

# LUISS



Department of Business and Management

Master of Marketing

Chair of Brand Management

**Fashion and sustainable development: A  
multidisciplinary project for showing the  
determining role of luxury and aesthetics**

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Academic Year 2023/2024



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# INTRODUCTION

Among the multiple industries that characterize the global economy, the luxury sector emerges as a phenomenon of particular importance and complexity. The importance of this sector is not only limited to its economic dimension, but also extends to its ability to influence social, cultural, and psychological trends. In the era of globalization, luxury presents itself as a multifaceted universe that intersects fashion, design, art, gastronomy and much more, playing a crucial role in the economy of many countries and in the collective imagination.

This thesis aims to explore the concept of luxury by highlighting how changes in consumer preferences and market dynamics are redefining the luxury landscape. Through a detailed analysis of existing literature and the collection of qualitative data, we observed that luxury is no longer simply an indicator of social status, but a form of personal expression that reflects individual and cultural values.

In Chapter 1, we outlined the definition of luxury, highlighting its historical evolution and the emergence of new dimensions that meet the needs of an increasingly diverse clientele. Luxury today is characterized by authenticity, personalization and a growing interest in sustainability, as highlighted by research by Kapferer and Bastien (2009) and Chevalier and Mazzalovo (2008).

Chapter 2 explored the role of the luxury fashion industry, emphasizing the importance of sustainability. Fast fashion has revolutionized the industry, leading to over-consumption and severe environmental impacts. However, many companies are adopting more sustainable practices, responding to consumers' growing awareness of the environmental and social impacts of their purchases.

Chapter 3 presented the analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data collected, highlighting how contemporary luxury consumers are driven by motivations that go beyond mere status. In particular, our study highlighted the importance of the perception of symmetry and asymmetry in jewelry, paving the way for future

research and innovations that could revolutionise the way these products are designed and perceived.

## CHAPTER 1

### 1.1 Definition of luxury

The definition of **luxury** is constantly evolving, as it reflects changes in society and individual perspectives, thus requiring a multidimensional approach that considers economic, social, cultural, and environmental aspects. The term luxury derives from the Latin word "luxus" which literally means "excess," "intemperance," "debauchery," "slackness," but also "pomp" and "magnificence" (Bianchi E., Bianchi R., Lelli O., 1987). According to Kapferer and Bastien (2009), luxury has its roots in the heart of the royal era, when social stratification differentiated the nobility of kings, royalty, and priests from others. According to Chevalier and Mazzalovo (2008), although luxury consumption has a history of a thousand years, the first forms of luxury brands emerged in the 19th century (Chevalier and Mazzalovo, 2008). The first luxury brands of glassware, porcelain, and silverware (such as Baccarat, Wedgwood and Lalique) were created industrially in France and England (Nueno and Quelch, 1998). Technological advances in the 20th century made these products accessible to both the middle class and a wide range of people "who are no longer financially remote from luxury" (Atwal and Williams, 2009, p. 339). Thus, luxury brands have created 'prestige' brands for smaller brands (Truong et al., 2009). Already observing this variety of meanings reveals the ambiguity that accompanies the concept of luxury, suspended between a negative valence extreme of excessive, unregulated, and

superfluous sumptuousness and one with the positive character of dreamlike magnificence. Sombart argues that luxury is expenditure that goes beyond what is necessary (W. Sombart,2003). According to this interpretation, luxury originates in expenditure that exceeds the real need in each socio-cultural context. Forms of luxury can be found both in terms of wasted goods, thus from a quantitative point of view, and in terms of superior quality, thus from a qualitative point of view (Culatelli, 2004). It is from the concept of qualitative luxury that we derive that of luxury goods characterised by extreme refinement. To this concept must be added that of the psychological value of ostentation and exclusivity that goods must incorporate. Luxury goods are therefore those goods that show particular attention to design, materials and with a high communicative capacity. One of the best descriptive representations of the luxury business is certainly the 'Luxury Pyramid' introduced by Danielle Allérès; a model that imagines the luxury market as divided into three major sectors:

- Inaccessible luxury or super luxury;
- Intermediate luxury;
- Accessible luxury.

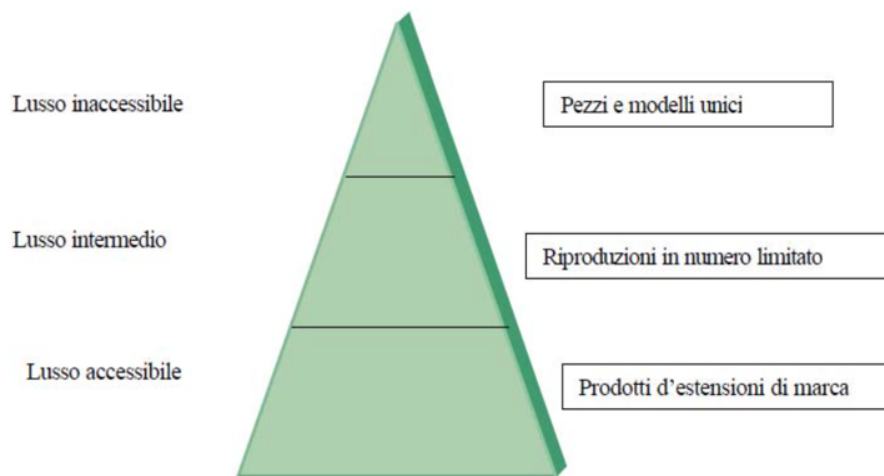


Tabella tratta da "l'esperienza del lusso" di Corbellini, Saviolo, edizione Etas.

*Figure 1 The Luxury Pyramid*

Inaccessible luxury stands at the top of the ideal pyramid and to this category belong goods of which only a few pieces exist, often custom-made and distributed through highly selective channels at astronomical prices. To the category of intermediate luxury, on the other hand, belong those products that resemble in brand and style the goods of the higher category but are not custom-made; these goods can be adapted to the needs of the consumer, distributed selectively, and sold at very high prices. Finally, accessible luxury is the galaxy of mass-produced goods, distributed on a larger scale and sold within a lower price range. One hundred years ago, the 20th century opened in the western world under the banner of the refined follies of the 'belle époque', a luxury for only the 'happy few', i.e. the privileged few of high society. The 21st century has opened in a radically different scenario: luxury is now within the reach of minorities so large that they become almost indistinct from the majority. The production of luxury objects, which in the past was of high craftsmanship, aimed exclusively at the creation of



unique limited-edition pieces, is now mass production, capable of coping with millions of orders. It is precisely this increase in production that has laid the foundations for the development of a true luxury industry, with its similarities and differences to that of mass consumer goods. Today, the concept of luxury enjoys maximum flexibility and adaptability depending on the point of view from which it is observed and, for simplicity's sake, can be defined in 4 different stages: Price, Quality, From objective to subjective and Experience. Luxury can be perceived in different ways by various consumers. For some, it is defined by the possession of an expensive item, driven by a desire to show off and align with the affluent elite. This motivation stems from a wish to display wealth through branded and recognizable objects. For others, luxury signifies a commitment to quality. These consumers value personal evaluation and discern the differences in products, such as distinguishing between a 12-year-aged brandy and an 18-year-aged one, understanding that the higher price reflects superior quality. As preferences evolve, the choice of luxury goods becomes a matter of personal taste rather than merely following trends. These consumers prioritize what best suits their individual needs. Finally, the most discerning consumers focus on the unique experiences associated with luxury products and brands. This approach shifts the emphasis from the product itself to the exclusive experiences it offers, a trend increasingly evident in mature markets like Italy.

## **1.2 Luxury market figures**

Despite political tension and the macroeconomic crisis, the luxury goods market set a record in 2022 worth EUR 345 billion, with 9/11% growth over 2021 (Bain & Company, 2023).

The growth in 2023 was mainly due to several concomitant factors: the gradual decrease of hyperinflation, the recovery of consumer confidence in Europe, the reopening of the shopping season in China before the Chinese New Year, and the boom in Japan and South-East Asia.

Where, on the other hand, there will be a slowdown is in the US related to consumer caution in view of a potential recession.

The global luxury industry has experienced remarkable growth in recent decades. Despite the current coronavirus pandemic and the 51% drop in global domestic tourism revenue, it is estimated that this industry will generate \$388 billion in revenue in 2025 and recover rapidly to reach 2019 levels by 2023 (Statista, 2020, 2021).

"Luxury is historically a growth sector," points out Claudia D'Arpizio, Global Head of Fashion & Luxury at Bain & Company and author of the annual *Bain/Altagamma Luxury Goods Worldwide Market Monitor* study. "But the first factor that explains this strong recovery is the emergence of a new customer base." As in many other sectors, the pandemic has accelerated a series of disruptive changes that were already in place.

As mentioned earlier, one of the key drivers of the luxury sector's growth is China, whose market share has virtually doubled in just two years to EUR 60 billion, or 20% of the global market, making it the epicentre of the global luxury market in the years to come.

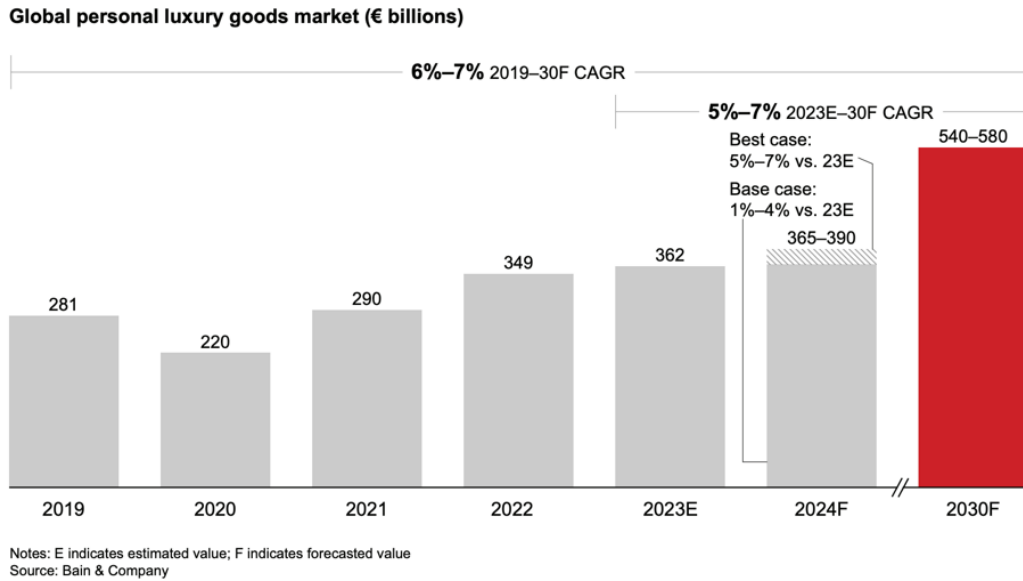
But the expansion of the customer base is not limited to Asia. 'Another significant change concerns local geography,' Claudia D'Arpizio points out. "Until now, customers of luxury brands have been concentrated in large conurbations, which tends to be less and less the case, particularly as many people move to smaller

cities. Brands are adapting accordingly, opening pop-up stores, but also developing online sales." Much of the consumption dynamic observed in the US, for example, comes from smaller cities and suburban areas.

The Middle East also represents an opportunity for the luxury sector the personal luxury market is valued at around EUR 15 billion in 2023 and is expected to reach EUR 30-35 billion in 2030. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) are the two main drivers of regional growth. The personal luxury market in KSA is worth about EUR 3 billion in 2023 and is expected to reach about EUR 6 billion in 2030, **doubling its size** (CAGR 10-12% during 2022-2030) (Boston Consulting Group, 2023).

Bain & Company (2023) forecasts growth in 2023 and analyses two possible scenarios. In the optimistic scenario, driven by recovery in China and steady spending in Europe and America, sales in the personal luxury goods market are expected to increase by 9-12% compared to 2022. Conversely, the realistic scenario, impacted by a slowdown in mature markets and a slower recovery in China, anticipates sales growth in the personal luxury market to be between 5-8% year-on-year.

Looking ahead to the end of the decade, the personal luxury goods market is likely to be worth between EUR 530 and 570 billion in 2030, about 2.5 times the size of the luxury market in 2020, due to its strong fundamentals. (Bain & Company, 2023).

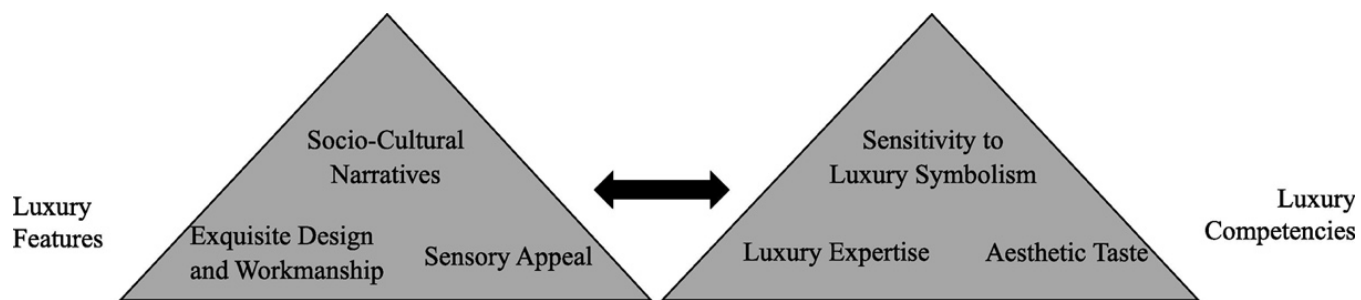


*Figure 2 In 2024, personal luxury goods could grow modestly, but by 2030, solid fundamentals should lead to sound growth*

### 1.3 Symbolism of luxury

Luxury goods are carefully designed and manufactured. A luxury product is the result of a complex creative process that has been compared to alchemy, from concept to creation, from production to market presentation (Maisonrouge, 2013). Most luxury products are uniquely designed; some are even handmade by artisans. The artisanal love for the product and the production process contributes to the desire for luxury goods. Luxury products are seen as authentic and original due to their exquisite workmanship and design, as research has shown (Fuchs et al., 2013, Morhart and Malär, 2020). Similarly, many luxury services require innovative experience design (e.g. in-depth design and choreography of service interactions) (Wu & Liang, 2009). It is true that luxury products frequently have a high hedonic value and sensory appeal, which adds to their customer appeal and attractiveness. Luxurious goods arouse feelings, arouse the senses, and offer a source of pleasure and delight, in contrast to utilitarian goods, which primarily

serve functional demands (Hagtvedt, H., & Patrick, V. M., 2009). Art artifacts and luxury goods are often contrasted (Dion and Arnould, 2011, Kapferer, 2014). According to Dion and Arnould (2011), "not because [luxury] is art, but rather because it needs to be viewed as art," the "artification" of luxury has become a trend in goods and retail establishments (p. 374). Strong consumer experiences are produced by the sensory, hedonistic, and artistic elements of luxury items (Brakus et al., 2009). In a similar vein, luxury services like fine dining, spa treatments, and resort holidays are perceived as unique and exceptional experiences (Wirtz, Holmqvist, & Fritze, 2020).



*Figure 3 Luxury Features and Luxury Competencies*

Sensory attraction helps consumers develop and cultivate their aesthetic taste. The idea that luxury products and brands are immersed in a rich network of socio-cultural narratives is fundamental to understanding their impact on the consumer and society. These products are not simply material objects but carry deep symbolic meanings that go beyond their physical characteristics.

Recent research highlights the shift towards the experiential and emotional aspects of luxury. According to Atwal and Williams (2009), modern consumers increasingly value the experiences and emotional satisfaction that luxury goods provide. This symbolic value transcends the material product, encompassing the feelings of pleasure, indulgence, and personal fulfillment that luxury consumption can evoke.

Ultimately, consumers become sensitive to luxury symbolism as they recognise the power and influence of cultural and social meanings embedded in luxury products and brands. These symbols not only give value to luxury goods, but also influence consumer perceptions, emotions, and behaviour, helping to shape consumer culture and society. These signals may include elements such as the historical heritage of the brand, the prestige associated with its geographical origin, connections with celebrities or influential personalities, and the cultural or aesthetic values that the brand represents. For instance, Dubois and Duquesne (1993) note that in some cultures, luxury is seen as a marker of tradition and heritage, while in others, it represents modernity and progress. Historical shifts in the perception of luxury, from the opulence of the aristocracy to the democratization of luxury goods in contemporary society, illustrate how its symbolic significance evolves over time.

## **1.4 Understanding the behavior of luxury consumers**

The definitions of luxury proposed by sociologists, corporatists and consulting firms focus on the elements of the marketing mix developed specifically for this category of goods (Frank R.H.,1991). Based on the theoretical systematization conducted by Brioschi (2000), there is a table that contains a ranking of the

attributes (micro-descriptors) most used in the doctrine to define the concept of luxury attributes grouped in turn into 11 general macro-descriptors (Aiello, Donvito, 2006) (*Table 1*).

*Table 1 The characters of the concept of luxury*

N.	Rank	Macro-descriptori del concetto di lusso	Micro-descriptori del concetto di lusso
1	1°	Status - Prestigio	Status; Accettazione in gruppo di appartenenza; Emulazione pecuniaria; Espressione di sé; Riconoscimento personale; Rituale; Ammirazione; Immagine prestigiosa; Nobilitazione; Reputazione; Ricchezza; Successo
2	2°	Piacere - Edonismo – Emozione	Piacere; Edonismo; Emozione; Coinvolgimento; Felicità; Regalo; Sensuale; Soddisfazione
3	3°	Eccellenza Qualitativa – Raffinatezza estetica	Eccellenza qualitativa; Estetico; Qualità estetica; Raffinatezza; Stile/design; Creativo; Buon gusto
4	4°	Ostentazione	Ostentativo; Comparazione invidiosa; Snob - Consumo Snob; Moda
5	5°	Esclusività	Esclusivo; Elitario; Unicità; Distinzione
6	5°	Rarità	Raro; Produzione limitata; Distribuzione selettiva; Bassa frequenza di acquisto
7	6°	Prezzo elevato	Prezzo elevato
8	7°	Heritage	Tradizione; Artigianale; Effetto made in
9	8°	Investimento	Basso rischio; Investimento
10	9°	Materialismo	Materialismo
11	9°	Futilità	Superfluo

The doctrine, in attempting to define the concept of luxury, has simultaneously also been interested in the study of the purchasing behavior of luxury goods; as we shall observe. Here we will recall theoretical positions traceable to four strands that have respectively investigated (a) ostentatious and (b) hedonistic forms of consumption, (c) the democratization process of luxury, and (d) the related phenomenon of luxury trading up. Ostentatious and status forms can be classified according to Liebenstein (1950) into three main types (Leibenstein H. 1950): the **Veblen effect**, the **Snob effect**, and the **Bandwagon effect**. The Veblen effect relates to the theoretical framework of the scholar after whom it is named (Veblen 1899) and overemphasizes how individuals enact a process of ostentatious consumption to signal their wealth, power, and status.

According to Veblen, luxury goods (or Veblen goods) behave differently from ordinary goods in terms of demand. While demand for ordinary goods decreases as prices rise, the demand for luxury goods increases when their prices go up.

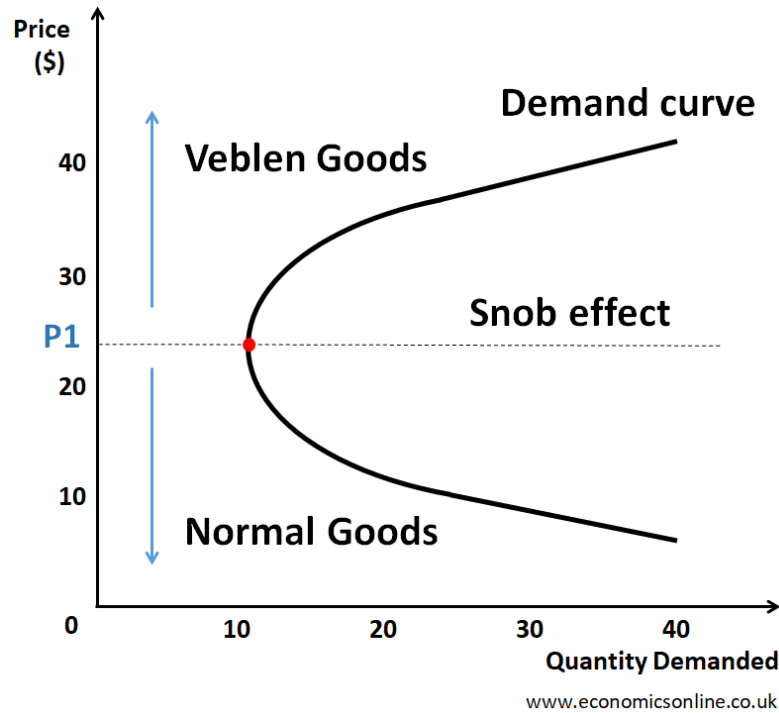


Figure 4 Veblen's inverted cost curve

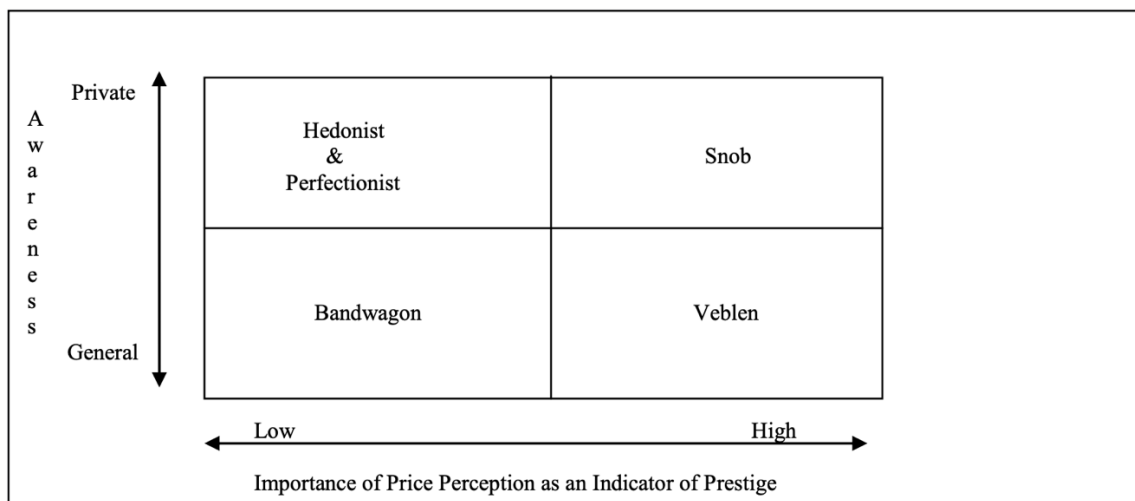
As illustrated in *Figure 4*, up to a certain price level ( $p^*$ ), the good behaves like a normal good, with demand decreasing as the price increases. However, beyond this point, demand begins to rise instead of continuing to fall. This indicates that above a certain price level ( $p^*$ ), higher prices lead to an increase in the quantity demanded. The upward-sloping portion of the curve reflects the unusual behavior of luxury goods consumers: the higher the price, the more desirable the product becomes, as it is perceived as a symbol of exclusivity and status.

The Snob effect, on the other hand, drives individuals to purchase and use luxury goods because of their rarity and uniqueness; the Snob effect can manifest itself at two points in the life cycle of a luxury product: at the introduction stage, when



the snob consumer will be among the first to purchase it (thus falling into that minority of early users) (Rogers E.M. 1983) and at the growth and maturity stages, when (in case the good has become overly popular) he or she will no longer want to be a user (Mason R.S. 1981).

The Snob effect, as defined by Leibenstein (1950), encompasses both social and personal influences. When individuals consume or purchase a branded product for prestige reasons, the Snob effect not only affects their own behavior but also becomes influenced by the behaviors of others, in addition to social and personal factors (Mason, 1992). *Figure 5* illustrates the various behavior types based on perception and price variables, which impact luxury consumption.



*Figure 5 Prestige seeking consumer behavior*

The Bandwagon effect can be traced to a consumer's need to select and compare a given luxury good for the sole purpose of being accepted within a social circle. This mechanism differs from the Veblen effect in that the individual seeks a signaling value to be manifested within a peer group (Bandwagon) and not a distinguishing factor vis-à-vis an audience from which to distance himself or herself (Veblen).

Alongside these forms of ostentatious luxury consumption (hetero-referenced luxury) are hedonistic forms of consumption, which can be traced back to the theories of recreational shopping and hedonistic consumption (self-referenced luxury). In particular, the recreational shopping theory emphasized that in the motivations that drive purchase should be placed first and foremost the gratification and satisfaction derived from the act of purchase regardless of the good/service being transacted (Castaldo,Botti ,1999; De Luca, Vianelli ,2001) ; in fact, the recreational shopper or "recreational" buyer considers the benefits derived from the pleasure of the shopping activity in itself activating a purchase and consumption behavior that is explicable only within a broader motivational system. For its part, the theory of hedonistic consumption (Hirschman, Holbrook, 1982 and Holbrook, Hirschman 1982) contributes to placing the emotional dimension and thus the ability of goods (especially luxury goods) to arouse feelings in that sphere at the center of the buying process. The difference between a brand operating in the luxury sector and one offering consumer goods has been defined by Vigneron and Johnson (2004) through five dimensions of the luxury brand. The existence of three dimensions reflecting non-personally oriented perceptions (perceived glitz, perceived uniqueness, and perceived quality) and two dimensions reflecting personally oriented perceptions (perceived self-expansion and perceived hedonism) was demonstrated. These strongly interrelated yet very different dimensions represent the five key factors to be considered and monitored to create a luxury brand that lasts. Wang (2022) particularly emphasizes that luxury customers do not only use luxury to indicate their wealth. They are intrinsically motivated to invest resources and time to discover and appreciate the unique characteristics of luxury products, such as their fine design and workmanship, sensory appeal, and distinct socio-cultural narratives. Customers develop and utilize what we call 'luxury skills', which include expertise in design and workmanship, aesthetic sense and sensitivity to

luxury symbolism, when consuming luxury goods. These 'luxury skills' emphasize different consumption goals, considerations, choices and uses and outcomes than wealth-based consumption. Han et al. (2010) classifies consumers into four groups: patricians, parvenus, poseurs and proletarians. They do so according to their wealth ('have' versus 'have nothing') and their need for status. This typology studies how customers in these different groups try to associate and disassociate themselves and consider seen versus unseen products, as indicated by the degree of 'brand prominence' (silent or strong signals in logos and designs). For example, the 'patricians', who are wealthy and have a low need for status, and the 'parvenus', who are wealthy and have a high need for status, and the 'poseurs', who are 'have nots' with a high need for status, use strong signals, the latter even buy fake products. As pointed out by the literature review (Berger and Ward, 2010, Eckhardt et al., 2014, Han et al., 2010) inconspicuous consumption refers to the subtle or discreet consumption of goods and services, often characterized by the lack of ostentation of wealth. Non-conspicuous consumption is opposed to conspicuous consumption, developed by economist Thorstein Veblen in 'The Theory of the Leisure Class' (1899), which involves huge expenditures on leisure activities and luxury goods to show one's wealth and status. Veblen's concept of inconspicuous consumption emphasizes the idea that some people or social groups may deliberately choose to avoid displaying their wealth prominently, opting instead for more sober consumption styles. In this way, they may seek to signal status or affiliation to a particular social group by using subtle clues or symbols that are mainly perceptible to those in their social circle. According to the literature on inconspicuous consumption, it can perform several functions beyond simply signaling status. For example, in her book 'The Overspent American' (1998), sociologist Juliet Schor analyses how middle-class consumers use inconspicuous consumption as a means of maintaining social ties, managing social class perceptions, and coping with economic insecurity. Inconspicuous

consumption in this context may include practices such as switching to less visible forms of consumption, emphasizing experiences rather than material goods, or engaging in DIY culture to express authenticity and individuality. Moreover, its role in addressing environmental concerns and promoting sustainable lifestyles is underlined by recent studies on inconspicuous consumption. According to scholars, inconspicuous consumption can include practices such as minimalism, ethical consumerism, and collaborative consumption, in which people prioritize simplicity, sustainability and community over the ostentation of wealth and consumption. Overall, the concept of inconspicuous consumption emphasizes the complexity of consumer behavior and the multifaceted ways in which people navigate their consumption practices between social norms, identity construction and cultural values. Researchers, regulators and marketers have yet to understand the dynamics of inconspicuous consumption because society is still dealing with issues such as inequality, environmental degradation and changing notions of status and identity.

Altagamma and BCG conducted an in-depth analysis in 2015 called "True-Luxury Global Insight," examining over 10,000 top luxury consumers across 10 key countries, including Italy, France, the US, Japan, and China. The study aimed to identify consumer habits and behaviors as well as emerging trends in the luxury sector. It identified eight global luxury consumer segments. The "Absolute Luxurers" are the European elite and the affluent from emerging markets, known for their connoisseurship, elegance, and quest for uniqueness, personalization, and playfulness. "Megacitier" refers to those living in major global cities who share similar lifestyles, tastes, holiday destinations, and playlists. "Socialwearers" are distinguished by their emphasis on quality, sustainability, and an emotional connection with brands, valuing products that are 'Made In' specific countries. "Experiencers" prefer shared luxury, valuing moments of happiness, travel, and romantic dinners over material goods. The "Little Princes" are young, spoiled,

impulsive, and always connected, representing Generation Z and constantly seeking the latest trends. "Fashionistas" are fashion-savvy individuals who love shopping, design, and designer labels, living life as if it were a continuous fashion show. "Status Seekers" follow fashion and trends, preferring well-known brands and displaying logos or accessories to showcase their status. Lastly, "Classpirational" consumers seek classic clothing within affordable luxury brands to avoid feeling excluded from their social circles.

The broadening of the consumer base in the luxury sector, especially with the inclusion of a younger clientele, is triggering several significant changes in the way luxury brands operate and market themselves. This change is not only demographic but also cultural and behavioral and is redefining the traditional dynamics of the luxury sector.

In the past, luxury was often associated with the display of status and wealth, with products predominantly designed for formal and representative occasions. However, there is now a shift towards a clientele that sees luxury in a more personal and nuanced way. It is less about displaying one's wealth and more about expressing one's identity and personality through the consumption of luxury products.

This shift leads to an increased demand for products that suit more dynamic and informal lifestyles. Casual shoes, sportswear and holiday items are becoming more and more popular as they offer the possibility of use in a variety of contexts, thus reflecting the versatility and practicality that the new generation of consumers look for in luxury products.

Furthermore, there is a significant change in the motivation to purchase luxury products. While in the past the purchase may have been driven primarily by the desire to display high social status, consumers today are more interested in expressing their personal values and identifying with the brand they choose. This

translates into an increased demand for authenticity, transparency and sustainability from luxury brands.

## CHAPTER 2

The impressive acceleration of technology and the insatiable hunger for needs that characterizes human beings leads the consumer society to over-exploitation, impoverishment and consequent destruction of our planet. Sustainability, a theme that has always interested not only scientists and ecologists but also economists, is the "ability of humanity to respond to the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs" (Our Common Future, The World Commission on Environment & Development (WCED), 1987).

Nonetheless, it could be a more direct way for new generations to perceive the importance and urgency of giving a sustainable turn to our entire way of doing things.

The fashion industry has undergone a major transformation in recent years and has been revolutionized by the advent of Fast Fashion, which has contributed to a new way of conceiving the purchased product. This trend towards excessive consumerism, however, has had as a direct consequence the establishment of increasingly polluting production chains and consumers with little awareness of the serious environmental damage.

As a counterbalance to this negative effect, however, most companies operating in the sector are progressively working to adopt sustainable criteria in their production processes.

Indeed, the fashion industry in recent years has faced increasing pressure to adopt more sustainable and responsible practices. The environmental and social impact of the textile industry has become increasingly evident, prompting consumers and market players to reflect on the entire production chain, including the product

design phase. Clothes design is not only an aesthetic issue but plays a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior and can be an important lever to improve the sustainability of the industry.

This chapter aims to explore how the design factor can influence consumer behavior and at the same time be beneficial for sustainability.

## **2.1 Sustainability in the fashion system**

The growing focus on environmental and sustainability-related issues has a progressively increasing impact on supply relationships, product innovation and related branding policies in the fashion system (Allen et al. 2012; Pinto 2011; de Brito et al. 2008; Jones et al. 2008; Kotler 2011).

Consumers, particularly the younger generation, are increasingly aware of the environmental and social impact of their purchases. This has prompted luxury companies to reconsider their practices and adopt more sustainable business models to meet consumer expectations.

By its very nature, the fashion phenomenon generates product obsolescence beyond the physical one, accelerating the dynamics of consumption and thus the use of natural resources. Furthermore, in clothing the increase in consumption has not only been favoured by sociological trends (hyper-consumption), but also by the evolution of business and production models (fast fashion) that have shortened the life cycle of individual products and often expanded consumption in volume (Ritzer 1999; Barnes and Lea-Greenwood 2006).

If one adds to this the working conditions that are associated with production localisations in the garment industry in many low factor cost countries, the ecological sustainability of fashion production in particular is highlighted by various factors such as: (1) the polluting potential of certain processing steps, related both to chemicals used mainly in the semi-finished product industries (textile finishing, leather tanning, etc.) and in the finished product industries



(garment dyeing, finishing with chemical agents); (2) the direct energy consumption of the machinery used in processing (motive power used for fibre generation, as well as for weaving; (3) last but not least and to an increasing extent, the geographical diversification of supply chains, which has been particularly accentuated since the 1980s and 1990s, in which there has been a massive shift of production to countries far away from consumer markets, resulting in increased energy consumption for logistics and in particular for transport, to which the associated impact on global pollution is linked (Jones 2002; Choi 2012). The literature on the topic of sustainable development is voluminous and at the same time discordant (Gallopín, 2003).

The term sustainability was first used in 1992, during the first UN Conference on the Environment, and was defined as: "A development model capable of ensuring that the needs of the present generation are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Since this initial definition, this concept has seen its meanings expand not only in relation to the ecological sphere, but also in reference to the social and economic spheres.

The fashion industry was described as the second most polluting in the world by the United Nations conference (UNEP. UN Alliance For Sustainable Fashion Addresses Damage of 'Fast Fashion', 2019). This has also been driven by economic development and population growth, its impact being estimated at 8-10% of global carbon emissions (Niinimäki, K., Peters, G., Dahlbo, H., Perry, P., Rissanen, T., & Gwilt, A., 2020).

Certain scholars have observed that the fashion industry's carbon footprint might be reduced by doing away with fossil fuel power sources and the rapid fashion business model (Peters et al., 2021).

To lessen their environmental effect, fashion and textile firms are currently looking for innovative circular solutions. With an emphasis on circularity and

ecological sustainability, a range of innovative technological approaches to design and business models have emerged in the last ten years to rethink the different phases of product development and textile production (Gazzola et al., 2020; Goldsworthy et al., 2018; Niinimäki, 2017). These materials are easily recycled or reused back into the production cycle. The industry's effects on the environment also include a significant disposal concern. The clothing industry manages the life cycle of apparel, disposing of relatively new items not because they are worn out but rather because of industry marketing methods that make them look out of style (Claudio, L. Waste Couture. *Environ. Health Perspect.* 2007).

It is precisely because of this problem that the fashion industry wants to move in the most responsible direction possible. The industry is characterised by a linear business model, i.e. 'take, produce waste' (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, Concept Circular Economy). Even if companies change their business models from linear to circular, to focus on sustainability it is necessary to focus on a specific driver and in the case of fashion products, this driver is almost absent in the design process or in the end-of-life phase of products (Blowfield, M.; Murray, A., 2008). Businesses are starting to realize the financial advantages of emphasizing a circular strategy as consumers' concerns about the social and environmental effect of their purchases grow. It can be said that the fashion and textile industries still lag other sectors, even though the circular economy and the issue of waste are receiving more attention (Niinimäki, 2013, 2017).

## 2.2 An in-depth look in the role of sustainability in the luxury sector

The phenomenon of sustainability is becoming increasingly relevant in the luxury sector. Traditionally, the luxury sector has been associated with a high concentration of resources, both natural and human, often with negative environmental impacts and ethical issues related to production and supply chain management.



*Figure 6 The convergence of luxury and sustainability discourses*

The pandemic has only accelerated paths and initiatives going in this direction, and Generation Z, the target audience, prefer and reward brands that have a positive impact on both the environment and society.

This is what emerges from the report "LuxCo 2030: A Vision of Sustainable Luxury" prepared by Bain & Company.

The report also highlights the main characteristics that a LuxCo must possess and the 5 key pillars on which to focus business strategies:

- Redefining corporate purpose;
- Decoupling volume growth;
- Supply chain traceability;
- Maximizing environmental and social commitments;
- Creation of economic value from sustainability.

LuxCo has redefined the idea of "luxury" into something more akin to the Greek concept of *kalokagathia*, roughly translated as "that which is beautiful and good," both for people and for the planet. This goes beyond the mere pursuit of profit and embraces a broader vision, incorporating ethical, social and environmental values. The clear definition of corporate purpose not only inspires employees, but also consumers, creating an emotional connection and a distinctive brand identity.

Decoupling volume growth has become crucial to ensure long-term sustainability, just as it is also necessary to move away from the traditional approach based solely on production and sales volume growth. The key to success undoubtedly becomes value creation through innovation, product differentiation and customer experience.

The drawback of having accomplishment and prominence is that it also increases one's vulnerability to criticism. In the current business environment, sustainable development has emerged as a critical concern for all companies. This includes luxury, however not so much because of its diminutive size as it represents the expansion of consumption driven by factors other than utility. This has been referred to as the appearance business or the positioning economy (Mason, 2000). Many instances unequivocally demonstrate how luxury brands are now facing a very significant reputational risk. Because of social networks, there is an increased

possibility that a single customer's dissatisfaction might swiftly take on enormous De Barnier et al. (2012) discovered seven common characteristics of luxury, derived from the three main scales used to date: These factors include exceptional quality, hedonism (beauty and pleasure), price (expensive), rarity (which is not scarcity), distribution and personalized services, exclusive character (prestige, privilege), and creativity (art and avant-garde). All seven criteria are necessary to distinguish luxury products from other types of products, such as fashion or premium products (Kapferer and Bastien, 2012).

Comparing what are the components of sustainable development with those of luxury reveals elements of disagreement.

Luxury is marked by ostentation and opulence, characteristics totally opposite to those of social harmony and equity that characterize sustainable development.

However, however, unlike fast fashion or waste couture (Claudio, 2007), luxury is always associated with high quality, know-how and the preservation of traditional labor; associations, which, on the other hand, are in complete agreement with sustainability.

Unfortunately, the rapid expansion of the luxury industry has attracted new brands seeking to expand. These are mass prestige brands (with a luxury image but mass-produced) that attempt to exceed the rigid standards of luxury in order to make money.

The problem is that their names can be linked to the luxury industry, which affects the perception of it. The desire of an increasing number of consumers to have access to the most prestigious brands (Silverstein and Fiske, 2003) has pushed luxury brands to provide more affordable products or services through the creation of second or third lines or accessories.

Adherence to sustainability issues in this case can also be considered in two ways: on the one hand, this can only have an internal valorization within the company, which, in compliance with an ethical code of conduct, evaluates its processes from

an environmental sustainability perspective; on the other hand, environmental issues can become a relevant driver of differentiation. In this context, the definition of new business models and new inter-organizational solutions for the generation of sustainable offerings can be a vector for the valorization of the perception of new brands that can be conveyed a concept of "sustainable luxury"(Guercini and Ranfagni 2012; 2013), to be understood both in the sense of sustainability on the ecological level and that on the social level (Kapferer 2012). A study by Amatulli et al. (2021) revealed an important aspect of sustainable luxury: consumers are more inclined to buy sustainable luxury products when these products are marketed as sustainable rather than merely excellent. This phenomenon, referred to by the researchers as "Atypicality in Sustainable Luxury," occurs because consumers view sustainability-focused communication as unusual for a luxury product. This perceived atypicality enhances feelings of uniqueness (Amatulli et al., 2021).

It seems clear that nowadays more importance is given to the aesthetics than to the ethics of the product on offer. The acceleration of production, therefore, and the downward pressure on costs risk worsening the conditions and remuneration of workers, developing a 'grey market' that can slide into illegality.

The luxury market is thriving despite the impending crisis, as seen by the success of well-known international corporations like LVMH, whose first-quarter revenues of £19 billion were up 17% from 2022. The luxurious lifestyle is in demand, whether it be understated or extravagant. The pandemic hastened a significant shift in attitudes and a change in lifestyle, forcing the luxury sector to modify its offerings and advertising tactics to meet the demands of a wider and more sophisticated audience (Savanta Group, 2022).

Research indicates that sustainability is seldom mentioned by consumers as a criterion when selecting luxury brands. This aligns with the attitude–behavior gap, where consumers' stated attitudes and actual behaviors regarding ethical criteria

often do not match. For example, while people may support corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities and ethical concerns, they are generally unwilling to pay a premium for them. This inconsistency is known as the sustainable fashion paradox, wherein consumers express concern about sustainability issues and expect fashion companies to demonstrate their commitment, yet they do not follow through with purchasing sustainable fashion products.

Luxury consumers believe that luxury brands have a responsibility to be sustainable and to set an example due to their high prices and promised exceptional quality. However, they often do not engage in the consumption of sustainable luxury products. This phenomenon, described by Cowe and Williams as the 30:3 phenomenon, reveals that while 30% of consumers claim they want to buy ethical products, only a small niche of about 3% makes such purchases.

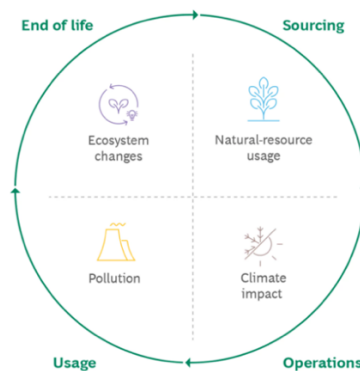
Furthermore, Ehrich and Irwin (2005) found that although consumers claim to care about sustainability issues when shopping, they often deliberately ignore these concerns to avoid negative emotions. In the context of luxury purchases, anything that disrupts the idealized experience should be avoided. However, according to Leary et al. (2014), consumers are more likely to translate their sustainable attitudes into actions when they believe their efforts can create a market-wide impact through a snowball effect. As a result, customers today are more conscious than ever of the importance of sustainability and the negative consequences of unsustainable practices. They respond positively to environmental and social sustainability initiatives from luxury fashion brands.

Luxury firms have been employing more environmentally friendly materials, reconsidering packaging, selling or donating extra fabric to cut down on waste, and lowering their carbon footprint in recent years. In addition, they could pursue longer product lifespans by collaborating with premium resale sites or, like Gucci, reselling within. They should also employ ethical labor standards. According to Savanta's analysis, data from the final quarter of 2022 indicates an increasing

tendency of affluent individuals in the UK being more interested in the used luxury market. A total of 28% are interested in buying used luxury fashion goods in the future, compared to 23% who have previously done so.

A company must identify the environmental impact within its life cycle, from sourcing to production, from use to disposal. Research and development teams can therefore use complementary sustainability strategies, focusing on a product's composition, lifespan, supply chain, efficiency and recyclability, to guide their design efforts.

The design of a product, therefore, strongly influences its ecological sustainability as its durability, efficiency and recyclability affect the environment.



Source: BCG analysis.

*Figure 7 Asses four factors to understand a product's environmental impact across its life cycle*

A report by the Boston Consulting Group grouped the principles of sustainable design into six complementary strategies that encompass all these factors along the product life cycle: Dematerialization, Next-best Material Selection, Green Supply Chain, Longevity and Effective Usage, Product Efficiency and Circularity.



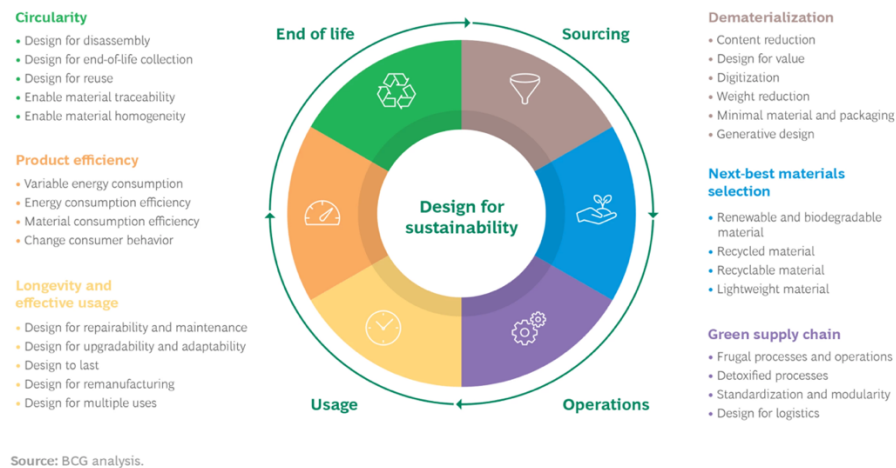


Figure 8 Six sustainable-design strategies

*Dematerialisation* - involves using less material in products or packaging while still providing the required functionality. In addition to material, companies can use and benefit from digitisation, whereby functions can be added without increasing the weight of the product or the amount of material used. *Next-best Material Selection* - thus the use of materials that minimise environmental impact without decreasing functionality. *Green Supply Chain* - introduction of materials that have a more favourable ecological footprint on logistics and production or design ad hoc processes to shorten supply chains.

*Longevity and Effective Usage* - companies can extend the useful life of a product to facilitate repair processes, upgrades and adaptations. The longevity of a product can be charged in the form of a premium, thus increasing brand reputation and automatically making products considered of higher quality.

*Product Efficiency* - The efficient product is one that consumes the least amount of energy and materials, reducing the carbon footprint.

*Circularity* - Designing for circularity is challenging. The life cycle of an engineered product involves many suppliers with whom companies must collaborate to develop an efficient circular design.

## **2.3 A feature of sustainability: durability**

Design is not only about aesthetics, but also about the functionality and durability of the product and its sustainability.

There are, however, well-established perceptions that the concept of luxury conflicts with sustainability, suggesting that the very idea of luxury may be hampered by environmental and social considerations. Previous studies have emphasised this incompatibility between luxury and sustainability (Achabou and Dekhili, 2013; Griskevicius et al., 2010; Widloecher, 2010). This perception has contributed to limiting research on the impact of sustainability initiatives in the luxury sector and the possibility that luxury and sustainable products can succeed in the market.

Much research has overturned the latter way of thinking, stating that large luxury companies can be seen as both 'golden' and 'green', emphasising the differential effectiveness of two alternative product design strategies that fashion companies could adopt when introducing new sustainable luxury products (De Angelis, M., Adıgüzel, F., & Amatulli, C., 2017).

Durability is essential in minimizing the environmental impact of concrete by extending its service life and reducing the need for repairs and replacements.

Fletcher (2015) argues that durable materials and products are often promoted as strategies to increase sustainability in the fashion industry. However, these benefits largely depend on changes in user behavior and consumption patterns, which in fashion are influenced by social and experiential dimensions, not only by the material properties of products. Obsolescence of fashion products is often driven by changing aesthetics and changing social preferences, highlighting the psycho-social nature of factors influencing the durability of garments.

Through ethnographic evidence, Fletcher shows that garments that challenge obsolescence do so in informal or unintentional ways, rarely because of design

planning or the material qualities of the product. This suggests that durability should emerge from human action strategies rather than focusing only on materials, products and user-object relationships. In this way, durability, although facilitated by materials and construction, is determined by an ideology of use.

A key study on the topic is 'A Systematic Literature Review of Fashion, Sustainability, and Consumption' by Osmud Rahman and colleagues, which analyzed a wide range of articles published between 2010 and 2020. This study highlighted how sustainable fashion has become a topic of growing interest, with a particular focus on female consumers in the United States. It also found that many studies focus more on non-sustainable aspects rather than sustainable practices, and that numerous initiatives have been taken by major brands such as H&M, Zara and Uniqlo to promote more sustainable collections and recycling programmes (Rahman et al., 2023).

The concept of luxury is rooted in durability and timelessness, characteristics that strongly emphasise performance, aesthetics and craftsmanship (Athwal & Harris, 2018). Its value is closely linked to exclusivity and the perception of rarity, as not everyone can or should own luxury products. However, the emergence of new forms of luxury consumption has democratised conventional conceptions of luxury, making it more accessible to the masses.

A topic closely related to product durability is the increasingly common phenomenon of sharing and exchanging goods. From bartering food or objects, this approach is being rediscovered in various sectors, including the fashion industry.

The term 'sharing economy' and the related concept of 'collaborative consumption' have emerged due to the interactions between users on the Internet made possible by information and communication technologies (ICTs) (Botsman and Rogers, 2010; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010; Wang and Zhang, 2012). These technologies offer the possibility of a transition to a post-ownership economy (Belk, 2014).

Although the sharing economy and collaborative consumption are still vaguely defined, a recent definition that attempts to correlate the two notions has been proposed by Möhlmann: "Collaborative consumption, often associated with the sharing economy, takes place in organised systems or networks in which participants conduct sharing activities in the form of renting, lending, trading, bartering, and exchanging goods, services, transportation solutions, space, or money" (2015, p. 193).

The literature provides us with examples of new forms of luxury consumption in relation to the on-demand economy, the product-service economy, second-hand consumption and co-ownership.

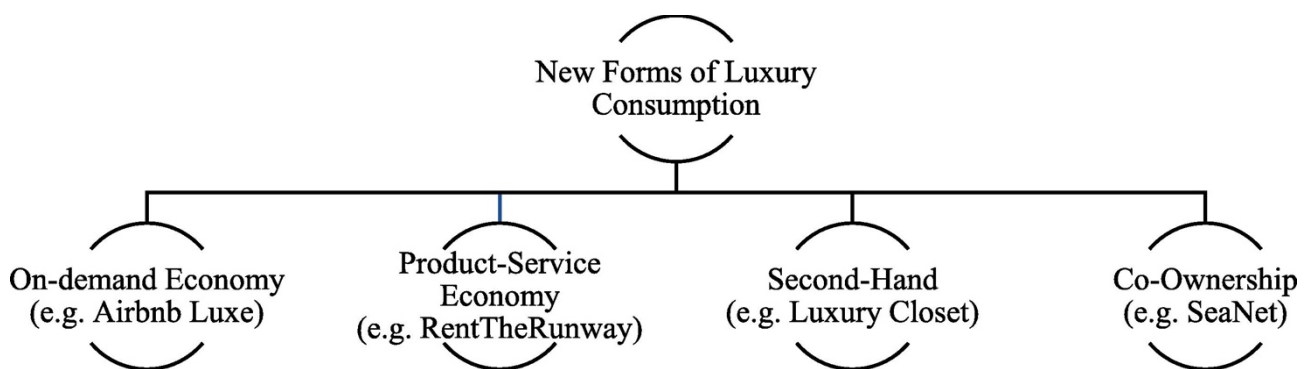


Figure 9 Examples of new forms of luxury consumption

Respectively, the '*on-demand economy*' (Lawson, Gleim, Perren e Hwang, 2016) is when there is temporary access to tangible or intangible resources of third parties without transfer of ownership, whereas the '*product-service economy*' is based on the idea that consumers rent goods directly from companies, which retain ownership (Frenken & Schor, 2017). Regarding '*second-hand consumption*', goods pass directly from one consumer to another, providing permanent access to these goods (Cervellon et al.,2012, Turunen e Leipama-Leskinen, 2015).

Finally, '*co-ownership*' occurs when consumers share ownership of a good (Aspara, J., & Wittkowski, K., 2019).

## **2.4 Aesthetics focus**

Aesthetics is defined as the perception of beauty (Lies, 2020). First modern theories of aesthetics have explored the notion of the old Greek *aisthetà* “that which can be sensed” and searched for the sensual qualities of the perceived or sensed. This sensual-phenomenological dimension of aesthetics informs us about workings of design as sensually appealing and leads to reflection on the sensual-bodily matters of the imagination when it operates in the individual consciousness as part of the process of cognition. At the same time, this dimension of aesthetic theory tries to challenge the dominant Western dichotomy of perceiving subject and a perceived object and seeks to combine them concepts of “ambience” (Bohme) or “experience” (Moore) seen to encompass the relation of subject and object.

The exploration of aesthetics has its roots in ancient Greek philosophy, where the term 'aisthetà' referred to what can be perceived or felt by the senses. This fundamental understanding of aesthetics as rooted in sensory perception laid the foundation for modern theories of aesthetics, which deepen the sensory-phenomenological dimension of human experience. In contemporary discourse, aesthetics encompasses the study of sensory qualities, perceptual experiences and the subjective interpretation of beauty, form and meaning. Contemporary aesthetics is thus concerned with analyzing how people interact with the world through their senses, exploring the beauty, harmony and meaning that emerge from perceptions and subjective interpretations of aesthetic experience.

Although aesthetics may seem to be only about art objects, in current conceptualization the two terms are not entirely synonymous.

Aesthetics, in fact, represents one of the oldest fields of interest in psychology (Fechner, 1871) and is applicable to any type of object, most research on aesthetics in marketing has focused on very broad topics including product design and promotional materials (Bloch, 1995; Homburg et al, 2015).

The concept of aesthetics is very often associated with that of beauty. But is it possible to give an unambiguous definition of this?

Researchers attempting to analyze the phenomenon by equating beauty with aesthetic pleasure might rely on metrics such as aesthetic pleasure, liking and level of preference (Hagtvedt, 2023).

Aesthetics originates from sensory perception of any kind, but is restricted to experience that is interesting, pleasant, meaningful or emotionally stirring, often with beauty as a central component (Hagtvedt, 2022).

There are 12 principles of aesthetics: typicality, novelty, congruity, harmony, symmetry, dynamism, complexity, space, contrast proportion, imitation of nature, and ambiguity.

In this study we will focus on the characteristic of symmetry and how this can in some way influence consumer choice, also from the perspective of product sustainability and durability.

Symmetry represents self-similarity under a specific class of transformations and is typically defined as the extent to which a visual stimulus is reflected on a central axis, i.e. mirror symmetry (Bajaj and Bond, 2018). Consumers associate asymmetry in visual brand elements with brand excitement, and asymmetric logos can therefore improve brand evaluations when used for brands that possess an exciting personality (Bajaj and Bond, 2018; Luffarelli et al., 2019b).

Aesthetics, moreover, plays a critical role in the success of marketing campaigns within the fashion industry. Visuals, sounds, and all contribute to the overall perception of a brand and its offerings.

Some consumer perceptions are direct while others are cognitively mediated; thus, the satisfaction derived from the purchase or consumption of a given product may derive both from its intrinsic and structural qualities and from meanings conveyed by its aesthetic image or that of the brand in general. Aesthetics almost acts as the main driver for a company to differentiate itself regardless of the activity from which the company derives.

In their study, Kim, YK., Sullivan (2019), discuss and define emotional branding as a brand strategy that stimulates the affective state of consumers by appealing to their feelings with the aim of increasing consumer loyalty to the brand. Furthermore, we believe that emotional branding is an essential strategic practice, especially for fashion brands, in a cut-throat retail environment. *Figure 10* illustrates the structure of emotional branding. A brand experience encompasses the subjective sensations, emotions, and assessments that arise in response to brand-related stimuli such as design, visual identity, packaging, communications, and other environmental signals (Brakus et al. 2009). Consequently, a brand experience can manifest through a product, service, retail environment, or marketing campaign.

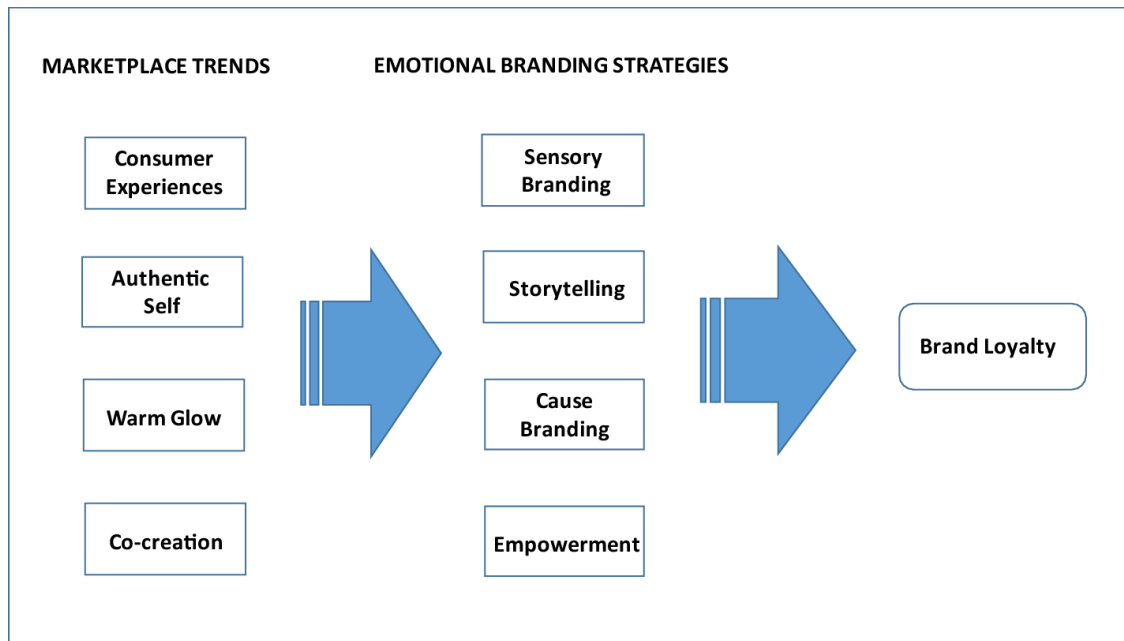


Figure 10 Structure of emotional branding

Studies by Fiore et al. (2018) and Zhang et al. (2020) demonstrate the significant influence of imagery on consumer decision-making in fashion. High-quality, aspirational visuals featuring models, products, and brand environments evoke emotions and create desire, ultimately driving purchase intent. In the Critique of Judgement, Kant anchors the essence of aesthetics in the notion that "what is beautiful is what is universally pleasing without concept" and "without any interest." Two noteworthy facets emerge: firstly, art doesn't singularly constitute the wellspring of pleasurable encounters, extending its reach to the entire tapestry of natural beauty, encompassing landscapes. Secondly, beauty is not an inherent quality residing in objects but resides subjectively in the beholder's perception. A crucial prerequisite for beauty involves shared perception, a consensus reminiscent of the essential elements found in the realm of marketing.

Product design began to be used as a key competitive weapon, and as Philip Kotler and Alexander Rath (1984) had summarized it:

*“Product have undergone a change moving from only a functional piece of instrument to the issues which are important to create an acceptable design to*



*make the product more competitive. External appearance has become a key selling concept. (..)*”

The marketing and consumer behavior literature has seen a surge in interest over the past three decades due to research on hedonic products and hedonic consumption (e.g., Babin et al. 1994; Batra and Ahtola 1991; Hirschman and Holbrook 1982; Homer 2006; Okada 2005; Steenkamp and Geyskens 2006). According to Dhar and Wertenbroch (2000), hedonic products are goods and services that offer greater experience and emotional value than utilitarian goods, which are primarily instrumental and offer functional value. Hedonic features of consumption relate to intrinsic characteristics like product style and appearance, whereas utilitarian or functional product aspects (e.g., derived from functions performed by products) are often considered as just an extrinsic means to an end (Grewal et al. 2004). Design is arguably one of the most crucial aspects of a product in today's environment, when we are inundated with advertising promoting an increasing number of goods and services and where tradition-based differentiation is becoming less and less effective (Peters 1994).

Aesthetics play a critical role in the success of marketing campaigns within the fashion and tourism industries. Visuals, sounds, and even emotions all contribute to the overall perception of a brand and its offerings.

Likewise, the term “aesthetics” refers to visual forms of objects and sensory experiences associated with, texture, harmony, order and beauty (Venkatesh & Meamber, 2008).

Scholarly interest in aesthetic products and experiential consumption has led to an increased, if still restricted, focus on aesthetics in the business management literature (Charters, 2006). Four characteristics are generally thought to be necessary for a product to be considered aesthetic:

1. its primary goal must be aesthetics;
2. it must be designed to encourage aesthetic consumption;

3. it must be able to provide intrinsic value;
4. it must compete in highly segmented markets. (Charters, 2006).

Nonetheless, as most consumer goods include some combination of the aforementioned characteristics, aesthetic products could be thought of as a continuum that includes everything from completely aesthetic products to those with very no aesthetic dimension (Bloch, Brunel, & Arnold, 2003). Aesthetic consumption and consumers' ability to judge aesthetic qualities of a product are related to the idea of product design (Kirillova, 2014).

A brand aesthetic is formed through the integration of consistent quality and design elements into existing products, fostering brand association and differentiation (Seifert et al., 2019). This concept takes on particular importance in the luxury fashion industry, where brand aesthetics become an indispensable tool to create a unique shopping experience and increase consumer desire. Goh et al. (2013) introduce the concept of brand design consistency (BDC), according to which consistency between the aesthetics and design of a brand increases the likelihood of having a recognizable and successful brand. Ranscombe et al. (2011) point out that aesthetics is the main feature that enables product or brand recognition among consumers, making consistency between aesthetics and brand design crucial (Seifert, Cui, & Chattaraman, 2019).

Theoretical support for this concept can be found in the theory of aesthetics and psychobiology by Berlyne (1971), who elaborated the Wundt curves, which relate arousal to aesthetic judgements. According to these curves, arousal increases to an optimal level, beyond which it begins to decrease. This principle also applies to product design: a design consistent with brand identity causes high levels of arousal up to an optimal level, maximising consumer enjoyment and linking to BDC theory (Seifert, Cui, & Chattaraman, 2019). Despite this, however, luxury brands can be subject to the so-called halo effect (Zboja and Voorhees, 2006). The halo effect refers to the phenomenon whereby an evaluator fails to distinguish

between conceptually distinct and potentially independent attributes, causing a greater co-variance of individual attribute evaluations than would otherwise occur (Leuthesser et al., 1995, p. 58). The alone effect is further amplified by factors such as the country of origin, brand history, and product quality, leading fashion brands to benefit from a positive overall perception (Seifert, Cui, & Chattaraman, 2019).

Aesthetics has been also discussed in hedonic consumption as having the capacity to generate strong emotional involvement (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982).

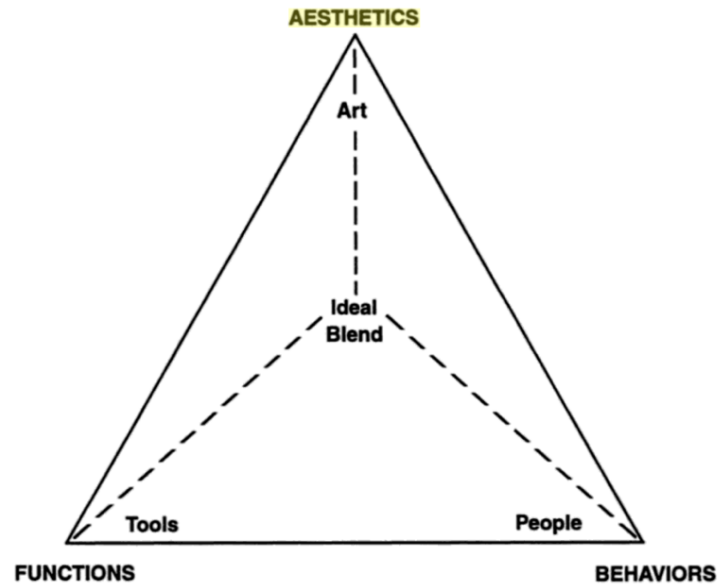
Aesthetic taste and the ability of customers to evaluate the aesthetic quality of a product are linked to the idea of product design. An aesthetically attractive product is a means of communicating information, attracting buyers' attention, and providing aesthetic pleasure to both sellers and users in saturated markets (Bloch, 1995).

Abraham H. Maslow created the Functional-Psychological-Aesthetic (FPA) Pyramid as a conceptual framework for marketing and consumer psychology. The FPA Pyramid expands on Maslow's well-known Hierarchy of Needs, which postulates that human needs are ranked from most basic physiological needs to more complex psychological and self-actualization needs. It also considers consumer behavior and product preferences.

1. **Functional Level:** The functional level, which represents customers' fundamental utilitarian needs and product functionality requirements, is at the base of the FPA Pyramid. This level includes a product's useful features, such its capacity to carry out a certain task, resolve an issue, or meet a fundamental need. Customers anticipate that goods would fulfill basic functional requirements and provide observable advantages that cater to their individual requirements or goals. For instance, to meet the functional

needs of users, a smartphone needs to provide dependable communication, effective processing power, and user-friendly features.

2. **Psychological Level:** Going beyond basic functioning, customers' emotional and psychological wants, desires, and motivations are covered by the psychological level of the FPA Pyramid. This level investigates how goods satisfy the emotional needs, values, goals, and self-expression of customers. Goods that appeal to consumers' psychological needs—like a sense of autonomy, affiliation, and self-expression—also boost their self-esteem and elicit happy feelings. For example, a high-end purse might arouse emotions of distinction, standing, and assurance, satisfying buyers' psychological needs for approval from others and enjoyment.
3. **Aesthetic Level:** The aesthetic level, at the summit of the FPA Pyramid, symbolizes consumers' need for aesthetics and design as well as their subjective appreciation of aesthetics and sensory pleasure. This level goes beyond simple psychological gratification and practicality to emphasize a product's artistic qualities, visual appeal, and sensory appeal. Products with outstanding craftsmanship, graceful design, and sophisticated aesthetics appeal to consumers since they improve the user experience overall and stimulate the senses. A finely built watch or an exquisite work of art, for instance, captivates customers with its aesthetic appeal and transforms it from a simple practical object to a representation of taste and elegance.



*Figure 11 Functional-psychological-aesthetic pyramid*

According to Clay (1908), art is the inevitable result of people's love and longing for beauty, and their reactions and feelings towards aesthetic beauty are an essential component of the lived experience. Differentiating goods and services through design, or "art with a purpose" (West & Purvis, 1992:15), is a strategy that can be employed (Reimann, Zaichkowsky, Neuhaus, Bender, & Weber, 2010). According to Esslinger (2009), corporate executives and designers ought to collaborate to develop strategies that promise a more prosperous, visually pleasant, and sustainable future.

# **CHAPTER 3**

## **3.1 Experimental design phase**

This research aims to investigate and analyze how the design and, therefore, more generally the aesthetics of a product influence the choices, both short- and long-term, of consumers. In particular, the sector taken into consideration is luxury fashion. In order to implement the research phase, it was necessary to carefully analyze the existing literature.

## **3.2 Conceptual Framework**

Consumer choices are influenced by a wide range of factors, including the aesthetic characteristics of products. Visual perception plays a crucial role in the decision-making process, influencing not only product attractiveness but also perceptions of quality and sustainability. Just as consumers attribute personality traits, such as social skills and competences, to other people based on their physical attractiveness (Dion et al., 1972; Goldman and Lewis, 1977), they also make inferences about a product's attributes based on its visual attractiveness (Bloch, 1995; Creusen and Schoormans, 2005). As analysed in the previous chapters, the existing literature has extensively documented the importance of aesthetic design in the context of marketing and consumer psychology. Bloch (1995) and Creusen and Schoormans (2005) have highlighted how the aesthetic perception of a product can significantly influence consumers' purchasing decisions. As we are aware, luxury is not often associated with sustainability, due to their opposite nature. On one hand luxury is mostly related to exclusive, glitz

and excessive, whereas sustainability is connected to a lifestyle aimed at reducing and protecting the limited resources of the planet. However, lately it was established a closer connection between these two dimensions. It was found that luxury and sustainability converge in rarity and durability.

Asymmetry can inspire a feeling of vitality and inventiveness, it can pique customers' interest and elicit feelings of excitement and curiosity, even if symmetry is frequently comforting (Berlyne, 1971). When asymmetrical items are connected to brands that foster an image of originality and invention, this effect is especially potent (Hekkert et al., 2003). Thus, depending on the situation and brand message, asymmetry can have complicated effects on how people perceive sustainability (Luchs et al., 2010). The way that design is viewed visually can have a big impact on sustainability. High-quality, durable goods are typically viewed as more sustainable (Peattie, 2010). As symmetry is linked to stability and quality, it might encourage decisions that are more environmentally friendly. On the other hand, asymmetry, which is linked to dynamism and innovation, may have a variety of effects on how people view sustainability and may even encourage the idea of innovative but transient products (Hartmann et al., 2005). The aesthetic preference for symmetry is widely documented in various fields, including art, architecture and consumer goods. Symmetry is often associated with beauty, order and harmony, qualities that influence consumer preferences and perceptions (Palmer et al., 2013). In the context of jewelry, symmetrical designs are perceived as more pleasing to the eye and stable (Reber et al., 2004).

### 3.3 Methodology

The study focuses on how the aesthetic characteristics of a product design, in particular symmetry and asymmetry, can influence consumer choice and have an impact on sustainability. It is hypothesized that the way in which consumers perceive design aesthetics could impact their actions about sustainability. Products with symmetrical or asymmetrical designs are thought to affect consumers' perceptions of sustainability differently. Customers may favor more environmentally friendly options if, for instance, they believe that symmetrical designs are more stable and substantial, projecting an image of a high-quality and long-lasting product. However, asymmetrical design may be linked to a more inventive and dynamic image, which could have a different impact on how people view sustainability.

Moreover, it is suggested that products characterized by symmetrical designs may be perceived as more aesthetically pleasing and balanced by consumers, positively influencing their purchasing decisions. Conversely, it is hypothesized that asymmetrical designs may arouse greater interest and excitement, especially in connection with brands that promote an image of innovation and dynamism. This study uses a quantitative approach to examine how aesthetic design features of luxury products, particularly symmetry and asymmetry, influence consumers' choices and perceptions of sustainability. Data were collected through an online survey administered to a sample of consumers evaluating various luxury products. There are 2 scenarios in the survey, presented in a randomized manner: one 'symmetrical' scenery (*Figure 13*) with jewelry with simple and balanced lines, the other, 'asymmetrical' (*Figure 14*) with jewelry with irregular and original shapes. The questionnaire included questions regarding the expected time of use/possession of the product, perceptions on attributes such as luxury, prestige, attractiveness and high class, evaluation of product symmetry and opinions on



design in terms of balance and stability. It is important to note that, from the perspective of the consumer, the goal is to examine how they purchase luxury fashion, how they view sustainability, and, most importantly, how sensitive they are to design (symmetrical or asymmetrical). As such, it is not necessary to include as customers only those who regularly purchase luxury goods. Specifically, the sample consisted of 102 respondents: 66 females, 34 males, 1 non-binary and 1 'Prefer not to say'.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	34	24,3	33,3	33,3
	Female	66	47,1	64,7	98,0
	Non-binary / third gender	1	,7	1,0	99,0
	Prefer not to say	1	,7	1,0	100,0
	Total	102	72,9	100,0	

*Figure 12 Sample gender*

The responses were measured using 5-point Likert scales, where 1 represents "definitely not" and 5 represents "definitely yes".

Based on the random scenario displayed, we asked participants to:

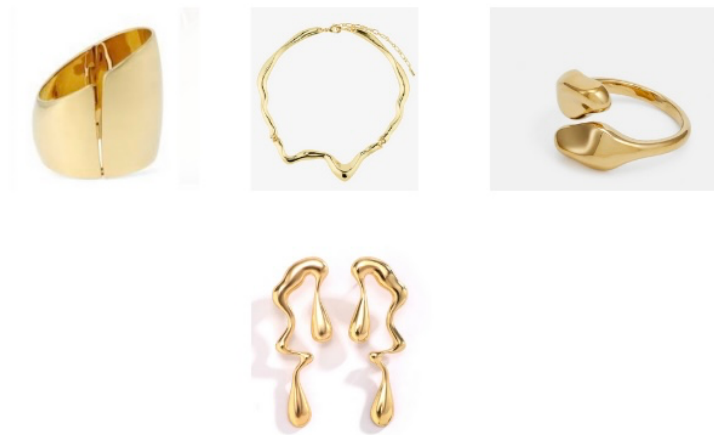
- To assess how long they thought they would use the type of product shown in the random scenario. From 0-6 months to >3 years.
- To rate the product shown in the image as 'Luxurious', 'Prestigious', 'Attractive', 'High class', on a scale from 'Definitely not' to 'Definitely yes';
- Give reasons for your previous answers.
- To describe the product from 'Symmetrical' to 'Asymmetrical', and from 'Sustainable' to 'Unsustainable';

- To describe the product in terms of ‘Balance and Stability’ and in terms of ‘Innovation and Originality’;
- To judge whether the symmetrical product was associated with greater quality and stability than the asymmetrical one;
- To judge whether the asymmetrical design was perceived as more ‘Innovative and original’ than the symmetrical one;
- To judge whether the symmetrical design was perceived as more sustainable than the asymmetrical one.

We use a pre-validated scale: “Attitude toward an object” (Classiness). The scale, that measures the degree to which a person describes an object, was called “Perception of luxury by Hagtvedt and Patrick (2008).



*Figure 13 Symmetric scenery*



*Figure 14 Asymmetric scenery*

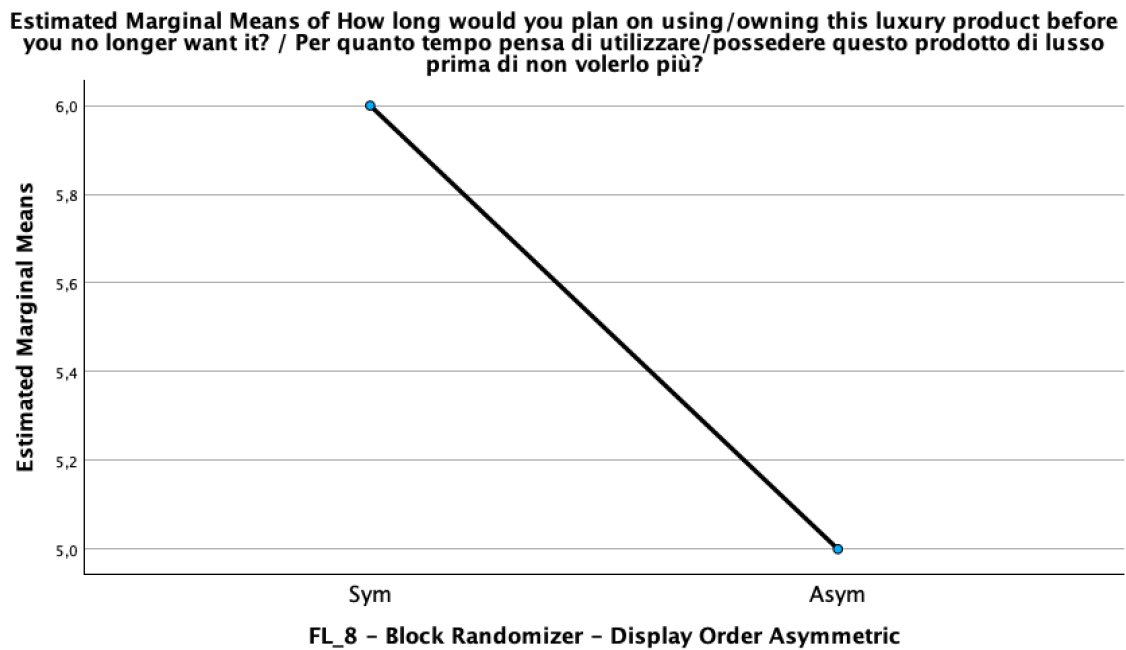
We recoded the variable “FL\_8 - Block Randomizer” on the scenarios, into a new variable called “DESIGN”, which we assigned the value 1 when participants saw the asymmetrical scenario and 0 if they saw the symmetrical scenario.

The data was exposed to reliability and validity tests to investigate and check the accuracy of the items in the questionnaire.

Although we used a pre-validated scale, we checked for the reliability of this scale by looking at Cronbach’s alpha. We had  $\alpha = 0.794$  that indicates a good level of internal consistency for our scale with the specific sample, therefore the multi-item scale was reliable.

The results show that participants in the symmetrical design group expect to use the luxury product for a significantly longer period than participants in the asymmetrical design group. This difference is supported by statistically significant results in the t-test for independent samples.

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the ‘Design’ variable in ‘Symmetric scenery’ and ‘Asymmetric scenery’. There was a significant difference in the scores for ‘Symmetric scenery’ (M = 6.00, SD = 1.768) and ‘Asymmetric scenery’ (M = 5.00, SD = 2.103);  $t(99.129) = 2.606, p < .005$ . Because the p-value in the “Sig.” row is smaller than .005, scenarios are correctly perceived.



*Figure 15 Profile plot*

Regarding the questions concerning the perception of ‘better quality and stability’, ‘innovation and originality’ and ‘sustainability’, it emerged that: 80 respondents perceived asymmetrical products as more innovative and original, but at the same time 64 respondents perceived the products as higher quality and stable and 60 respondents as more sustainable than asymmetrical products.

**Do you think asymmetrical design is more innovative and original than symmetrical design? / Pensi che il design asimmetrico sia più innovativo e originale rispetto al design simmetrico?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes / Si	80	57,1	78,4	78,4
	No	11	7,9	10,8	89,2
	I don't know / Non so	11	7,9	10,8	100,0
	Total	102	72,9	100,0	

*Figure 16*

**Do you think that symmetrical design is associated with higher quality and stability than asymmetrical design? / Pensi che il design simmetrico sia associato a una maggiore qualità e stabilità rispetto al design asimmetrico?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes / Si	64	45,7	62,7	62,7
	No	29	20,7	28,4	91,2
	I don't know / Non so	9	6,4	8,8	100,0
	Total	102	72,9	100,0	

*Figure 17*

**Do you think symmetrical design is more sustainable than asymmetrical design? / Pensi che il design simmetrico sia più sostenibile rispetto al design asimmetrico?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes / Si	60	42,9	58,8	58,8
	No	21	15,0	20,6	79,4
	I don't know / Non so	21	15,0	20,6	100,0
	Total	102	72,9	100,0	

*Figure 18*

### 3.4 Results

It is clear from the results that respondents show a marked preference for jewelry with symmetrical lines. This group was perceived as more durable and stable. Symmetry in jewelry seems to convey a sense of balance and harmony, which respondents associate with greater sustainability. The perception of durability could be linked to the idea that regular, balanced shapes are more durable over time and less susceptible to fashion changes.

Sustainability is an increasingly sought-after feature in consumer products, and jewelry is no exception. Participants associated symmetry with greater sustainability, perhaps due to the idea that a balanced design can last longer and resist wear and tear better. This result suggests that consumers see symmetry as not only aesthetic, but also ethical and practical.

On the other hand, jewelry with asymmetrical lines was appreciated for its innovation and originality. Participants recognized a distinctive and unique character in this jewelry, which differentiates it from traditional designs. However, these same jewels were not perceived as being as durable as their symmetrical equivalents. Asymmetry seems to evoke a feeling of modernity and creativity but fails to provide the same confidence in terms of longevity and stability.

### **3.5 Future implications**

As a first step towards understanding the implications of choosing a symmetrical design as more sustainable, the current study has some limitations and opens avenues for future research. As the sample is not particularly large and the research topic is very specific, we suggest extending the analysis to a more significant number of participants to obtain a better understanding.

More flexibility in terms of time would have allowed us to collect more responses and, thus, to explore the topic in more depth. This limitation combined with the small sample size contributed to a study that was not particularly thorough and the formulation of partially acceptable conclusions.

Possible changes may concern demographic choice: investigate whether there are significant differences in preferences between generations (e.g. Baby Boomers vs. Millennials vs. Gen Z), analyzing whether men and women perceive symmetry and asymmetry differently or examining how preferences change between different cultures, considering cultural influences on the perception of aesthetics. To further deepen the understanding of consumer preferences regarding jewelry designs, several advanced methodologies could be used. One approach could be

the use of eye-tracking technology, which allows one to monitor which design elements capture consumers' attention the most. This technique provides precise data on where consumers' eyes focus and for how long, thus revealing which visual aspects are most attractive. Eye-tracking technology has been successfully used in several studies to analyze aesthetic preferences and purchase decisions (Duchowski, 2007). Another innovative methodology is neuro-aesthetics, which involves the application of neuroimaging techniques to study consumers' brain responses to different jewelry shapes and designs. Through these techniques, it is possible to gain a deeper understanding of how the brain perceives beauty and aesthetic appeal, providing useful information for designing jewelry that resonates with the public. Neuro-aesthetics combines principles from neuroscience and psychology to explore the aesthetic experience and has shown how specific visual features can activate specific areas of the brain associated with aesthetic pleasure (Chatterjee & Vartanian, 2014).

## **SUMMARY**

The presented research analyses the impact of aesthetics for the design of luxury fashion products, with a focus on jewelry.

This thesis has shown that the luxury sector is undergoing a significant transformation, driven by a shift in consumer values and expectations. Luxury



companies that can adapt to these new trends, embracing sustainability and offering products that resonate with consumers' personal experiences and identities, will have a competitive advantage in the future market. Continuous research and innovation will be essential to navigate this changing landscape and to meet the needs of an increasingly aware and sophisticated customer base.

The fashion industry, increasingly aware of environmental and sustainability issues, is facing profound changes affecting supply relationships, product innovation and branding policies. Consumers, especially younger ones, are more aware of the environmental and social impact of their purchases, pushing luxury companies to adopt sustainable business models.

Design in the fashion industry encompasses aesthetics, functionality, durability and sustainability. The perception that luxury conflicts with sustainability is changing and research suggests that luxury companies can successfully integrate sustainability into their products. Durable materials and products are promoted as strategies to increase sustainability, although changes in user behavior and consumption patterns are also crucial.

Finally, our study showed how important it is to perceive asymmetry and symmetry in jewelry, paving the way for future studies and innovations that could change the way these products are designed and perceived.

The analysis of quantitative data showed that contemporary luxury consumers are driven by motivations that certainly go beyond mere status.

The survey results showed a clear preference for jewelry with symmetrical lines, perceived as more durable and stable.

Despite being praised for its creativity and inventiveness, asymmetrical jewelry was not considered very durable. This suggests that while asymmetrical designs offer a unique and contemporary aesthetic value, they may not provide the same level of stability and longevity as symmetrical designs.

# APPENDIX

## T-Test

### Notes

Output Created		29-MAY-2024 16:00:53
Comments		
Input	Data	/Users/giuliadibugno/Downloads/Aesthetics_May 29, 2024_15.46 2.sav
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	Cases Used	Statistics for each analysis are based on the cases with no missing or out-of-range data for any variable in the analysis.
Syntax		T-TEST GROUPS=Design(0 1) /MISSING=ANALYSIS /VARIABLES=Lenghtuse /ES DISPLAY(TRUE) /CRITERIA=CI(.95).
Resources	Processor Time	00:00:00,02
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00,00

[DataSet1] /Users/giuliadibugno/Downloads/Aesthetics\_May 29, 2024\_15.46 2.sav

### Group Statistics

FL_8 - Block Randomizer - Display Order Asymmetric		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
How long would you plan on using/owning this luxury product before you no longer want it? / Per quanto tempo pensa di utilizzare/possedere questo prodotto di lusso prima di non volerlo più?	Sym	49	6,00	1,768	,253
	Asym	53	5,00	2,103	,289

### Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means
		F	Sig.	t
How long would you plan on using/owning this luxury product before you no longer want it? / Per quanto tempo pensa di utilizzare/possedere questo prodotto di lusso prima di non volerlo più?	Equal variances assumed	8,960	,003	2,588
	Equal variances not assumed			2,606

### Independent Samples Test

		t-test for Equality of Means		Mean Difference
		Significance		
		One-Sided p	Two-Sided p	
How long would you plan on using/owning this luxury product before you no longer want it? / Per quanto tempo pensa di utilizzare/possedere questo prodotto di lusso prima di non volerlo più?	Equal variances assumed	,006	,011	1,000
	Equal variances not assumed	,005	,011	1,000

## Independent Samples Test

t-test for Equality of Means  
95% Confidence Interval of  
the Difference

		Lower	Upper
How long would you plan on using/owning this luxury product before you no longer want it? / Per quanto tempo pensa di utilizzare/possedere questo prodotto di lusso prima di non volerlo più?	Equal variances assumed	,234	1,766
	Equal variances not assumed	,239	1,761

## Independent Samples Effect Sizes

		Standardizer <sup>a</sup>	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower	Upper
How long would you plan on using/owning this luxury product before you no longer want it? / Per quanto tempo pensa di utilizzare/possedere questo prodotto di lusso prima di non volerlo più?	Cohen's d	1,949	,513	,117	,907
	Hedges' correction	1,964	,509	,116	,900
	Glass's delta	2,103	,475	,074	,872

a. The denominator used in estimating the effect sizes.

Cohen's d uses the pooled standard deviation.

Hedges' correction uses the pooled standard deviation, plus a correction factor.

Glass's delta uses the sample standard deviation of the control (i.e., the second) group.

## Univariate Analysis of Variance

### Notes

Output Created	29-MAY-2024 16:03:14	
Comments		
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	Split File	<none>
	N of Rows in Working Data File	140
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User-defined missing values are treated as missing.
	Cases Used	Statistics are based on all cases with valid data for all variables in the model.
Syntax		UNIANOVA Lenghtuse BY Design /METHOD=SSTYPE(3) /INTERCEPT=INCLUDE /PLOT=PROFILE(Design) TYPE=LINE ERRORBAR=NO MEANREFERENCE=NO YAXIS=AUTO /PRINT DESCRIPTIVE HOMOGENEITY /CRITERIA=ALPHA(.05) /DESIGN=Design.
Resources	Processor Time	00:00:02,70
	Elapsed Time	00:00:01,00

### Between-Subjects Factors

		Value Label	N
FL_8 - Block	0	Sym	49
Randomizer - Display Order Asymmetric	1	Asym	53

### Descriptive Statistics

Dependent Variable: How long would you plan on using/owning this luxury product before you no longer want it?  
/ Per quanto tempo pensa di utilizzare/possedere questo prodotto di lusso prima di non volerlo più?

FL_8 - Block Randomizer - Display Order Asymmetric	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Sym	6,00	1,768	49
Asym	5,00	2,103	53

Total	5,48	2,004	102
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### Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances<sup>a,b</sup>

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
How long would you plan on using/owning this luxury product before you no longer want it? / Per quanto tempo pensa di utilizzare/possedere questo prodotto di lusso prima di non volerlo più?	Based on Mean	8,960	1	100	,003
	Based on Median	11,847	1	100	<,001
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	11,847	1	68,785	<,001
	Based on trimmed mean	10,185	1	100	,002

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.<sup>a,b</sup>

a. Dependent variable: How long would you plan on using/owning this luxury product before you no longer want it? / Per quanto tempo pensa di utilizzare/possedere questo prodotto di lusso prima di non volerlo più?

b. Design: Intercept + Design

### Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: How long would you plan on using/owning this luxury product before you no longer want it? / Per quanto tempo pensa di utilizzare/possedere questo prodotto di lusso prima di non volerlo più?

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	25,461 <sup>a</sup>	1	25,461	6,700	,011
Intercept	3080,755	1	3080,755	810,725	<,001
Design	25,461	1	25,461	6,700	,011
Error	380,000	100	3,800		
Total	3469,000	102			
Corrected Total	405,461	101			

a. R Squared = ,063 (Adjusted R Squared = ,053)

### Profile Plots

### T-Test

## Notes

Output Created		29-MAY-2024 16:05:05
Comments		
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	N of Rows in Working Data File	140
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User defined missing values are treated as missing.
	Cases Used	Statistics for each analysis are based on the cases with no missing or out-of-range data for any variable in the analysis.
Syntax		T-TEST GROUPS=Design(0 1) /MISSING=ANALYSIS /VARIABLES=Checksym m_1 Checksymm_2 /ES DISPLAY(TRUE) /CRITERIA=CI(.95).
Resources	Processor Time	00:00:00,02
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00,00

## Group Statistics

FL_8 - Block Randomizer - Display Order Asymmetric		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
How would you define the product you have just seen?/Come definirebbe il prodotto che ha appena visto? - Symmetric:Asymmetric	Sym	49	2,10	1,636	,234
	Asym	53	5,15	1,736	,239
	Sym	49	2,24	1,493	,213

How would you define the product you have just seen?/Come definirebbe il prodotto che ha appena visto? - Sustainable:Not sustainable	Asym	53	4,70	1,782	,245
--	------	----	------	-------	------

### Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means
		F	Sig.	t
How would you define the product you have just seen?/Come definirebbe il prodotto che ha appena visto? - Symmetric:Asymmetric	Equal variances assumed	,749	,389	-9,108
	Equal variances not assumed			-9,130
How would you define the product you have just seen?/Come definirebbe il prodotto che ha appena visto? - Sustainable:Not sustainable	Equal variances assumed	4,102	,046	-7,502
	Equal variances not assumed			-7,555

### Independent Samples Test

		t-test for Equality of Means		Mean Difference
		Significance		
		One-Sided p	Two-Sided p	
How would you define the product you have just seen?/Come definirebbe il prodotto che ha appena visto? - Symmetric:Asymmetric	Equal variances assumed	<,001	<,001	-3,049
	Equal variances not assumed	<,001	<,001	-3,049
How would you define the product you have just seen?/Come definirebbe il prodotto che ha appena visto? - Sustainable:Not sustainable	Equal variances assumed	<,001	<,001	-2,453
	Equal variances not assumed	<,001	<,001	-2,453



## Independent Samples Test

		t-test for Equality of Means	
		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		Lower	Upper
How would you define the product you have just seen?/Come definirebbe il prodotto che ha appena visto? - Symmetric:Asymmetric	Equal variances assumed	-3,713	-2,385
	Equal variances not assumed	-3,711	-2,386
How would you define the product you have just seen?/Come definirebbe il prodotto che ha appena visto? - Sustainable:Not sustainable	Equal variances assumed	-3,102	-1,804
	Equal variances not assumed	-3,098	-1,809

## Independent Samples Effect Sizes

		Standardizer <sup>a</sup>	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower	Upper
How would you define the product you have just seen?/Come definirebbe il prodotto che ha appena visto? - Symmetric:Asymmetric	Cohen's d	1,689	-1,805	-2,264	-1,340
	Hedges' correction	1,702	-1,792	-2,247	-1,330
	Glass's delta	1,736	-1,756	-2,265	-1,237
How would you define the product you have just seen?/Come definirebbe il prodotto che ha appena visto? - Sustainable:Not sustainable	Cohen's d	1,650	-1,487	-1,923	-1,044
	Hedges' correction	1,662	-1,476	-1,909	-1,036
	Glass's delta	1,782	-1,376	-1,841	-,902

a. The denominator used in estimating the effect sizes.

Cohen's d uses the pooled standard deviation.

Hedges' correction uses the pooled standard deviation, plus a correction factor.

Glass's delta uses the sample standard deviation of the control (i.e., the second) group.

## Reliability

## Notes

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	Split File	<none>
	N of Rows in Working Data File	140
	Matrix Input	
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User-defined missing values are treated as missing.
	Cases Used	Statistics are based on all cases with valid data for all variables in the procedure.
Syntax		<pre> RELIABILITY /VARIABLES=luxuriousness_1 luxuriousness_2 luxuriousness_3 luxuriousness_4 /SCALE('ALL VARIABLES') ALL /MODEL=ALPHA /STATISTICS=DESCRIPTIVE /SUMMARY=TOTAL. </pre>
Resources	Processor Time	00:00:00,01
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00,00

### Scale: ALL VARIABLES

#### Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	97	69,3
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	43	30,7
	Total	140	100,0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,794	4

### Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
The jewel seen above is / Il gioiello visto sopra è : - Luxurious/Lussuoso	3,86	,979	97
The jewel seen above is / Il gioiello visto sopra è : - Prestigious/Prestigioso	3,84	,965	97
The jewel seen above is / Il gioiello visto sopra è : - Attractive/Attrante	4,21	,828	97
The jewel seen above is / Il gioiello visto sopra è : - High Class/ Alta Classe	3,67	1,007	97

### Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
The jewel seen above is / Il gioiello visto sopra è : - Luxurious/Lussuoso	11,71	5,187	,612	,739
The jewel seen above is / Il gioiello visto sopra è : - Prestigious/Prestigioso	11,73	5,052	,666	,710
The jewel seen above is / Il gioiello visto sopra è : - Attractive/Attrante	11,36	5,858	,581	,756
The jewel seen above is / Il gioiello visto sopra è : - High Class/ Alta Classe	11,90	5,239	,568	,763

### T-Test

## Notes

Output Created		29-MAY-2024 16:10:23
Comments		
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	Weight	<none>
	Split File	<none>
	N of Rows in Working Data File	140
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User defined missing values are treated as missing.
	Cases Used	Statistics for each analysis are based on the cases with no missing or out-of-range data for any variable in the analysis.
Syntax		T-TEST GROUPS=Design(0 1) /MISSING=ANALYSIS /VARIABLES=Attitude /ES DISPLAY(TRUE) /CRITERIA=CI(.95).
Resources	Processor Time	00:00:00,02
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00,00

## Group Statistics

FL_8 - Block Randomizer - Display Order Asymmetric		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Attitude	Sym	46	3,9185	,73797	,10881
	Asym	51	3,8676	,75722	,10603

## Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality		
		F	Sig.	t	df	One-S
Attitude	Equal variances assumed	,121	,729	,334	95	

Equal variances not assumed			,335	94,417
-----------------------------	--	--	------	--------

### Independent Samples Test

		t-test for Equality of Means			
		Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
				Lower	Upper
Attitude	Equal variances assumed	,05083	,15213	-,25119	,3528
	Equal variances not assumed	,05083	,15193	-,25081	,3524

### Independent Samples Effect Sizes

		Standardizer <sup>a</sup>	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower	Upper
Attitude	Cohen's d	,74816	,068	-,331	,466
	Hedges' correction	,75413	,067	-,328	,463
	Glass's delta	,75722	,067	-,332	,466

a. The denominator used in estimating the effect sizes.

Cohen's d uses the pooled standard deviation.

Hedges' correction uses the pooled standard deviation, plus a correction factor.

Glass's delta uses the sample standard deviation of the control (i.e., the second) group.

## Descriptives

### Notes

Output Created		29-MAY-2024 16:13:13
Comments		
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	Split File	<none>
	N of Rows in Working Data File	140

Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User defined missing values are treated as missing.
	Cases Used	All non-missing data are used.
Syntax		DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=Q11 Q12 Q13 /STATISTICS=MEAN STDDEV MIN MAX.
Resources	Processor Time	00:00:00,01
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00,00

### Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Do you think that symmetrical design is associated with higher quality and stability than asymmetrical design? / Pensi che il design simmetrico sia associato a una maggiore qualità e stabilità rispetto al design asimmetrico?	102	1	3	1,46	,655
Do you think asymmetrical design is more innovative and original than symmetrical design? / Pensi che il design asimmetrico sia più innovativo e originale rispetto al design simmetrico?	102	1	3	1,32	,662
Do you think symmetrical design is more sustainable than asymmetrical design? / Pensi che il design simmetrico sia più sostenibile rispetto al design asimmetrico?	102	1	3	1,62	,809
Valid N (listwise)	102				

## Frequencies

### Notes

Output Created		29-MAY-2024 16:13:43
Comments		
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	Split File	<none>
	N of Rows in Working Data File	140
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User-defined missing values are treated as missing.
	Cases Used	Statistics are based on all cases with valid data.
Syntax		FREQUENCIES VARIABLES=Q12 Q11 Q13 /ORDER=ANALYSIS.
Resources	Processor Time	00:00:00,01
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00,00

### Statistics

Do you think asymmetrical design is more innovative and original than symmetrical design? / Pensi che il design asimmetrico sia più innovativo e originale rispetto al design simmetrico?

Do you think that symmetrical design is associated with higher quality and stability than asymmetrical design? / Pensi che il design simmetrico sia associato a una maggiore qualità e

Do you think symmetrical design is more sustainable than asymmetrical design? / Pensi che il design simmetrico sia più sostenibile rispetto al design asimmetrico?

		stabilità rispetto al design asimmetrico?		
N	Valid	102	102	102
	Missing	38	38	38

## Frequency Table

**Do you think asymmetrical design is more innovative and original than symmetrical design? / Pensi che il design asimmetrico sia più innovativo e originale rispetto al design simmetrico?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes / Si	80	57,1	78,4	78,4
	No	11	7,9	10,8	89,2
	I don't know / Non so	11	7,9	10,8	100,0
	Total	102	72,9	100,0	
Missing	System	38	27,1		
Total		140	100,0		

**Do you think that symmetrical design is associated with higher quality and stability than asymmetrical design? / Pensi che il design simmetrico sia associato a una maggiore qualità e stabilità rispetto al design asimmetrico?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes / Si	64	45,7	62,7	62,7
	No	29	20,7	28,4	91,2
	I don't know / Non so	9	6,4	8,8	100,0
	Total	102	72,9	100,0	
Missing	System	38	27,1		
Total		140	100,0		

**Do you think symmetrical design is more sustainable than asymmetrical design? / Pensi che il design simmetrico sia più sostenibile rispetto al design asimmetrico?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes / Si	60	42,9	58,8	58,8
	No	21	15,0	20,6	79,4



	I don't know / Non so	21	15,0	20,6	100,0
	Total	102	72,9	100,0	
Missing System		38	27,1		
Total		140	100,0		

## Frequencies

### Notes

Output Created		29-MAY-2024 16:45:58
Comments		
Input	Data	/Users/giuliadibugno/Downloads/Aesthetics_May 29, 2024_15.46 2.sav
	Active Dataset	DataSet1
	Filter	<none>
	Weight	<none>
	Split File	<none>
	N of Rows in Working Data File	140
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User-defined missing values are treated as missing.
	Cases Used	Statistics are based on all cases with valid data.
Syntax		FREQUENCIES VARIABLES=Gender Age Nation /ORDER=ANALYSIS.
Resources	Processor Time	00:00:00,05
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00,00

### Statistics

		How would you identify your gender? / Come identifichi il tuo genere?	What is your age (number)? / Quanti anni hai (numero)?	Nationality/Nationalità :
N	Valid	102	140	140
	Missing	38	0	0

## Frequency Table

### How would you identify your gender? / Come identifichi il tuo genere?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	34	24,3	33,3	33,3
	Female	66	47,1	64,7	98,0
	Non-binary / third gender	1	,7	1,0	99,0
	Prefer not to say	1	,7	1,0	100,0
	Total	102	72,9	100,0	
Missing	System	38	27,1		
Total		140	100,0		

### What is your age (number)? / Quanti anni hai (numero)?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		38	27,1	27,1	27,1
	15	1	,7	,7	27,9
	18	1	,7	,7	28,6
	20	6	4,3	4,3	32,9
	21	3	2,1	2,1	35,0
	22	7	5,0	5,0	40,0
	23	9	6,4	6,4	46,4
	24	8	5,7	5,7	52,1
	25	7	5,0	5,0	57,1
	26	5	3,6	3,6	60,7
	27	2	1,4	1,4	62,1
	28	1	,7	,7	62,9
	29	2	1,4	1,4	64,3
	30	2	1,4	1,4	65,7
	32	3	2,1	2,1	67,9
	34	1	,7	,7	68,6
	35	2	1,4	1,4	70,0
	36	1	,7	,7	70,7
	37	2	1,4	1,4	72,1
	38	1	,7	,7	72,9
	39	1	,7	,7	73,6
40	3	2,1	2,1	75,7	
43	1	,7	,7	76,4	

45	5	3,6	3,6	80,0
50	3	2,1	2,1	82,1
51	1	,7	,7	82,9
53	3	2,1	2,1	85,0
54	2	1,4	1,4	86,4
55	3	2,1	2,1	88,6
56	4	2,9	2,9	91,4
58	4	2,9	2,9	94,3
59	2	1,4	1,4	95,7
60	2	1,4	1,4	97,1
61	1	,7	,7	97,9
63	1	,7	,7	98,6
71	1	,7	,7	99,3
79	1	,7	,7	100,0
Total	140	100,0	100,0	

### Nationality/Nazionalità :

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	38	27,1	27,1	27,1
French	1	,7	,7	27,9
Ita	1	,7	,7	28,6
italia	1	,7	,7	29,3
Italia	12	8,6	8,6	37,9
Italian	5	3,6	3,6	41,4
italiana	4	2,9	2,9	44,3
Italiana	61	43,6	43,6	87,9
ITALIANA	1	,7	,7	88,6
Italiano	3	2,1	2,1	90,7
italy	1	,7	,7	91,4
Italy	9	6,4	6,4	97,9
ItLia	1	,7	,7	98,6
Lebanese	1	,7	,7	99,3
Tunisian	1	,7	,7	100,0
Total	140	100,0	100,0	

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