspective; this way potential consumers can sense this gratification through other users on the app. Furthermore, brands should consider the results that revealed materialism and bandwagon significantly influence purchase intention. Brands should regard both of

these factors in their messaging; they could highlight the product's exclusivity, superior quality or even the status symbol associated with a product, which all appeal to materialistic tendencies. Simultaneously, they should leverage the use of the bandwagon effect by showing a high demand or popularity of a product through their own social media account, and user-generated content on TikTok, which can create a sense of urgency to purchase. By having a well-planned marketing strategy in the platform, the more users see a particular product being mentioned or talked about, the more other users will want to follow the trend and conform with the rest of the group.

The role that nationality plays in this research should also be considered as an indicator of how consumer behaviour alters between countries and cultures. Luxury brands need to acknowledge these cultural differences in their marketing strategies. In the case of the United States, where hedonism was found to be more prevalent, businesses might want to emphasise more the pleasure and personal fulfilment associated with owning their product. Conversely, in Brazil, brands should find the gap and other values that might take precedence, in which different strategies could be more effective. The same should be applied to materialism. It was shown that the US is a more materialistic country than Brazil in the context of luxury on TikTok. Hence, luxury brands can take different approaches when developing specific marketing campaigns in countries that come from a collectivist culture and have less of a materialist appeal. Additionally, it is crucial for brands to consider the distinct motivations between different nationalities; hence marketers should tailor their strategies according to their target demographics. This involves using the current research and other studies to understand the values and behaviours of their consumers on TikTok and customising their messaging accordingly.

Lastly, the importance of targeting the right age demographic should be taken into consideration by brands. Millennials and Gen Z consumers are not only predominant on the TikTok platform as well as that by 2026 they will represent more than 60% of the global luxury market (Bain & Company, 2020). Furthermore, as mentioned, the two generations are expected to spend three times more than previous generations until 2030 (Bain & Company, 2020). Since Gen Y and Gen Z are characterised by being digital natives, brands should account for these consumers when utilizing platforms such as TikTok. According to an article by Huang (2022) in the New York Times, Gen Z users reported that they utilize the app to look for restaurants in their area, as well as brands and other tips instead of using Google as they find the content on TikTok to be more personalised (Huang, 2022). Therefore, TikTok has now taken over as a search engine (Carbonaro, 2023; Dobuski, 2022; Huang, 2022).

5.4) Future Research and Limitations

The present research focuses on consumers from Brazil and the United States. While this approach provides insights into these two markets as well as being able to compare the different cultures, it may still limit the generalizability of the findings to other cultural contexts. Even though Brazil is characterised by a collectivist society while the US by an individualist one, this research's result might not apply to countries with a similar culture. As an example, findings from the Brazilian culture might not be generalizable to Chinese people just because they both have collectivist cultures. Even though certain countries might share Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimension, other factors might alter the way young consumers behave. For instance, TikTok characteristics might differ from country to country, including famous creators and brands. Some brands might be more predominant among young consumers in Brazil when compared to other brands in China. Hence, depending on the country, this factor might alter millennials' and Gen Z's purchase intent towards luxury brands.

Another limitation is regarding the distribution of Brazilians and US citizens, 302 compared to 155, respectively. A larger sample size is more likely to be more representative of a population. Thus, Brazilians may have been more accurately represented when compared to US citizens (Babbie, 2016). In addition, the sample also mainly consisted of females, in which 93% identified as females while 7% as males. This may affect this study's generalizability of results since the findings may only generalise to some of the population as there is a significant disparity between both genders. For future studies, researchers should ensure there is a balanced gender ratio, and a suggestion would be for the research to separately analyse the data of males and females to observe specific trends or outcomes that might differ among both groups.

Furthermore, it is also important to mention that TikTok is a newer platform, becoming extremely popular only in 2019. Therefore, there are fewer studies and articles in the context of this application when compared to other social media such as Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. Therefore, future research could further explore the application among the different niches within the app, such as the beauty, fashion, sustainability, technology, gaming and food communities (TikTok, 2023). It is also recommended that more research is done among the other two countries that have a large TikTok community, Indonesia and Mexico. TikTok has a global reach; hence, cross-cultural studies can provide valuable insights into how the platform impact may vary across different cultural contexts. On this note, in terms of theory, it is advisable to expand the research on the bandwagon concept when it comes to the different nationalities. There are existing studies on the topic, however, more specific research is recommended to understand how this concept differentiates among other cultures and why that occurs.

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7. Appendix A

Appendix A – Online Survey:

Introduction:

I am a student at Erasmus University Rotterdam currently doing my masters in Media and Business and, as part of my thesis, I am carrying out a study that investigates the consumption of luxury products in the context of TikTok in the United States and Brazil.

This questionnaire takes no longer than 15 minutes to answer.

The data collected in this study is anonymous and confidential. There are no right or wrong answers, so I appreciate it being as sincere as possible.

Your collaboration is very important for the development of my study. For this reason, at the end of the survey you will have the opportunity to enter your email in a form to have a chance to win \$50.

Thank you in advance for your help!

I agree to participate in the research study. I understand the nature and purpose of this study and I am participating voluntarily. I understand I can withdraw anytime. I hereby give my consent. Please indicate your choice below:

I agree (continues the survey)

I disagree (survey ends there)

Part 1:

Q1. Do you utilize TikTok and consume luxury goods content? (**Luxury goods are products which are not necessary, but which tend to make life more pleasant for the consumer. This can include expensive items such as handbags, jewellery, makeup, watches etc.*)

- Yes (continues the survey)
- No (survey ends there)

Part 2: TikTok

First, I would like to know how your shopping experience is regarding TikTok. Please indicate your degree of agreement/disagreement with the following statements:

(5-point Likert scale / strongly disagree to strongly agree)

1. Scrolling on TikTok for luxury products is truly a joy.
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
2. I continue to look for luxury products on TikTok, not because I have to, but because I want to.
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
3. Scrolling on TikTok for luxury products feels like an escape.
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
4. Compared to other things I do, the time I spend scrolling on TikTok for luxury products is truly enjoyable.
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
5. I enjoy being immersed in exciting new products on TikTok.
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
6. I enjoy scrolling on TikTok for luxury products for its own sake, not just for the items I may have purchased because of it.
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
7. I have a good time scrolling on TikTok for luxury products because I am able to act on the "spur-of-the-moment."
 - Strongly Disagree

- Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
8. I feel the excitement while on the hunt for luxury products on TikTok.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
9. I am able to forget my problems while looking for luxury products on TikTok.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
10. I feel a sense of adventure while looking for luxury products on TikTok.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
11. Scrolling on TikTok for luxury products is not a very nice time.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree

Please indicate your degree of agreement/disagreement with the following statements:
(5-point Likert scale / strongly disagree to strongly agree)

1. I like owning luxury products that are worn by celebrities/users that appear on TikTok.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
2. I buy luxury products that are very fashionable.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree

- Strongly Agree
3. I choose luxury brands that are recognised by many people on TikTok.
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
 4. I choose luxury brands that are worn by most people on TikTok.
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree

Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements below:
(5-point Likert scale / strongly disagree to strongly agree)

1. I am likely to purchase luxury products because of TikTok.
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
2. Given the opportunity, I would consider purchasing luxury products that I have seen on TikTok in the future.
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
3. It is likely that I will actually purchase luxury products that I have seen on TikTok in the near future.
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
4. Given the opportunity, I intend to purchase luxury products because of TikTok.
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree

Part 3: Materialism

Now, I would like to know more about your general behavior. Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements below (*this section has not to do with the use of TikTok for specific purposes):

(5-point Likert scale)

1. I admire people who own expensive homes, cars, and clothes.
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
2. Some of the most important achievements in life include acquiring material possessions.
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
3. I don't place much emphasis on the amount of material objects people own as a sign of success.
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
4. The things I own say a lot about how well I'm doing in life.
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
5. I like to own things that impress people.
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
6. I don't pay much attention to the material objects other people own.

- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
7. I usually buy only the things I need.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
8. I try to keep my life simple, as far as possessions are concerned.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
9. The things I own aren't all that important to me.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
10. I enjoy spending money on things that aren't practical.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
11. Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
12. I like a lot of luxury in my life.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
13. I put less emphasis on material things than most people I know.

- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
14. I have all the things I really need to enjoy life.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
15. My life would be better if I owned certain things I don't have.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
16. I wouldn't be any happier if I owned nicer things.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
17. I would be happier if I could afford to buy more things.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
18. It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I can't afford to buy all the things I would like.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree

Part 4:

Q1: What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Other/Rather not say

Q2: What is your age?

- Drop down with ages available

Q3: What is your highest level of education?

- None
- Primary school
- Secondary school/high school
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- PhD

Q4: What is your annual household income before taxes?

- Less than \$25,000
- \$25,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 or more

Part 5:

As mentioned in the beginning of the survey, by participating in this research you are able to win a giveaway of 50 dollars. Please write your email in the form below if you want to participate. The winner will be contacted via this email.

_____ END OF SURVEY