

# SCALE DEVELOPMENT AND INITIAL VALIDATION FOR CONSUMPTION MASSTIGE

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## ABSTRACT

*The objective of this article is to investigate the consumption practices of mass and prestige (masstige), as well as to validate a scale for this specific consumption. Followers of vloggers, bloggers and consumers of masstige products were interviewed in the region of Central Brazil. Structural equation modeling (PLS) was used for validation. An extensive literature review was used in relation to the construction and validation of the questionnaire. Vloggers and Bloggers signal the symbols for masstige consumption. Pleasure moves mass consumption, which presents itself as a line and product diversification strategy. Status and exclusivity construct the concept for pleasure, though Tradition does not suggest engagement in the construction of pleasure. Masstige consumption is presented as a proposal for the reduction of piracy with major brands. This research is the basis for future studies, as: (a) it suggests employment in other cultures, (b) it opens doors to the study on piracy of major brands, (c) it contributes to studies on line extension and (d) it brings insights into the work of vloggers and bloggers in the consumer environment. This research tool can be used by research institutes, universities and companies for market studies. Understanding this consumer is to promote work on the transmission of meanings and inclusion of new consumers in this access economy. The research promotes social inclusion and the recovery of self-esteem from consumption since people carry this out with the ownership of quality products at an affordable price. As a theoretical contribution, we believe that we occupy a gap in the theory of the consumption of luxury, after all are rare the publication on mass consumption, symbolic and cultural. Access to the consumption of prestigious and quality products promotes a sense of belonging and the search for an identity that is consistent with new consumption patterns (accessible, quality and prestige products). The welfare of this consumption is centered on pleasure and vanity, as seen in the consumption plus size that has rescued the self-esteem of obese people.*

Keywords: Masstige, Consumer; PLS, Behavior

## INTRODUCTION

The modern consumer has discovered the necessary practices in order to spend less while maintaining their consumer experiences without discriminating between physical and virtual stores (Blitz, 2016). This has resulted in interactions between communities, organizations, products and brands (Hollebeek & Chen, 2014) and in a more frequent manner (Lee & Watkins, 2016; Loureiro et al., 2018). This is especially true when talking about luxury clothing (Lenne & Vandenbosch, 2016). The issue lies not only in adopting new low-cost habits from sites and applications of collective purchases, but also consuming masstige products from digital platforms and physical stores. This neologism of luxury (a contraction of mass words, with prestige) for the masses, or mass prestige, defines products or services for consumers of accessible consumption (Silverstein & Fiske, 2003). Their prices are higher than those of mass-

market products, but lower than those of old luxury brands. Coach, Miu Miu, Armani Exchange (Ko & Sung, 2015) and Dooney & Bourke (Vogel & Watchravesringkan, 2017) are examples of masstige brands.

The masstige concept is inserted in a context of survival for expensive and traditional brands. After all, rarity and scarcity are no more of a guaranteed success for the restricted universe of luxury goods. After all, new brands appeared at the beginning of this century in a way that threatened large corporations (Dubois et al., 2005). It is also possible to relate other aspects that encouraged the arrival of the new luxury brands to this: the consumer developed new digital social needs and new digital economic desires (Armitage & Roberts, 2014). Additionally, the falsifications of the big brands have brought losses to corporations of traditional luxury (Phau & Teah, 2009). In the midst of this problem, an opportunity was opened for the extension of large brands (Hanslin & Rindell, 2014). Corporations such as Armani have successfully adapted to the mass market, gaining substantial gains to compensate for any damage to the main brand (Kim & Lavack, 1996). Armani Exchange, for example, became a low-cost option compared to the other brands of the group, Emporio Armani, Armani Collezioni or Giorgio Armani (Stankeviciute & Hoffmann, 2010).

In this context, that involves conspicuous consumption, symbolism, tradition and masstige. This study is delimited, which aims to investigate the consumption practices of prestige and accessible goods, as well as validate a scale for the study of consumption of masstige products. The question relates to the six dimensions of research (differentiation, tradition, exclusivity, pleasure, status and functional) when they are related as latent variables that will explain the pleasure of consuming affordable luxury. This understanding is aligned with the use of the Modeling of Structural Equations and with the methodology used. The research was carried out in a context of the BRICs (Brazil, Russia, India and China), an emerging economy and consumer of products such as the masstige.

The findings of this research indicate practical and theoretical issues. With a new scale it is possible to identify new market opportunities and to deepen the theory about the consumption of affordable luxury in the universe of symbolic and cultural consumption. The timely gap for this research lies in the way that millennials slowly expand their participation in this universe. Brands are keen on incorporating the growing expectations of these new consumers who are twice as likely to support brands with a proven commitment to social and environmental issues (Wong & Dhanesh, 2012). It is a complex environment that occupies another market segment and does not rival high-end products in an environment that prevails attributes such as status, inspiration, momentum, reward and loyalty (Hanslin & Rindell, 2014).

The first part of the study presents the main authors and the theory that supports the data. The methodology, analyzes and discussion of the results are presented below.

### **The Basic and the Superfluous: Purely Arbitrary Concepts**

There is a belief related to the so-called exclusive products that the concept of art makes them rare and expensive. Thus, transferring this to the masstige, the concept of art seems to be a natural way to go. In practice, the significance of rarity cannot be shared among consumer communities at the risk of overexposing the brand (Doss & Robinson, 2013), as well as creating a bias in the analysis of cognitive, emotional, behavioral and social investment behavior in branded interactions (Hollebeek & Chen, 2014). Therefore, rarity and scarcity are just a few elements to be considered in this context. The hypotheses of this research are related to the status that directly influences pleasure.

*H1: Exclusivity influences Pleasure.*

Exclusivity is key to maintaining status. This is an important variable for the construction of pleasure and maintenance of the concept of luxury (Makkar & Yap, 2018; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999).

*H2: Exclusivity influences Status.*

Aspects such as exclusivity, status and tradition come into play as well. This is the transformation of the product into art, as if it were a craft, immersed in meanings that invite their consumers into live a story. It resides in the process of making art a particular product, a robust method of differentiation by exclusivity, status and tradition (Makkar & Yap, 2018). Therefore, the following hypotheses are installed:

*H3: Functional aspects influence the perception of product tradition.*

It is understood as functional aspects the technical and physical characteristics, such as: quality, raw material, durability, among others. A product with extensive quality assurance and technical assistance, it becomes durable and enabled to be passed from generation to generation (Zeithaml, 2012)

*H4: Tradition influences the formation of necessity by exclusivity.*

Style and good taste determine differentiation, inclusion and exclusion among others. Knowing how to use a product framed in this situation provides this differentiation, even if false. Fashion is the striking expression of contemporary society, but it is not intensely related to the democratization of consumption, but rather to the maintenance of status. Being fashionable indicates that the consumer privileges a status of distinction (Bourdieu, 2013), also predicted by Asian, European and North American empirical studies (Walley et al., 2013; Wu et al., 2013; Kapferer & Valette-Florence, 2016). In this way the hypotheses that influence pleasure are proposed.

*H5: The need for exclusivity influences differentiation.*

Allied to the practice of making art an exclusive product, there exists another search factor of symbolic and conspicuous price strategy. Exposing the price or not and whether or not to carry out a liquidation, are concerns related to the marketing practices of masstige products. It should be noted that this is not a concern of a masstige brand. Experimental studies attest that exposing price does not change “*desirability*” in times of consumption of accessible and democratic goods (Parguel et al., 2016). The way in which the tactic of pricing creates distinction and desire is discussed at the microeconomic and market level. It should be noted that these two aspects are intertwined in the context of fashion, which in a non-rational way entails status and consequently, promotes distinction. Style and good taste determine differentiation, inclusion and exclusion among other things. Knowing how to use a product framed in this situation provides this differentiation, even if false. Fashion is the striking expression of contemporary society. It is not intensely related to the democratization of consumption, but rather to the maintenance of status. It is in fashion that the consumer favors a status of distinction (Bourdieu, 2013), an idea

also predicted by Asian, European and American empirical studies (Walley et al., 2013; Wu et al., 2013; Kapferer & Valette-Florence, 2016). In this way the hypotheses that influence pleasure are proposed:

*H6: Functional aspect influences pleasure.*

*H7: Tradition influences Pleasure.*

The products related to the concept of new luxury still retain an inheritance of their creators, the true artisans of the big brands (Truong et al., 2009; Godey et al., 2016). The example applies to brands such as Louis Vuitton, Hermés, Armani, among others (Dubois et al., 2005)

*H8: Differentiation influences Status and H9 Status influences Pleasure.*

In this context of the search for distinctive consumption, meaningful approaches are bringing other lenses to the understanding of symbolic consumption. Some classic prejudices are softened when it is understood that the less privileged consumers do not only live in the search for the basics, a concept which is purely arbitrary. After all, in all social classes there is consumption of differentiation, exclusivity and status. An example of such changes is the consumption of wine that is often consumed in the presence of reference or aspirational groups (Wolf et al., 2016). In fact, the frequency of consumption deconstructs the concept of prestige and luxury being that it is expected that prestige is something casual and restricted in its use. Technology also impacts the construction of the concept of luxury and *masstige* since it is considered that the rare of yesterday is the superfluous of today. This was the case with the air bag, ABS brakes, refrigerators and microwaves, which have all evolved from the rare to the indispensable (Douglas & Isherwood, 2002).

## METHODOLOGY

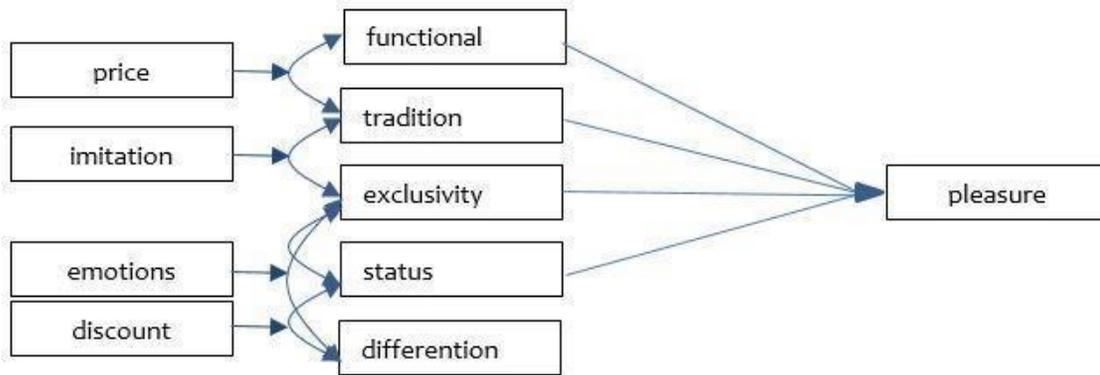
The methodology of this study sought to validate a scale for *masstige* consumption as well as to promote a study to deepen the subject. The search for the modeling technique of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and Partial Least Squares (PLS) was useful. The SEM/PLS technique is indicated when there are a large number of variables involved and grouping of variables around constructs. Such an aspect made it possible to reach the objectives and studies of the hypotheses.

A total of 457 participants were randomly interviewed in large cities in the region of Central Brazil at events held with the theme of new luxury and *masstige*. The inclusion criterion was to frequently consume *masstige* products and follow bloggers and vloggers of this consumption universe. This criterion was based on a list of luxury brands that are considered to be exclusive and marketed food and beverages; beauty products; perfumery; fashion and cars. From this relationship, those who consumed accessories and products from an extended line of these brands were considered a “*masstige consumer*” and were invited to participate in the survey. Three situations were foreseen:

1. Line extension: when a manufacturer launches another item to compose its line from one product. For example, a perfume or cream that accompanies the same fragrance.
2. Category extension: used by the parent brand to penetrate a new market segment. For example, a sports car that has as mix, key chains, clothing and accessories.

3. junior version: brands created from parent brands when the goal is to reach new segments such as Armani with the Armani Exchange. The practice in this case aims to preserve the main brand when promotions and discounts launch cheaper products.

Individuals under the age of 18 years and incapable of responding to interviews were adopted as exclusion criterion. The interviews were conducted in public settings, such as squares, parks and other public places.



**FIGURE 1  
PATH DIAGRAM**

From some related studies and according to the exploratory study that guided the quantitative phase of this research, 6 variables were related. Similar studies on the consumption of luxury products and masstige had some common variables (Table 1) such as: excellence, aesthetics, pleasure, identity and utilitarian aspects (Choo et al., 2012); identity, social recognition, self-esteem, achievement, aspiration for the brand and award (indulgence) (Pilla et al., 2016); prestige, exclusivity, rarity, leadership and seduction (Kapferer & Valette-Florence, 2016; Kapferer & Laurent, 2016).

<b>Table 1 STUDY VARIABLES</b>	
1	The masstige product has high quality (Dubois et al., 2005).
2	The masstige product is related to high technology (Serraf, 1991).
3	A masstige product should be made from rare raw material (Serraf, 1991).
4.	The masstige product can be considered an art (Dubois et al., 2005).
5	A masstige product reflects who owns it (Douglas & Isherwood, 2002).
6	The masstige product promotes the personal image of its consumer (Lipovetsky & Roux, 2003)
7	The masstige product represents a historical tradition (Allérès, 2005)
8	The masstige product is always associated with a strong brand (Lipovetsky & Roux, 2003)
9	[...] serves to demonstrate how successful the person is (Lipovetsky & Roux, 2003).
10	The masstige product expresses who the consumer wants to be (Dubois et al., 2005).
11	The price for a masstige product should be high (Dubois et al., 2005).
12	The masstige product is rare (Douglas & Isherwood, 2002).
13	A masstige product must be of high sophistication (Serraf, 1991).
14	Through a masstige product it is possible to determine who has money (Veblen, 2017).
15	[...] should be consumed at rare times of life (Dubois et al., 2005).
16	People buy masstige products to differentiate themselves from others (Baudrillard, 2016)
17	For masstige products it is possible to influence people (Serraf, 1991).

**Table 1**  
**STUDY VARIABLES**

18	A masstige product should reflect a lifestyle (Lipovetsky & Roux, 2003).
19	A replica of a masstige brand is equally attractive (Dubois et al., 2005).
20	The masstige product is used for competition between people (Veblen, 2017).
21	Prior knowledge is needed to appreciate masstige goods (Bourdieu, 2013).
22	I know a lot about the masstige world (Bourdieu, 2013).
23	I could talk about masstige products for hours.
24	[...] masstige services products by influence of the cultural environment (Bourdieu, 2013).
25	The masstige product attracts admiration to those who consume it (Dubois et al., 2005).
26	The masstige product is associated with the emotion of life (Serraf, 1991).
27	A masstige product must be related to the good reputation of its manufacturer (Serraf, 1991).
28	Buying a masstige product is a real pleasure (Dubois et al., 2005).
29	The masstige product reveals consumer taste (Castarede, 1992).
30	Ownership of a masstige product means exclusivity (McClelland, 1978).
31	Few people have a truly masstige product (McClelland, 1978).
32	[...] it is possible to be part of a group of people (Douglas & Isherwood, 2002).
33	The masstige is linked to ostentation (Douglas & Isherwood, 2002).
34	He who possesses masstige products also has power (McClelland, 1978).
35	The purchase of a masstige product is a personal achievement (McClelland, 1978).

This survey made the connection between the latent variables in the Structural Equation Modeling Path Diagram (MEE) possible. The seven-step model was adopted: (1) development of a theoretical model; (2) construction of a path diagram; (3) conversion of a path diagram of causal relationships; (4) choosing the type of data matrix and estimation of the proposed model; (5) assessment of the model identification; (6) evaluation of quality criteria; (7) interpretation and modification of the model, if theoretically justified (Hair et al., 1998).

*“A quantidade de variáveis envolvidas no estudo explica porque as decisões de escolha de marca dos consumidores está sendo cada vez mais influenciadas por atributos de marca não-utilitários, como propriedade simbólica e demonstração de distinções sociais”* (Pillai et al., 2016)

### Data Analysis Technique

The range of expressive schooling in the sample was the “*complete superior*”, considering even the target audience of events, university students and middle class youth. Most of the interviewees were single (63.27%), followed by married (23.60%). Widowed and separated contributed with 13.11%. The sample consisted predominantly of women living in the city of Goiânia, aged between 20 and 29 years.

The analysis of missing values and outliers led to the exclusion of 12 cases. The option chosen is justified by the appropriate case-variable relation of 7.85 (minimum acceptable of 5 cases per variable) for Factor Analysis, as well as by the practicality of not being derived from the attribution processes and the resulting analyzes (Hair et al., 1998). Statistical normality through histograms, box plots and Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, considering *H0* (the variable data originate from a normal distribution) and *H1* (the variable data do not originate from a normal distribution), he concluded that the data were in their normal distribution. With the exclusion of outliers, the visual analysis was favorable, as well as the values of the test and Kolmogorov-Smirnov with correction of significance of Lilliefors.

Linearity, homoscedasticity and visual inspection were examined for the dispersion diagram, which did not show related problems. Regarding the measurement reliability test, only V3 was excluded from the model, which raised the alpha of the dimension to 0.880. In sequence, the correlation matrix and the Kaiser criterion (variance explained by at least 1.0) and the Obliqua Orthogonal Varimax rotation were developed.

### Analysis of the Correlation Matrix and Anti-Image Matrix

Once the correlation matrix was constructed, the first visual examination finds that there are not many correlations above the suggested scores, though some are as high as 0.50 and 0.60. Values near 0.50 indicate that the factors found cannot satisfactorily describe the variations of the original data. Regarding the MAS tests (0.800); KMO (2829.731) and Bartlett's Sphericity Test (595.000), presented adequacy for the use of PA. With regard to the sphericity test, the value considered satisfactory for the significance test (sig) would be below 0.05. Above 0.10, the use of AF is discouraged (Lattin et al., 2011).

The desired option for the extraction of factors fell on Orthogonal and Varimax. In this sense, by the criterion of latent root, the extraction would be 6 factors; according to the Kaiser criterion, the choice would be 10. The other suggested criteria of percentage of variance and heterogeneity of the respondents were disregarded due to the low accumulated variance recorded in the first attempt to extract factors (56.75%). When Factorial Analysis was run without determining the amount of factors to be extracted, the maximum accumulated total variance obtained was 56.75%.

	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Cronbach <math>\alpha</math></b>
Differentiation	0.212	0.668
Exclusivity	0.255	0.584
Functional	0.301	0.637
Pleasure	0.206	0.564
Status	0.000	0.649
Tradition	0.337	0.776

With respect to  $\alpha$ , we highlight “*tradition*”, “*differentiation*” and “*status*”, with expressive values, granting the proviso that this measure is extremely sensitive as new variables are inserted into the study dimensions. However, for R<sup>2</sup>, it is possible to state that the coefficient has an explanation coefficient of zero, that is, nothing elucidative Table 2.

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b><math>\alpha</math></b>	<b>KMO</b>
Cultural	Tradition	20.64%	0.775	0.874
Social	Differentiation	15.92%	0.669	0.751
	Exclusivity	14.82%	0.584	0.680
Symbolic	Status	14.82%	0.651	0.662
	Pleasure	33.10%	0.563	0.626

<b>Table 3</b> <b>CORRELATION BETWEEN LATENT VARIABLES</b>				
Product	Functional	5.97%	0.641	0.717

The dimensions proposed in the Factor Analysis are created from the subjectivity suggested by the researchers, naming these dimensions can also follow the variable that presents the highest factorial load (Hair et al., 1998).

## RESULTS

When running the AF, the lowest value for the main diagonal was related to the variable FUN08 (0.42) and the highest was related to PRA01 (0.70). On the secondary diagnoses, a low value was verified for TRA09. The requirement here is to exclude low values that interfere with the Mean Extracted Variance (AVE).

According to Table 3, variables in four models with a low factor load were excluded until the process had factorial loads equal to or greater than 0.70 and an AVE greater than or equal to 0.50. In the first passage with the exclusion of three variables, the model underwent a significant improvement mainly in the Differentiation, Functional and Tradition dimension; in the third passage with the exclusion of two other variables, the model improved in all dimensions. Finally, in the fourth and last passage, with the exclusion of four other variables, the model reached its limit when it can be considered "*adequate*" from the point of view of convergent validity and also suitable from the point of view of reliability (above 0.70) (Table 4).

<b>Table 4</b> <b>CORRELATION BETWEEN LATENT VARIABLES</b>	
<b>Model Order</b>	<b>Excluded Variables</b>
First Model	-
Second Model	DIF06; FUN01; TRAB9
Third Model	DIF3; STA3
Fourth Model	DIF5; EXC5; TRA1; TRA5

The AVE improves significantly as the exclusion procedures for the variables occur. The constructs show improvement with the procedure (Table 5).

<b>Table 5</b> <b>AVERAGE VARIANCE EXTRACTED BY MODEL (AVE)</b>						
<b>Model Order</b>	<b>AVE</b>					
	Differentiation	Exclusivity	Functional	Pleasure	Status	Tradition
First Model	0.331	0.373	0.414	0.532	0.406	0.383
Second Model	0.360	0.372	0.485	0.532	0.408	0.425
Third Model	0.395	0.373	0.486	0.533	0.462	0.426
Fourth Model	0.437	0.417	0.486	0.534	0.461	0.483

The variables have highly significant loads from a statistical standpoint: ( $t > 1.96$ ) according to Table 6 and ( $t > 1.96$  or  $p < 0.05$ ) according to the parameter.

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>Load Factor</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>Stat.</b>
Differentiation	DIF01	0.693	0.044	5.7
Differentiation	DIF02	0.687	0.050	13.7
Differentiation	DIF04	0.605	0.058	10.5
Differentiation	DIF07	0.658	0.048	13.8
Exclusivity	EXC01	0.647	0.048	13.6
Exclusivity	EXC02	0.602	0.054	11.1
Exclusivity	EXC03	0.655	0.048	13.8
Exclusivity	EXC04	0.678	0.041	16.4
Functional	FUN02	0.662	0.045	14.7
Functional	FUN03	0.806	0.023	34.5
Functional	FUN04	0.587	0.058	10.1
Functional	FUN05	0.716	0.041	17.6
Functional	PRA01	0.729	0.049	15.0
Pleasure	PRA02	0.720	0.048	14.9
Pleasure	PRA03	0.743	0.044	17.1
Status	STA01	0.663	0.051	13.0
Status	STA02	0.652	0.064	10.2
Status	STA04	0.758	0.045	16.8
Status	STA05	0.635	0.069	9.2
Tradition	TRA10	0.636	0.035	18.0
Tradition	TRA02	0.712	0.032	22.0
Tradition	TRA03	0.610	0.039	15.7
Tradition	TRA04	0.720	0.031	23.4
Tradition	TRA06	0.677	0.033	20.8
Tradition	TRA07	0.718	0.035	20.7
Tradition	TRA08	0.777	0.027	29.4

The next step was to verify the discriminant validity at the variable level. Because of this, a diagonal is created with the square root of the AVE's in the correlation matrix of the dimensions. Since the values on the diagonal are greater than the values outside the diagonal, there is discriminant validity.

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Differentiation</b>	<b>Exclusivity</b>	<b>Functional</b>	<b>Pleasure</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Tradition</b>
Differentiation	0.661					
Exclusivity	0.463	0.646				
Functional	0.293	0.379	0.697			
Pleasure	0.270	0.362	0.334	0.731		
Status	0.495	0.351	0.197	0.263	0.679	

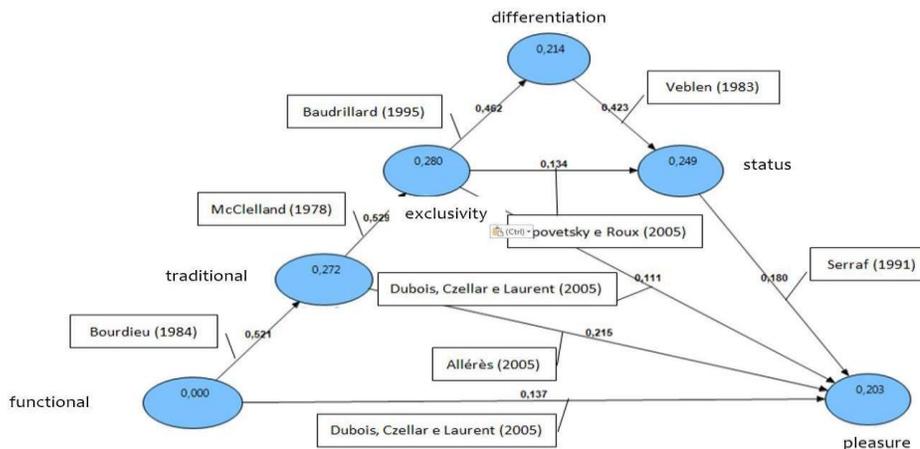
Tradition	0.253	0.487	0.516	0.285	-0.005	0.695
AVE	0.437	0.417	0.486	0.534	0.461	0.483

Next, it was also necessary to assess the discriminant validity at the indicator level.

	Differentiation	Exclusivity	Functional	Pleasure	Status	Tradition
Differentiation	1					
Exclusivity	0.459	1				
Functional	0.311	0.383	1			
Pleasure	0.269	0.336	0.320	1		
Status	0.460	0.399	0.272	0.293	1	
Tradition	0.407	0.546	0.516	0.372	0.197	1

According to Table 7, issues related to differentiation are a preponderant factor for exclusivity; functional product issues are also related to exclusivity; tradition is built by the exclusivity and functionality of the product.

In elaborating the constructs, the goal was to follow the theoretical reference using the Factor Analysis proposal as support. The main criterion for evaluating the reliability and validation of the structural model (Figure 2) is through the determination coefficient  $R^2$  for endogenous latent variables (Chin, 1998; Hair et al., 1998). Chin (1998) considers that in order for  $R^2$  to be weak, the value will be around 0.19; to be moderate, the value will be centered at 0.33 and finally to be substantial, the expected value will be 0.67 (Table 8).



**FIGURE 2  
STRUCTURAL COEFFICIENTS**

Considering the parameters suggested by Chin (1998), one has to say that in terms of pleasure construction, there are no substantial exogenous variables. Only tradition would receive the criterion of “*moderate*” while the others would be considered “*insufficient*”. In isolation, their contributions would also be moderate, with emphasis on exclusivity (0.28).

<b>Way</b>	<b>Statistic-t</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>
Functional-Tradition	13.086	0.521
Tradition-Exclusivity	12.023	0.529
Exclusivity-Differentiation	10.711	0.462
Exclusivity-Status	2.298	0.134
Differentiation-Status	7.237	0.423
Functional-Pleasure	2.463	0.137
Tradition-Pleasure	1.406	0.215
Exclusivity-Pleasure	2.765	0.111
Status-Pleasure	2.613	0.180

In analyzing from a statistical point of view, only the connection tradition and pleasure do not demonstrate any significance. However, from a practical point of view and from the parameters of Chin (1998), there would be no significance for all of the parameters. In the construction of the model, in general and by order of importance, we have exclusivity (0.280), tradition (0.272), status (0.249), differentiation (0.214) and functional (0.00).

In Table 9 we have the main questions forming the decision-making process for masstige products. Tradition is built in a significant way by the functional appeal of the product while there is an expressive link between tradition and exclusivity, as well as exclusivity and differentiation. Status and exclusivity are the most significant constructs for the formation of the pleasure construct.

In three recent surveys, the dimensions surveyed were slightly different. In the French study, the following was predicted: (1) product superiority, (2) selective distribution, (3) class and status, (4) originality, (5) exclusivity, (6) glamor, (7) rarity and (8) fashion Kapferer & Valette-Florence, 2016). In the North American study, the dimensions were constituted by: (1) differentiation, (2) extreme quality, (3) hedonism, (4) singularity and (5) personal projection (Vigneron & Johnson, 2017). In a study carried out in the United Kingdom, the proposed dimensions contemplated: (1) affection, (2) characteristics, (3) status, (4) gifting and (5) involvement (Walley et al., 2013). The dimensions involved suggest a semantic question, which raises other studies and may include other aspects such as corporate reputation (Walsh et al., 2017).

Figure 1 and Table 9 show the dilemmas related to multivariate analysis: validity and significance. Two results are expected from an analysis like this one: (1) the magnitude offered for effects between variables (for this the model must be correct); (2) and whether or not this model is robust. In summary, the model is correct, but not necessarily significant.

The study participants had an average of 25.33 years (vloggers and bloggers). The majority were male (56.35%), students (65.78), with an average income equivalent to (US \$3,500.00). All respondents were of Brazilian origin.

## DISCUSSIONS

From the results, the issue of representation emerges and is defined as; the degree of social distinction it provides along with the knowledge that is embedded in its consumption. Still rare, however, is the research that aims to study the masstige products, though research on luxury products do already exist in profusion. High-end products support their image in terms of geographical and social-demographical constraints while masstige products maintain their mass-segmentation strategy at a reasonable price and thus maintain their prestige (Truong et al., 2009). Nevertheless, they are market-oriented with other consumer cultures, which do not prioritize the attributes of high luxury. This should also be considered as an efficient penetration strategy (Paul, 2015). The masstige product occupies another market segment and does not rival luxury products as verified in related studies when even new concepts such as inconspicuous ones are brought into this particular universe of consumption (Makkar & Yap, 2018). In other words, hedonic pleasure and quality are intrinsic to high luxury and the desire to deconstruct luxury belongs to the masstige universe (Roper et al., 2013). Satisfaction, recognition, reward and merit, coupled with design, quality, durability and beauty, would be the determinants of luxury consumption. In this specific case, there was no correspondence between the studies due to the latent “*functional*” variable having very low representation. However, status and recognition correspond to the one described by the authors regarding hedonism.

The functional is allied to a significant tradition and exclusiveness. In this regard, price, quality and raw material make up the aspects of product tradition being that tradition is synonymous with exclusivity in this study. From studies centered on the recommendation of a product of prestige, one has that tradition which is not preponderant by the formation of the concept of differentiation. It would be tangible aspects such as the quality and innovation that determine a consumer to indicate their preferred brand (Chang et al., 2016), as well as performance excellence (Choo et al., 2012).

It is assumed that the functional question of a luxury product (quality, technical aspects and technology, among others) is related to tradition (image of the founder, experience and market, among others). Both constructs would be closely related to the exclusivity of use and the pleasure of living the emotion of that particular consumption; status is a determinant construct for the elaboration of the pleasure of consumption; the exclusivity would be the construction factor of the differentiation construct.

The pleasure dimension assumes the role of dependent variable where the values  $t > 1.96$  are significant at 5%. It is observed that only a structural coefficient was not significant, Tradition Pleasure. No doubt is it possible to affirm that pleasure is the propulsion of luxury consumption in this quantitative research beyond the latent variable being the center of character. Pleasure arises in situations of experiential consumption, the manifestation of a true aura, experiential power, only experienced in stores that teach the secret of the great brands of luxury (Hughes & Ahearne, 2010). This pleasure relates to the sharing of information about the manufacturing processes and materials used and the teachings passed on by the seller about elements of the history of brands that are less known or not public (Cervellon & Coudriet, 2013). The seller of this universe is an ambassador (when outside the country of origin) and a noble citizen (when in the country of origin). Consumers expect them to have the attitude and behavior of a privileged person, to be well educated, distant and unfamiliar with the customer, identified with the brand and defined with the same attributes that define their favorite brand (Hughes &

Ahearne, 2010), in order to allow the appropriation of meaning by the consumer (McCracken, 1986).

With regard to the question of differentiation and its construction in research, the variables exclusivity and status are essential aspects.

From a statistical standpoint, the ESM model is extremely significant, receiving Functional-Tradition (13.09); Tradition-Exclusivity (12.03); and Exclusivity-Differentiation (10.70); Differentiation-Exclusivity (7.23). The construction of pleasure in this consumption is mainly based on status (2.61) and exclusivity (2.76). Tradition does not suggest engagement in the construction of pleasure.

From a practical point of view, the ESM model is of medium relevance since most relations constructed are only medium-low. The Exclusivity (0.28) constructs stand out as important; Tradition (0.27) and Status (0.24). The strongest relationships are between Functional and Tradition; Tradition and Exclusivity; Exclusivity and Differentiation. In the construction of the Pleasure construct, which is the dependent variable, we have Status as the most significant in this relationship.

From a statistical standpoint, the results behave in a way that is in line with what has already been observed in other studies where tradition does not seem to be relevant for the construction of the pleasure of luxury consumption.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study, in addition to seeking to understand the consumption of affordable luxury products, has developed a scale that explores the issue of the motivations related to consumption of masstige products. This scale was constructed from the answers obtained from the application of questionnaires to consumers of masstige products and validated from the use of multivariate techniques. The importance of this study lies in the relationship to the difficulty in identifying this motivation, as well as in the aspect of accessible luxury being closely linked to the superfluous and futile as it goes through a process of democratization where each one builds its own concept of luxury. Today this is said of the individual who consumes luxury and masstige, as someone inserted in a context of conspicuous consumption of inclusion, differentiation and immersion in a search environment for belonging. However, this study was able to reveal other aspects. This issue was preponderant to highlight the importance and fidelity of the scale in question. It is important to use this scale in other studies, as predicted by Hair et al. (1998), if possible in two contrasting samples.

The scale also aligns itself with a situation that deals with the quest for the lower classes in copying those at the top of the social pyramid. This search is related to the democratic and accessible search for the masstige. In consideration to this consumer and an up-to-date definition for this consumption, it is noted that there is a symbolic dimension that runs through the logic of the mere functionality of these products (Huber, 2017). The values of products are socially constructed since there is no category of goods that responds to objective needs. Its function is a socially assigned meaning. The value of objects is the result of a combination of practicality and symbolism elaborated by the members of a group. In this experience, the consumer, in order to effectively insert himself or herself in the context of socially attributed meanings, goes through a learning context for the tendencies to be consumed (Rocha, 2005). This learning is often provided by experts since the tradition of consumption requires a series of requirements such as dedication, experience and cultural experience, among others (Featherstone, 2002). This situation predicted by the author provided the emergence as the figures of the coolhunters and bloggers.

It stands out as both theoretical and practical contributions that the scale for the consumption of affordable luxury, or *masstige*, can contribute to the development of new products that reach audiences of other income ranges and in doing so also promote the well-being and satisfaction of users and companies in general. In an extended way, the form found to classify the products like *masstige* also appears timely:

- (1) Products in their junior version; (2) Line extension products and (3) Category extension products.

Despite the potentialities referenced here for this scale, it is important to recognize that the same should be the subject of other studies that test other forms of validation. This does not necessarily include content validity and internal or concurrent structure and construct. The results obtained demonstrate that the scale of motivation to consumption of *masstige* products has good psychometric properties in addition to being stable. This in turn makes it possible to reach the proposed objectives.

This research tool can be used by research institutes, universities and companies for market studies. Understanding this consumer is to promote work on the transmission of meanings and inclusion of new consumers in this access economy. The research promotes social inclusion and the recovery of self-esteem from consumption since people carry this out with the ownership of quality products at an affordable price. As a theoretical contribution, we believe that we occupy a gap in the theory of the consumption of luxury, after all are rare the publication on mass consumption, symbolic and cultural. Access to the consumption of prestigious and quality products promotes a sense of belonging and the search for an identity that is consistent with new consumption patterns (accessible, quality and prestige products). The welfare of this consumption is centered on pleasure and vanity, as seen in the consumption plus size that has rescued the self-esteem of obese people.

There are wide possibilities for a future research agenda. It is possible, for example, to investigate aspects of brand hate related to fear, deception, shame and dehumanization (Zarantonello et al., 2016). Likewise, it is also possible to investigate the gifting effect (Waller, 1999) of the high luxury and *masstige* communities (Cavender & Kincade, 2014). In the universe of cultural and symbolic consumption, it is possible to investigate the Diderot Effect, or the interconnections between complementary products (McCracken, 1986).

This research has a cultural cut. For reasons of caution, it is recommended to observe the demographic differences for replication of this research instrument.

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