



**Universidad del
Rosario**

**NARCO CULTURE AND LUXURY FASHION: EXAMINING PERCEPTIONS AND
PURCHASE INTENTIONS IN COLOMBIA.**

GRADUATING PROJECT

SOFÍA LOAIZA VÉLEZ

PARIS, FRANCIA

2025

UNIVERSIDAD DEL ROSARIO



**Universidad del
Rosario**

**NARCO CULTURE AND LUXURY FASHION: EXAMINING PERCEPTIONS AND
PURCHASE INTENTIONS IN COLOMBIA.**

GRADUATING PROJECT

SOFÍA LOAIZA VÉLEZ

Dr. EIRINI KORONAKI

MARKETING Y NEGOCIOS DIGITALES

**ESCUELA DE ADMINISTRACIÓN
UNIVERSIDAD DEL ROSARIO
PARIS, FRANCIA**

2025

Declaration of Originality and Autonomy

I declare under the gravity of the oath, that I have written the title document “**Narco culture and Luxury Fashion: Examining Perceptions and Purchase intentions in Colombia.**”, in the graduation option of Marketing and Digital Business and double degree with a MSc in Luxury Marketing and Brand Management at Rennes School of Business and that therefore, its content is original.

I declare that I have clearly and precisely indicated all direct and indirect sources of information and that this work has not been delivered to any other institution for purposes of rating or publication.

Date: 28/10/2024

Sofia Loaiza Vélez

Disclaimer Statement

I, Sofia Loaiza Vélez, declare that the intellectual responsibility for this work rests solely with its author. The Universidad del Rosario is not responsible for the content, opinions, or ideologies expressed, either in whole or in part.

Sofia Loaiza Vélez

Table of contents

Declaration of Originality and Autonomy.....	3
Disclaimer Statement.....	4
Acknowledgements.....	8
Abstract.....	9
Resumen.....	10
1.Introduction.....	11
2. Research Question.....	13
2.1 Academic Relevance.....	13
3. Historical Review.....	16
3.1 Key figures in Colombian Drug Trafficking.....	16
3.2 The Rise of Cocaine.....	17
3.3 Introduction to Drug Lords.....	18
3.4 Social implications.....	20
4. Literature Review.....	23
4.1 Culture.....	23
4.2 Luxury.....	24
4.2.1 Luxury in Latin America.....	26
Luxury as a marker of social status in Latin America.....	27
Evolution of Latin American Luxury.....	28
Growth of a dynamic market.....	29
4.2.2 Colombian Social Disparity.....	30
4.3 Narco Culture.....	30
4.3.1 Narco Aesthetics.....	32
4.4 Narcos and Luxury.....	34
4.4.1 Narco Fashion.....	36
4.4.2 Narco Glorification.....	37
List of Songs Referencing Narco Culture, Luxury and Illegal Drug Dealing:.....	38
4.5 Perceived Risk.....	41
4.6 Perceived Value.....	42
4.7 Brand Perception and Brand Image.....	43
4.8 Brand Identity.....	45
4.9 Social Status and Cultural Capital.....	46
5. Methodology.....	47
5.1 Hypothesis.....	48
5.2 Sampling method.....	49
5.3 Data collection method.....	50
5.4 Demographic summary.....	52
6. Analysis and Results.....	53

7. Conclusions.....	58
7.1 Practical recommendations.....	60
8. Limitations of the study.....	63
9. Future directions.....	64
10. Bibliography.....	65
11. APPENDIX.....	73
1. Survey conducted for the study on narco culture and luxury fashion in Colombia.....	73
2. Table 1. Summary table of regression's results.....	77

Table of figures

Figure 1. The dimensions of luxury. (Ryding et Al, 2016).....	20
Figure 2. Average revenue expected from the luxury fashion market in millions in Colombia until 2029. (Statista, 2024).....	23
Figure 3. Aura Rocío Restrepo (Beauty pageant winner - Miss Tourism in Valle del Cauca.) 1987, accompanied by Gilberto Rodriguez Orejuela, high member of Cartel de Cali. (El Tiempo, 2022).....	26
Figure 4. Virginia Vallejo, journalist involved with Pablo Escobar in the 1980's. (Raja, 2018). 26	
Figure 6. Pablo Escobar and his African elephant in Hacienda Nápoles. (TN Internacional, 2023).....	28
Figure 5. Spending size in luxury by segments. (BGC, 2010).....	27
Figure 6. Pablo Escobar and his African elephant in Hacienda Nápoles. (TN Internacional, 2023).....	28
Figure 7. Pablo Escobar's Rolex made out of solid gold encrusted with hundreds of diamonds. (The Guardian, 2013).....	28
Figure 8. Griselda Blanco and her husband wearing gold jewellery. (National Geographic, 2021).....	29
Figure 9. The re-interpretation of narco fashion for a themed party. (Pinterest, N.d).....	29
Figure 10. Dimensions of perception of risk associated with purchase behaviour. (Tsiros, Heilman, 2005).....	33
Figure 11. Keller's pyramid for the Brand Equity Model (Demirbag, 2007).....	35
Figure 12. Brand Identity Prism by Kapferer applied to Channel. (BoardMix, 2024).....	36
Figure 13. Theoretical model for the research of the effects of Narco culture as a result of violence in the 80's in Colombia, currently affects the perception of luxury fashion in Colombia.....	38

Acknowledgements

I am deeply grateful to everyone that has supported me through my academic journey. Every bit of advice has been invaluable. Your guidance has been crucial to my growth and has provided me the fuel to keep striving for excellence.

To my family - Diego, Andrea and Susana - thank you for your unwavering support and encouragement. Your belief in me has been the foundation to my confidence and strength, inspiring me to chase my dreams wholeheartedly. Your unconditional support has been my anchor, providing me with the strength to explore new paths and embrace all challenges that life may put in my way with a brave face. I am endlessly grateful for the love and trust that you have placed in me, which has been the wind beneath my wings.

A heartfelt thanks to Salomé, my lifelong friend, who has always been pushing me to be my best and for believing in me since we were kids. Your words have always been a source of strength through this rocky journey. *Estoy eternamente agradecida de tenerte en mi vida.*

To my mentors and the Rennes School of Business, I am thankful to them for providing me with new knowledge, and new opportunities that have enriched my academic experience.

Finally, this research would not have been possible without the participants who shared their insights and experiences about Colombia. Your voices are the main pillar to this work, I am beyond grateful for your contributions.

Abstract

This study investigates the influence of narco culture in the purchase intention of luxury fashion in Colombia. Grounded in existing theories of consumer behaviour, this research examines how narco culture shapes Colombian consumer perceptions and purchase intention regarding luxury goods. Using survey data of 157 participants, the study assesses the perceived risk, value, brand perception and social status within the luxury fashion sector. Findings show that narco culture elevates the perceived risk in luxury purchase intention, indicating that Colombian consumers carefully consider social status and brand associations in luxury fashion goods before making purchase decisions. These insights highlight the important cultural dynamics, offering guidance for brands targeting the Colombian, Latin America, and markets shaped by long-term violence and social complexities.

Keywords: Narco culture, Luxury fashion, Purchase intention, Perceived risk, Consumer behaviour.

Resumen

Este estudio investiga la influencia de la narco cultura en la intención de compra de moda de lujo en Colombia. Basado en teorías existentes sobre el comportamiento del consumidor, esta investigación analiza cómo la narco cultura moldea las percepciones de los consumidores colombianos y su intención de compra en relación con los bienes de lujo. A través de datos de encuestas realizadas a 157 participantes, el estudio evalúa el riesgo percibido, el valor, la percepción de marca y el estatus social dentro del sector de la moda de lujo. Los hallazgos indican que la narco cultura aumenta la percepción de riesgo en la intención de compra de lujo, lo que sugiere que los consumidores colombianos consideran cuidadosamente el estatus social y las asociaciones de marca antes de tomar decisiones de compra. Estos conocimientos resaltan las importantes dinámicas culturales, ofreciendo orientación para las marcas que buscan dirigirse al mercado colombiano, latinoamericano y otros mercados influenciados por la violencia prolongada y las complejidades sociales.

Palabras clave: Narco cultura, Moda de lujo, Intención de compra, Riesgo percibido, Comportamiento del consumidor.

1.Introduction

What started as cultivating a medicinal herb, the Coca plant, led to one of the biggest social problems that the world has ever seen, the Cocaine Wars, and the narco-trafficking of illegal substances creating lasting effects on society. The rise of narco-traffic in Colombia can be traced back to the late 1940s, with large influence from the United States, and the post-war activities. The political instability and the social problems for the South Americans, especially in Colombia due to the geographical advantages, led to the perfect pathway to illicit activities, especially cocaine trade in the 1980's, as the demand kept rising.

This period of national brutality in Colombia, contrasted with the lavish and the greedy lifestyle of drug lords, led to the idolization of such by the lower socio-economic classes, thereby creating the "Narco culture", leveraging and almost sustaining its bases on the traditional sexist system of the country. The glorification of such figures was a consequence of the "easy money" path to obscene wealth and political influence, rewarded by women, highly objectified, and an abundance of material affluence, which was the only apparent solution to leave poverty in a quick way, which seemed almost impossible in the rigid social hierarchy.

Narco culture introduced a powerful contrast, in a matter of a couple of years from poor families, to being in Forbes Richest list for several consecutive years, The compelling narrative of private planes, lavish parties, designer items, captivated the eye of many, ingraining itself in the public memories as a demonstration of power and success.

Medellin and Cali, some of the most affected cities, served not only as operational centres, but as a symbol of the socio-cultural transformation that took place due to narco culture. Despite the efforts to eliminate or change the reputation of Colombia as a drug trafficking hub in the world, the consequences have prevailed intrinsic with values and behaviours known to be part of the Narco culture, that after its peak in the 1980's is contemporarily represented not only in a certain lifestyle, but in entertainment, fashion, the automobile industry, and even in the Latin American literature.

Globally, the media has played a key role in both immortalising and romanticising the brutalities of narco culture. Through movies, tv shows, art, music, the unique stories of these violent figures have been captured with a captivating and empathic light, in most cases, and preserving these violent narratives in the collective memory, while, at the same time, cultivating a fascination for the audiences. The double standard of humanising murderers and drug lords, creates admiration and inspires imitation amongst consumers, who seek to copy the style and status that is associated with the symbols of the narco aesthetics.

This graduating project examines the customer perception of luxury fashion in the Colombian environment taking into account the Narco culture as a variable, as a result of the 1980's violence, as a trigger for a shift in behaviour and attitude. During these times, fashion not only served as a way of expression, it represented a universe beyond self expression. In narco culture, fashion became a strategic move for positioning personal brands as a display of wealth and power in the social hierarchy. Garments surpassed functionality, and tapped into the symbolic ability to create a distinction in society, a legacy in people's minds. Nowadays, the influence of narco culture can impact the consumer's purchase intentions, as an effect of

aspiration or repulsion. Nevertheless, this has affected all Colombian population, directly or indirectly involved, as fashion was a way to identify the cartel members with non-verbal communication.

2. Research Question

How did the emergence of Narco culture, as a consequence of violence in 1980s Colombia, influence the contemporary perception of luxury fashion, and the effects on consumer's purchase intention?

2.1 Academic Relevance

The study covers the emergence of Narco culture, as a direct effect on the violent period in 1980's in Colombia, and the influence it has as a result of cultural permanence in the Colombian environment towards the contemporary perception of luxury items, specifically targeted towards luxury fashion.

The proposed research on the impact of Narco Culture on the perception of luxury fashion in Colombia is significant academically and socially for several reasons. Firstly, the violent past of Colombia's relationship with drug cartels, trafficking and corruption during the 1980's, left the country with aftereffects that not only are reflected in the big cities of Colombia and the country itself, but are also echoed in the Americas, and worldwide thanks to the mass media communication and globalisation.

The emergence of Narco Culture in Colombia during the 80's, is a cultural phenomenon, with big influence on art, music, and fashion, which continues to shape Colombian society and is represented globally on current affairs.

The research approaches the complexity of the sequels of a prolonged period of extreme violence, fascination for power, and demonstration of a higher social status. Culture, commerce, violence and social interaction create a mesh that moulds society which is a relevant aspect to evaluate in order to understand the Latin American approach for luxury, and the specific characteristics, taking into account the power display dynamic, the consumption patterns and the meaning of owning luxury, which should be taken into account when exploring the possibility to penetrate the market. It offers a unique lens to examine the ways of awareness towards a country that might have an unconventional relation with luxury consumption, challenging the traditional notions of it. Through the study, insights on the behaviour can be obtained as well as strategies of the luxury fashion industries, and to consumers to overcome socio political challenges.

Moreover, the study of Narco culture's impact on luxury fashion in Colombia, does not only affect academia, it provides valuable insights for professionals, policy makers, psychologists, and culture researchers, as they navigate through the challenges of globalisation, increasing the understanding of cultural diversity and differences regarding the luxury market and dynamics of luxury in Latin America, which are affected by historic incidents, especially in Colombia. This project can inspire a deeper appreciation of the cultural dynamics, and foster a further recognition of the relation between violence and art.

The topic of Narco Culture in Colombia and its impact on consumer perceptions of luxury fashion in the contemporary world is intricately linked to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). It serves as a means of comprehending individuals and establishing profound connections with the environment, primarily through cultural sensitivity. This understanding is instrumental in crafting a business model and strategy that can effectively adapt to the distinctive situations and dynamics present in Colombia.

In accordance with the UNIDO definition, "Corporate Social Responsibility is a management concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns into their business operations and interactions with stakeholders. CSR is generally understood as the way through which a company achieves a balance of economic, environmental, and social imperatives" (2023). The focus of this research is on addressing social imperatives, reflecting a responsibility to comprehend the needs and contexts of customers, influencing their consumption decisions.

Furthermore, heightened awareness of the topic enables companies to scrutinise and, where necessary, amend their sourcing practices, fostering ethical conduct throughout processes and supply chains. This is particularly crucial given the context of a recovering economy, such as Colombia's. Simultaneously, adopting political stances and engaging in social advocacy on issues like violence and drugs, while initiating projects to promote peace and contribute to the social development of regions affected by drug trafficking and cartels in the 80s, align with CSR principles. These strategies not only strengthen customer relationships but also demonstrate a commitment to addressing pressing social challenges.

3. Historical Review

3.1 Key figures in Colombian Drug Trafficking

Pablo Escobar:

Pablo Escobar Gaviria, one of the most renowned drug lords worldwide, had the complete dominance of the Medellin cartel and was an important figure in the War of Drugs in the United States. He is remembered by certain communities in the lower socio-economic classes in Medellin as a positive figure, father-like, for the work he did for the community. (Naef, 2018)

Los Ochoa:

Made of Jorge Luis, Juan David and Fabio Ochoa, came from a wealthy and aristocratic family, allies of Pablo Escobar and members of the Medellin cartel, (Rincón, 1987; Eddy, 1988; Ochoa, 1988). Had their way of negotiating with the Colombian government, were involved in political decisions and even managed to get their way with talking to the US government.

Griselda Blanco:

Commonly denominated as the First Lady of Cocaine, built her empire mostly during the 70's in the United States, and had connections in Colombia as well as in The United States. One of the few females known to have had power over a large market in the drug trafficking industry.

Cali cartel:

The Cali cartel - the Rodríguez Orejuela clan - was led by José Santacruz Londoño and Gilberto Rodríguez in the Valle del Cauca and Cauca region. This cartel was the direct competition to the Pablo Escobar empire in Medellín.

3.2 The Rise of Cocaine

After the World War 2 and the Vietnam War from the mid 50's to the mid 70's, and the horrors that United States, in Pearl Harbor, and the world had to see, the younger generation with the repatriated soldiers, opted for the rejection of the armed conflict and the post-war effects through the consumption of drugs, enabling and opening the market to the Hippie movement, which refused to accept violence and spread love and consciousness through the use of hallucinogenic drugs such as LSD. (Cruz, 2008)

The previous history of alcohol smuggling in the 1920's as a direct effect of The Prohibition (Niemic, 2012), tobacco, clandestine games, that in combination with the previous mafias and the immigrant connections, opened a pathway for higher marijuana and cocaine smuggling from Latin American countries such as Mexico, Cuba and finally Colombia. As in the past, cocaine smuggling had been in small-scale production coming from the Andes with Peruvians, Bolivians, Chileans, additionally to the countries with higher proximity to the US as Mexico and Cuba are, which had remained legal and above board until late 1940's (Gootenberg, 2007) .

Colombia entered the market as one of the biggest players as a result of the "Peace Corps" sent by the "Alliance for Progress" as a Kennedy program to foster economic collaboration between North and South America. (Rabe, 2016) The volunteers of such

organisations acted as the propellers for the Colombian industry. (Arango and Child, 1981)

Encouraging the Colombian families, mostly in the Antioquia region and the Coasts of Colombia to create nets and find new ways to smuggle marihuana and cocaine out of Colombia, and find also a way to emigrate to the United States as a step to get better opportunities.

3.3 Introduction to Drug Lords

The rise of cocaine as the drug of choice, enabled Jaime Caicedo alias “El Grillo”, one of the first big drug lords, to become involved in the international traffic of cocaine, Jaime was a renowned figure from the city of Cali, Colombia, as he was the owner to several nightclubs and social hubs that were used to do business, and gaining affection from the citizens as social life is a priority for the Colombian culture. (El Tiempo Archive, 2004)

Around the same time, mid 1970’s, in Medellin, Benjamín Herrera Zuleta, “Cocaine’s Black Father”, was joining forces with Martha Maria Upegui Uribe “The Queen of Coke”, to create smuggling routes from Argentina to the US. (Castillo, 1987)

Joining at a similar time, Pablo Emilio Escobar Gaviria, the highest representation of drug lords and Colombia’s drug reputation’s biggest author, who had already been involved with organised crime, seized control over the drug empire that Fabio Restrepo had built in Medellin, and escalating it to a global operation that the world had never seen before. He was also known for the mechanism he used to deal with situations, putting actors into a “*Plata o Plomo*” (monetary bribe or to be assassinated) dilemma.

Later establishing connections with Peru and Bolivia, and using Colombia as the hub to get product through to the north. “In the period of March to October 1978, it is assured that there were cocaine smuggling operations for a value of US\$26 million.” (Castillo, 1987)

Simultaneously in the US, Griselda Blanco, born in Medellin, known as “The Godmother”, referencing the Coppola movie “The Godfather”, was establishing her own coke empire in the US, with operations mainly in New York, Miami and Los Angeles. Very distinguished by the amount of violence that she set her empire on, and the way she maintained it for almost 15 years, until she was caught. (Djangi, 2024) However, despite being the biggest female drug lord, her life story and presence is not very known by Colombians, as she based her life in the US.

By 1980 the Colombians dominated the US market and it is estimated the consumption of cocaine was surpassing 50 tons, peaking in quantities exported compared to the last decade. (Cruz, 2008). At the same period, Escobar purchased 20 sq km of land in Antioquia, to reflect his wealth, by building his luxury villa, which included a personal zoo with elephants, hippos, giraffes, exotic birds and more. (McEvoy, 2014). By mid-1980’s it was estimated that Pablo Escobar was worth around US\$30 billion, and was named one of the 10 richest people alive by *Forbes*, and remained on the list for 7 consecutive years. (Jurney, 2015) The Medellin Cartel, led by Escobar in collaboration with Los Ochoa, by then was making about US\$420 million weekly, by smuggling more than 15 tons per day to the United States.

Pablo Escobar positioned himself as almost a heroic figure, politically involved and humanitarian oriented, including social programs for the poor and low resource people in

Medellin in his agenda. He spent millions of his fortune to improve the quality of life for residents in vulnerable neighbourhoods, and even built roads. Therefore, he became a praised public figure that even tried to run for president, even if he was a cocaine smuggler, and participated in the country's congress for 2 years. (García, 2021) However the Cartel fragmented in the late 80's to early 90's, and ended the golden era with the assassination of Escobar, in 1993.

In parallel, in the late 1980's, Gilberto Rodriguez Orejuela, Miguel Rodriguez Orejuela, and José Santacruz Londoño, broke away from the Medellin Cartel to start in Cali their own empire. They came from wealthy families, therefore anterior to their "Cali Cartel" name, they used to make themselves be called as the "Gentlemen of Cali". As said in the Book, *Drug lords. The rise and fall of the Cali cartel. The richest, most powerful crime syndicate in history* "Unlike their counterparts in Medellín, the Cali godfathers were more sophisticated and discreet in their operations and cultivated an image of being respectable businessmen." (Chepesiuk, 2009). The Cali Cartel saw the opportunities to expand from the profit and mega business that cocaine represented to them, to also explore with Heroin and Opium, this lead to opening Europe and being responsible for the rise in cocaine trends during the 90's, that according to Insight Crime, built a fortune of around US\$12,000 million. (CNN Español, 2022)

3.4 Social implications

The illegal drug trade and the lifestyle of drug lords, characterised by being very loud at displaying their wealth, coming from usually low resources to climbing and appearing in *Forbes* richest people on Earth left big implications in Colombian society. The power play,

added to the inherent corruption connected to politics, affected the usual dynamics in an individual and a group setting. The narco activity altered the feeling of community, prioritising values of individualism and individual needs over any price. (Rangel, 1995)

The constant war between the Colombian government and the powerful drug cartels led to a sharp increase of violence, corruption and social instability. Which for the common citizen translated immediately into a wave of terror, and insecurity, as everyday there was a possibility to be caught in the middle of fire. The drug cartels implemented extremely violent measures to keep their control and power, which included car bombings, massive kidnappings, taking over social clubs and threatening people, bombing aeroplanes (Miranda, 2019), leaving the population vulnerable to constant fear even if they were not directly involved with illicit activities.

Cartels and the cocaine wars divided a country that historically had never had full political stability, destabilising even more the society. By dissolving into politics, and interacting directly with the masses, like Escobar did, they became part of the social fabric, affecting interactions from public spaces, on what to wear and what to say, to closed door conversations, which if the wrong comment was said, everyone in the room was put in danger of assassination. Which as previously mentioned, unleashed the individualistic and full of hate mindset, as mentioned in a newspaper article,

"Some embraced the path of armed resistance; others, the majority, fear and silence.

We were a generation that was slowly being erased from the political and social landscape; a generation that witnessed the disappearance of its participatory role in the country's solutions, along with the sense of nationality, the meaning of being Colombian." (Le Monde Diplomatique Colombia, 2013)

The drug lord, Escobar, Griselda, and most of the drug lords, built their 'persona' on coming from the bottom, almost as a success story, and an easy way to getting rich. Establishing to the younger and susceptible generations that the only road to thrive was through illicit businesses, and guiding to what the "*Shortcut culture*" of avoiding the correct paths, open to illegal activities, also commonly known as "mafia culture"(Pereira Sánchez, 2010). The common hatred of the government, and the drug lords showing off their excessive wealth as a symbol of their power, glorifying it through materialism and violence, became regarded with fear and respect. The lines of legal as correct and illegal as incorrect, became so blurred that even morality and ethics were exchanged for the importance of economic benefits.

The conservative Colombia, with most of the population being catholic, and largely in sync with the roman catholic traditions, was challenged and re-shaped by the rise of Narco-Culture (defined in the theoretical framework). The paradoxical interposition between religion, God and violence. What was praised as an organisation and a religion to do "good", focused on the spiritual "well being", transformed into the people calling on God and relying on divine help to deal with drug or as "help" to murder and accomplish missions successfully, as Dr Carlos Rangel, 1995, mentioned in his speech.

Between the years of 1980 and late 1990s, when cocaine smuggling was at its peak, translated as one of the most violent eras that Colombia and the South American continent have ever experienced. This period created a chain reaction, a wave of effects in daily life safety, culture, ethics, morals, religion, politics, pop culture and more - effects that are still evident today.

4. Literature Review

In this section, the theoretical basis for the study will be established, focusing on the overlapping concepts of luxury fashion and narco-culture in the Colombian context.

The framework will also explore the different academic concepts that are key to understanding how consumer behaviour and trends might differ due to the specific setting of the Cocaine wars and their aftermath. Key topics include a look into culture and cultural influence on consumer behaviour, the role of luxury as social status, and the interaction of luxury within the Latin American context, which differs from the European point of view. Additionally, brand reputation, perceived risk and value, and all the previous concepts will be analysed to understand the influence that Narco culture has had, and how they shape contemporary consumer attitudes towards luxury fashion in Colombia.

By understanding the overlapping themes, the framework will guide and highlight how Narco culture has impacted Colombia nationally, potentially changing consumer perceptions that will affect the purchase decisions related to luxury fashion. This analysis is relevant to acknowledge the cultural dynamics that contribute to this niche consumption within the particular landscape of the country.

4.1 Culture

In order to dive deep into the implications of Narco culture in Colombia, culture must be defined. According to Hofstede, in 1994, "(Culture) is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another."

Showing that a large group of people have accepted and decided to embody a certain type of belief system and behaviour which somehow creates a sense of community within, as described by T. Schwartz, 1992, "Culture consists of the derivatives of experience, more or less organised, learned or created by the individuals of a population, including those images or encodements and their interpretations (meaning) transmitted from past generations, from contemporaries, or formed by individuals themselves".

4.2 Luxury

Luxury can be defined as something that exceeds the basic needs and the minimum necessary (Sombart, 1967), however there is no exact definition of what luxury is, since the concept is dependent on the historical context and societal norms of each community. Luxury can also have a negative connotation as it might translate into "excess" or having a "lavish" life. (Lipovetsky and Roux, 2003) It can be interpreted as the measure of wealth and displaying power, as the unmeasured consumption without consciousness, even in a hedonistic way. (Cabigiosu, 2020) There is extensive literature on this topic, which has evolved into a model with 7 main dimensions.

The sociologist Thorstein Veblen, in *The Theory of The Leisure Class* (1899), discusses luxury as "conspicuous consumption", it is a way of displaying wealth and social status, with especial attention to societies with big economic disparity (Roberts, 2021). The idea of showcasing wealth through consumption is a way of understanding luxury as a way of expression of social class through material objects.

Additionally to the Veblen theory, the consumption of luxury items is also not uniquely based on the functional capacities, but also for the aesthetics and the emotional connection that is created with the consumer by brands, creating what could be considered as “works of art”, and objects worth of admiration (Walley, Custance, Copley, & Perry, 2013). The emotional benefits come from the pleasure that is created to the consumer that surpasses the economic satisfaction, that generates a sense of ecstasy and fulfilment to the owner. (Ko et Al, 2019)

The same authors, KO, Costello and Taylor, express that luxury is highly associated with the high quality in which the goods are produced, having the best materials, one of a kind craftsmanship and durability, which is what separates these goods from non-luxury and more accessible items. (2019). Furthermore, linked to quality and performance, is the concept of timelessness. Luxury goods are perceived as long lasting pieces that will remain valid, in style and value, which usually are not linked specifically to any micro trend, giving it the eternal appeal. (Armitage & Roberts, 2014)

Another defining characteristic of luxury is scarcity and exclusivity. The idea of leveraging the very limited amount of items to transmit a uniqueness and a sense of singularity and individuality seems to draw in consumers. The exclusivity gives the owners a sense of limited edition and restricted access, that fosters a sense of prestige. (Radon, 2012)

Luxury, mostly luxury fashion, is a channel to convey personal image, building on the persona’s personal branding. Consumers use luxury to position themselves in a particular group, or to just show their taste, achievements and aspirations, it’s a way to enhance their self-concept. (Kapferer & Bastien, 2012) Besides just conveying personal identity, it can

reinforce an individual's self esteem, with the satisfaction giving a sense of personal competence and confidence. (Berger & Heath, 2007) Moreover, luxury allows consumers to identify with the attributes that are symbolised by a brand, which can be directly affiliated to specific social groups. (Escalas & Bettman, 2003).

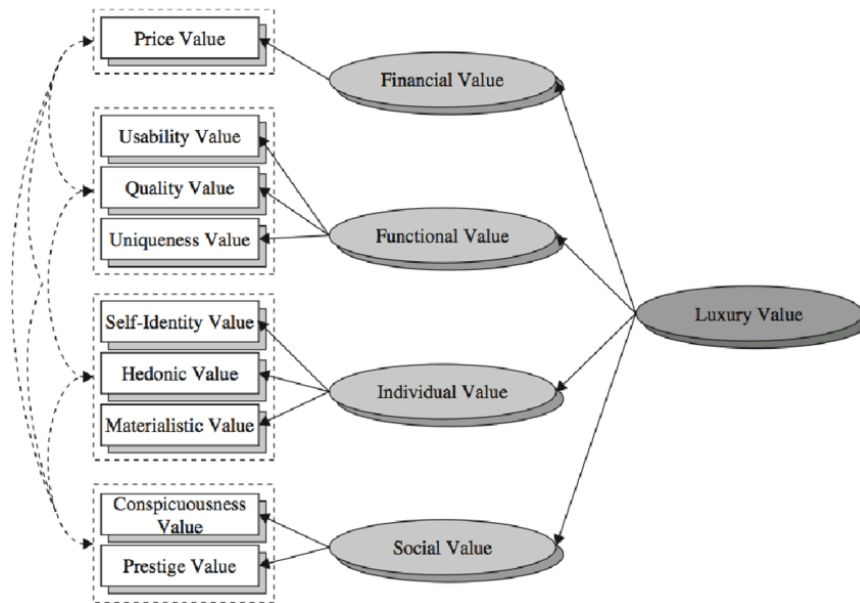


Figure 1. The dimensions of luxury. (Ryding et Al, 2016)

4.2.1 Luxury in Latin America

The luxury market in Latin America traces back to the colonial era, when Europeans' taste, values, and traditions migrated with them to the New Continent, settling down the references for wealth and social status. During this period of time, imported goods became a symbol of social distinction, differentiating the high socio-economic, and European, classes to the rest of the population. (CEPAL, 2013)

The Colonial influence came from the common practices of trade, which was the main economic activity in Latin America. These practices pushed the development of markets like

luxury, to settle in South America, as it was introduced originally by Portuguese and Spanish conquistadors, adding to it the inherent value for the society's elite members. It all started with the imported goods from Europe and Asia, such as fine jewellery, clothing, furnishing items. (Assadourian, 1983; Cambridge University Press, 2023)

Latin America's luxury market, influenced by the traditional indigenous practices and craftsmanship, evolved to become a mix between the European classical style, and the indigenous' local knowledge, which was linked to the economic shifts of post-colonialism. (Luxonomy, 2024). The changes in the economy after the colonialism era, allowed the growth of the luxury goods market for a larger portion of the society, as well as a bigger and deeper integration with local identity, that differentiated it from the European market.

Luxury as a marker of social status in Latin America

After being under Spanish and European control for many decades, even centuries, the newly independent countries adopted and retained some of the European traditions that had reigned them for so long, using luxury goods to make a distinction of the higher social class, as well as investing in imported goods as symbols of social dominance. Luxury goods served as a material heritage of colonial stratification, due to their exclusive prices and availability (Assadourian, 1983; Cambridge University Press, 2023). The adoption of the European practices in a newly independent nation, translated as a new way to discriminate and expand the social inequalities.

Regarding economic disparity and the luxury goods market that started since the colonial era, which has shaped the consumption patterns in Latin America, it has shaped the symbolism of luxury as distinction. The trend was evident back when the colonisers, and the upper classes, would display their wealth through material objects, rather than only for personal gratification or for enjoyment. The showcase of wealth was relevant from a

socio-economic perspective to reassure their position in a stratified society. The CEPAL comments that in the areas with the highest economic and social inequalities, luxury consumption is the most concentrated as the need to assert their dominance. (2013)

Evolution of Latin American Luxury

What started rejecting any local traditions, like the luxury industry, very traditionalist, what conquistadors did, evolved into embracing the local cultures and materials that the biodiversity of the continent offers. Blending the indigenous techniques and craftsmanship with the precision and eye-to-detail from contemporary luxury fashion, created a new identity unique to the region, where diversity is celebrated. (Gosh, 2023). "Additionally, sustainability practices have become integral to South American luxury, as brands increasingly prioritise eco-friendly materials and ethical production to align with international trends in responsible luxury" (ProColombia, 2023). Bringing a new light and relevance to the progress and difference from European or Asian luxury, where these practices are not very relevant.

From these countries, alpaca wool, leather, precious stones like Colombian emeralds, are integrated into luxury fashion to big brands, like Loro Piana with the Vicuña wool, Graff for precious stones, Stella McCartney for organic cotton, and Hermès for exotic leather. (Boscio, 2022, Hermès, 2024) The use of the local materials reflecting the cultural heritage adds exclusivity that appeals to the global consumers as explained in the Harvard ReVista, 2023. Local designers like Silvia Tcherassi or Agua by Agua Bendita, have found the way of mixing traditional shapes and techniques, with modern aesthetics that are culturally relevant (Anularis, 2023) appealing to local preferences, and making luxury appealing as aspirational for many.

Growth of a dynamic market

In Colombia, as a consequence of the evolving economy and the allocation of wealth in a more robust section for the middle class than historically, has provoked an increased demand for luxury goods especially in the bigger cities, Cartagena, Medellin and Bogota. Hand in hand with globalisation, the new reach has turned luxury into items that went from unreachable and unthinkable for most of the population, to aspirational with a possibility of acquiring it. Colombia's biggest cities now have high end boutiques of a large variety of luxury brands, as well as flagship stores, this can be interpreted as the rise of interest for these goods. Bonafide research claims that this increase is further expanded by the fast growing urbanisation and increased disposable incomes, which makes Colombia a key player for emerging luxury markets in Latin America. (2023)

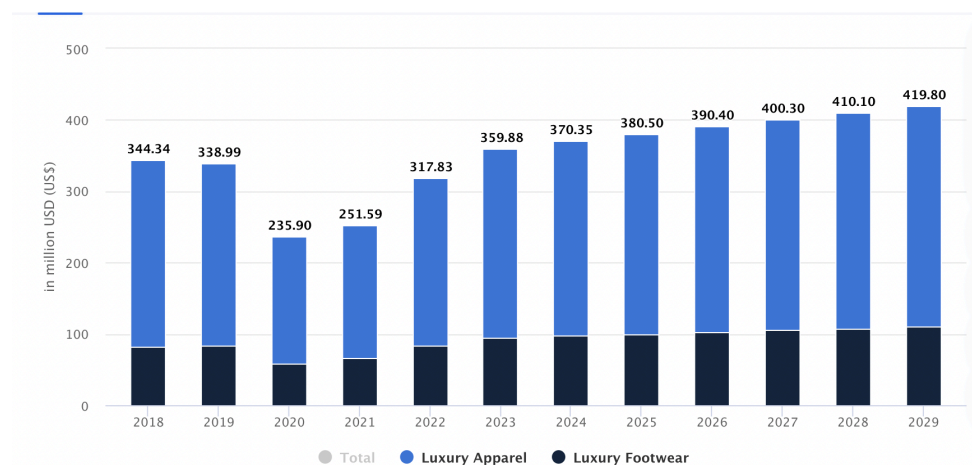


Figure 2. Average revenue expected from the luxury fashion market in millions in Colombia until 2029. (Statista, 2024)

The “democratisation” of luxury, a phenomenon rooted from the economic transformation that the Colombian middle class has been living through, could be one of the explanations given as a justification for the rise of luxury fashion. The embracing of

accessible and entry-level accessories from luxury brands, is the way of customers entering the luxury world, expanding the market. Besides, the Latin American consumers like the internationally renowned brands such as Chanel, Louis Vuitton, Dior (Statista, 2024), but as well appreciate the local brands that connect to heritage and tap into the emotional component, adding depth to the market. (CPP Luxury, 2024).

4.2.2 Colombian Social Disparity

As a contrast, Colombia for the year 2024, faces a big economic disparity, despite the economic growth and positive increase, the wealth is highly concentrated in a small portion of society. The privileged group is concentrated in the urban areas, also accessing the essential services such as water, health care, and education. This leaves under disadvantage to the individuals who live in the rural areas. The Gini index, which measures the dispersion of the economy, has shown a high level of inequality in Colombia, despite the efforts. (OECD, 2024)

Colombian policymakers have tried to incur into unusual solutions to fix the gap between the higher and social classes. The current efforts stand on decentralisation to combat the regional differences. Economy stands at its strongest in the metropolis, Medellin and Bogotá, which are the main source of investment and tourism for the country, in addition to Cartagena, that further the economic division within the nation's areas. (OECD, 2024; World Bank, 2015)

4.3 Narco Culture

Narco culture, as the base of this study, can be defined as the symbolic elements which create representation and social imaginaries about drug trafficking, which at some point, configure a lifestyle with values, patterns and a particular style, which has its own behaviour and attitudes that start from consumption up to the desire to appropriate the symbolic content or even the activity itself of drug trafficking (Becerra, 2005). Which built a set of beliefs briefly described by Professor and Journalist Oscar Rincón in 2013,

“Every law can be bought, anything is valid to climb the social ladder, happiness is now, success must be displayed through consumption, the law is good if it serves me, consumption is the motivator of power, religion is good as long as it protects, and morality is justifiable because we have no other choice to exist in this world.”

These codes, the particular style, and behaviour that characterise the Narco culture in Colombia, which go back to the 1980's, have had a direct and indirect effect in Colombian perception of the luxury industries.

Other definitions might accept the same concept of Narco culture as the subculture of the exaltation of the power play in economic and political aspects combined with the violence that revolves around drug trafficking, which idolises the individuals involved. (Simonett, 2004) In the sense that, citizens with resentment towards the state or the government in general, taking into account the political inconsistencies and the advantage taken out of most vulnerable in the Colombian society during the 80's, the narco culture and the drug lords seemed to be admirable as role model figure, and possibly an example of how to get out of the system and of the poverty state most families were in at that time.

Additionally to these codes, drug traffickers that climbed the social ladder until becoming rich drug lords, have been historically praised, “He [former mayor of Tula

municipality in Colombia, Gustavo Álvarez Gardeázabal] compares drug trafficking with a revolutionary process, similar to those employed during the French or Russian revolutions (Haidar, 2018)", glorifying, and almost attributing the "hero" status to criminals by a government official himself.

In Colombia, traditional gender norms, with major Catholic influence, have long been characterised by sexism, most importantly *machismo*. Sexism is "the favouring of male-bodied over female-bodied people, both ideologically and in practice." according to Wade and Ferree, 2019. Reinforcing male dominance and control over, in a very misogynistic way, leading to the female figure as a secondary character, with low influence on decisions taken. *Machismo* comes from the ideal of a "*Macho*", a concept coming from Latino cultures, with both positive and negative connotations, usually referring to a hyper masculine man, with enough toughness to be willing to recur to violence, which is worthy of others' respect. (Katz, 2006) This gives the *Macho* character, almost an "ownership" status regarding women, objectifying them and hyper sexualizing them to his liking. "In 'Narco' culture, women are objects, positioned as instruments alongside collections of cars, art, and properties." (Salazar et al., 2017)

4.3.1 Narco Aesthetics

There is no established definition of what narco aesthetics is, however it is largely accepted as the perception of beauty created from the intertwined dynamics of narco culture and intensified *machismo*, known for women in large perky breasts, voluptuous bottoms, curvy and toned physique. "It should be noted that within these organisations, women are perceived as a 'material asset' that can be accessed to publicly display purchasing power and

social status (Hernández, 2010). The characterised excess as an exhibit of power, and the eccentricity are associated to the narco lifestyle, and to drug trafficking, where being perceived as a drug lord provided a sense of social status, and approval from society that both feared and rejected them, but that contradictory still praised them. (Valdez-Cárdenas, 2009)

The biggest drug lords were seen accompanied by voluptuous women by their side often Colombian beauty pageant queens, which became the foundation for the narco aesthetics (Roldan, 2024), shifting from the religious innocence to which women were encouraged to look, to sexy objectified elements of a man's presence.



Figure 3. Aura Rocío Restrepo (Beauty pageant winner - Miss Tourism in Valle del Cauca.) 1987, accompanied by Gilberto Rodríguez Orejuela, high member of Cartel de Cali. (El Tiempo, 2022)



Figure 4. Virginia Vallejo, journalist involved with Pablo Escobar in the 1980's. (Raja, 2018)

4.4 Narcos and Luxury

Luxury is in its essence the core of narco-aesthetics, since it's basically an ode to extravagance, exhibitionism, and an ostentatious lifestyle. It is a life that is charged with an excess of symbolisms that are attributed to prove the person's status in society. (Cobo, 2008), which is also why luxury has been associated with this movement. Luxury becomes a symbol to show the purchasing power of an individual, which in general terms, "Anyone who displays jewellery, brand-name clothing, or extreme combinations is called a narco." (Rincon, 2013)

Narcos have a behaviour similar to the *Nouveau Riche* - New Rich or New Money, which according to The Cambridge Dictionary, "Nouveau riche people are people from a low social class who have recently become very rich and like to show this publicly by spending a lot of money.", which have a fascination for luxury and are the biggest spenders in the industry, as shown in the figure below by BCG, which justifies their extravagant activities which were sponsored by money produced quickly as their illicit business expanded. The

attitude of acquiring unique elements, led drug lords to indulge in mansions, private zoos, custom cars and jewelries, and even building replicas of buildings for their own private enjoyment, in addition to the lavish parties they would throw, similar to the Gatsby Era.

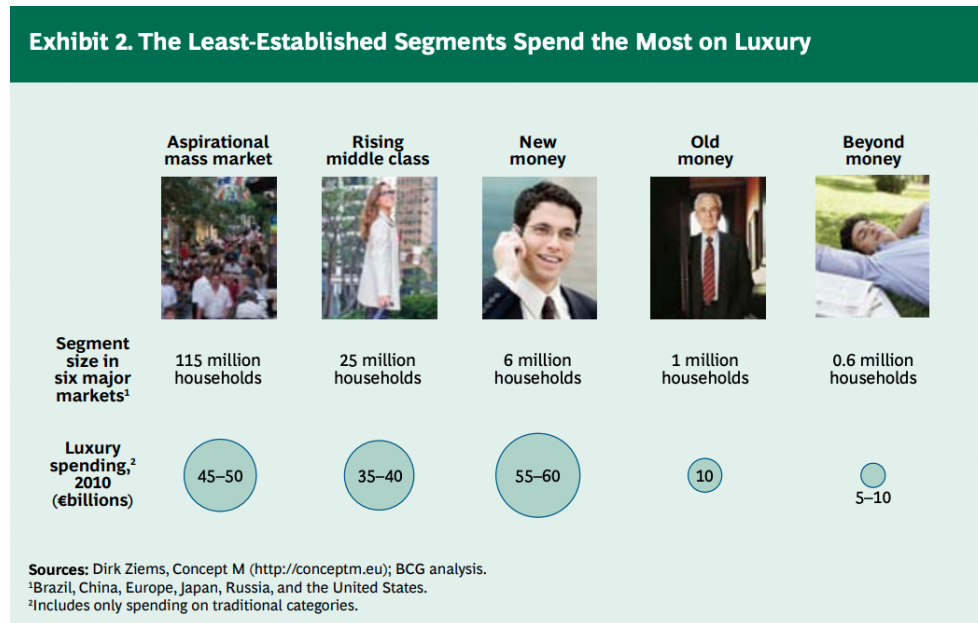


Figure 5. Spending size in luxury by segments. (BGC, 2010)



Figure 6. Pablo Escobar and his African elephant in Hacienda Nápoles. (TN Internacional, 2023)



Figure 7. Pablo Escobar's Rolex made out of solid gold encrusted with hundreds of diamonds. (The Guardian, 2013)

4.4.1 Narco Fashion

The concept emerged as an aggregated symbol to narco culture, as clothes and accessories had a deeper meaning than just clothes. The garments became a way to easily and very explicitly show the power, influence and wealth that the drug lords had. Narco fashion is characterised by bold, and very ostentatious, and as people would describe “Kitsch”, could be considered even vulgar, by the disruption it brings to traditional structures even with “over the top” style. (Pérez, 2016). Being able to communicate in a non-verbal manner the dominance and success in every environment, was key to the exaggerated aesthetic created by the evolution of culture.

Key elements of the Narco fashion are identified by the extravagance and the brand-centric way of wearing the items. The priority in narco fashion is to show and display the luxury items - designer shoes, designer bags, designer caps, heavy and big jewellery,

leather accessories, etc... These items are carefully chosen and curated to display affluence, like previously said to separate from the masses. Deeply rooted to *Machismo*, and the gender dynamics, men in narco culture used to establish their presence with hyper-masculine style, as previously mentioned, often reflected in the use of weapons, belts, and luxury accessories, while women were objectified and expected to dress in a “sexier” way showcasing “the prize” - men’s success.



Figure 8. Griselda Blanco and her husband wearing gold jewellery. (National Geographic, 2021)

Figure 9. The re-interpretation of narco fashion for a themed party. (Pinterest, N.d)

4.4.2 Narco Glorification

The lasting effect of narco fashion is directly attributed to the narco glorification in the media. Glorification is often described as elevating or idealising a person or a group, even an ideology, which usually takes a heroic light (Human Rights Law Review, 2023). This is particularly interesting to this study as the media portrayal of drug lords and Narco culture is commonly associated with a figure to idolise, depicting them as heroes, with charisma and wealth, without making a big emphasis on their violent nature and acts. (Awan, 2012) The

version that the media - through film, television, art and music - has crafted about the narcos and the cocaine issues, has had an impact on public perception and the cultural values as frequently they are associated with drugs, violence, women and luxury brands, at the same time of being glorified by their power.

The phenomenon of idolising the narcos in the media has expanded worldwide through music. Narco culture in popular music has been a recurrent narrative from the 80s until the contemporary era. The overuse of narco imagery, messages and objectification of women, and mentioning luxury name brands through themes of rebellion, status and power is largely present (Cambridge Core, 2012) in genres like Reggaeton, Corridos (also referred to as Narco Corridos), and Hip Hop in the United States. (Edberg, 2001).

List of Songs Referencing Narco Culture, Luxury and Illegal Drug Dealing:

Narcos – Anuel AA

- The songs references the drug trade and the luxurious life that comes included with successfully doing it. Incorporates lyrical elements that also reference wealth and power, talking about guns, women, dominating the masses, which are central to narco culture.

Poblado Remix – J Balvin, Karol G

- The reggaeton song directly mentions “The Moschino panties, and the Bond perfume”, discussing the lavish lifestyles that are linked to narco culture and narco aesthetics. It also depicts the over sexualized trophy nature of women in the narco era.

Trending Remix – Dei V, Myke Towers

- In this song, the artists mention luxury items like Birkin bags as a prize if the woman looks nice and behaves appropriately. It makes allusions to drug trade, illicit business and drug consumption, portraying the status of wealth and power into the *Macho* eye.

Ya'll Don't Wanna – Capone-N-Noreaga

- The line “Escobar style, I’ll build my own jail” alludes to Pablo Escobar, who famously built his own prison in Envigado. The song calls to narco references to communicate the topics of power, resilience, and rebellion to the social norms, aligning with American hip-hop's portrayal of narco culture.

Cuernito Armani – El Komander

- This narcocorrido uses symbols like the “Cuernito” (an assault rifle) combined with “Armani” to show the value and prestige associated with weaponry and violence within narco culture. The mention of expensive Buchanan’s whiskey reflects the purchasing power and opulence often glorified in narco trafficking circles and lavish parties.

El Jefe de Jefes – Los Tigres del Norte

- This song discusses a drug lord figure, emphasising themes of respect, power, and status, and reflecting the admiration often accorded to leaders in narco trafficking.

Just as music serves an important transnational medium to get the message across in a massive and easy way, film and television also are key elements to the amplifications of narco culture and luxury intertwined, which tend to blend fiction and romanticization to the collective memory of a tragic past (Rodriguez et al, 2022). Offering audiences eye-catching

captivating storylines, where the aesthetics and superficial themes tend to weigh up more than the actual consequences of such periods of pain.

Global media has emphasised the narco aesthetics by their luxury and opulence, big mansions, luxury cars, costly jewellery, glamorising the narrative that goes beyond the actions they had to do in order to reach the immense wealth and power they have. The private jets, exotic pets and wild parties, designer clothes that are usually associated with celebrities, royalty and social elites parallel with the picture that these figures are represented through in film and shows.

In world renowned series, the choice of actors add a layer to the complexity of reliability to the public despite the violent facts. For the Netflix show *Narcos*, Wagner Moura, chosen to play Pablo Escobar, made the character have charisma and admiration from audiences. In these series, actors are humanised and shown as “normal” people enjoying the extravagances. (Rodriguez et al, 2022). In *Griselda* (2024), another of Netflix’s blockbuster collection, the actress Sofia Vergara, highest paid TV show actress (Forbes, 2020) and very liked TV personality, starred as Griselda Blanco, yielding an unexpected likeness to the harsh character. The Netflix TV series, showed the character’s mansions, luxury clothes, and had a special focus to 80s Miami fashion, which called the attention of many, serving as a reflection to narcoculture. As well as American TV shows, there have been many narco related media, such as Colombian *telenovelas* - soap operas, like *Pablo Escobar, El Patrón del Mal* (2012) which has a rating of 8.4 in IMBd (2024), and Hollywood movies, with famous actress Penelope Cruz, playing Pablo Escobar’s lover in *Loving Pablo* (2017), or *Blow* (2001) with Johnny Depp.



Figure 10. Scene from Griselda, Netflix show, seen wearing lavish gold jewellery. (The Glossary magazine)

Figure 11. Picture from Narcos, Netflix show, demonstrating the fashion and accessories, included a gold decorated pistol, and exotic prints similar to Versace. (GQ Mexico, 2021)

4.5 Perceived Risk

The concept of perceived risk discusses the thought that the consumer decisions are influenced by potential negative consequences, to which Bauer (1960) was a pioneer of and described as “The undesirable outcome that a consumer anticipates that it can follow his current actions.” (Florea, n.d.) which might be particularly interesting under the context of associations with narcos and the illegal drug trade in Colombia, which in general terms have a stigmatised position in the consumer’s mind. Additionally, Jacoby and Kaplan describe perceived risk being composed by 3 different factors, financial, social and psychological (1972), which affect the moment of decision.

Firstly, social risk is the consideration that a purchase will negatively influence, decrease or damage social status.(Jacoby and Kaplan, 1972) Which translates into a

consciously made decision to buy considering society's stance on it. In a few terms, "social risk is the possible perceived loss of a customer's image or status because of buying a brand or a service." (Chung et al., 2014) Secondly, financial risk, according to the same authors, refers to the loss of economic resources through the purchase of a product that due to its attributes is not considered as worth, as it fails to meet the expectations (Holland, 2019, Tsiros, Heilman, 2005). Finally, the psychological risks are the ones associated with a possibility that the purchase might not align with the self-concept of the consumer, directly influencing his internal perception of image. (Holland, 2016). The figure below demonstrates other dimensions of risk besides the Jaocby and Kaplan theories.

Dimension of Risk	Definition	Cited Study
Functional risk	The product does not perform as expected.	Jacoby and Kaplan (1972)
Performance risk	The product does not meet standards of quality.	Dunn, Murphy, and Skelly (1986); Roselius (1971)
Physical risk	Consumers' safety in using the product.	Jacoby and Kaplan (1972)
Psychological risk	Poor product choice harms consumers' ego.	Jacoby and Kaplan (1972); Roselius (1971)
Social risk	Product choice may result in embarrassment before family or friends; others will think less of a person as a result of a poor product choice.	Dunn, Murphy, and Skelly (1986); Jacoby and Kaplan (1972); Roselius (1971)
Financial risk	The product is not worth the financial price.	Dunn, Murphy, and Skelly (1986); Jacoby and Kaplan (1972); Roselius (1971)

Figure 10. Dimensions of perception of risk associated with purchase behaviour. (Tsiros, Heilman, 2005)

4.6 Perceived Value

A theory useful for describing perceived value is the concept of five consumption values, functional, social, emotional, epistemic, and conditional. (Sheth, Newman, & Gross, 1991) Describing the different dimensions that consumers receive from the purchase of a

luxury good, like status, exclusivity, emotional value etc... Moreover, perceived value is defined as the consumer's assessment of the utility of a product in a win or lose model, which exchanges what is received versus what is given, and which is categorised in 4 variables; Price, Benefits received, "What I get for what I give" and the attributes weighted by the evaluations divided by the price weighted by the evaluations. (Zeithaml, 1988) This framework could explain the decision and the evaluation that might happen by Colombians when buying luxury fashion, showing also that decisions are in its majority not based on the specific functionality, but as a mixture of emotional and social contexts.

In relation to the study, narco-culture and the purchase intention for luxury fashion in Colombia, the Luxury Value Perception Model by Wiedmann, Hennins and Siebels could be analysed as a tool to understand why consumers buy luxury. (2007). The theory describes four core dimensions, financial, functional individual and social values. Making a relation with Zeithaml's model to deeply understand probably if narco culture had an effect on social and individual dimensions related to luxury fashion's value in Colombia.

4.7 Brand Perception and Brand Image

Aackers's Brand Equity Model provides the foundation for the concept of brand equity, dividing it into four components; brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality and brand associations. Each of the components of this framework is a key element to get a comprehensive deep view into interactions and perceptions with brands. Brand loyalty discusses how it is deeply rooted to consumer attachment and emotional connection. Brand awareness in luxury is not taken as a superficial trait, it conveys the knowledge of the brand specific attributes and exclusivity, their "*Savoir-faire*". Based on this definition, high

awareness could enhance social status and the perceived value of an item; this is essential as high awareness of the narco culture can change the perception and the brand image of something associated with it. Related to this aspect, the brand associations, which are the particular images created by a consumer under a specific context, that changes with meanings, images and values. Finally, the perceived quality, the luxury sector align with the notion of excellent craftsmanship and durability, it is another way to value brands.(Aacher, 1991)

In accordance with the four components for brand equity, Keller (1993) offers an in-depth look at how brands build a strong identity and get a chance to communicate with consumers, a critical strategy in order to create strong emotional bonds. The model, shown in the figure below, demonstrates the relationship between the brands identity, the brand meaning, the brands responses and the brand resonance. A key takeaway from the model is through with aspects can luxury brands effectively resonate with the Colombian consumers to position themselves as prestigious, aspirational and with high social standing.

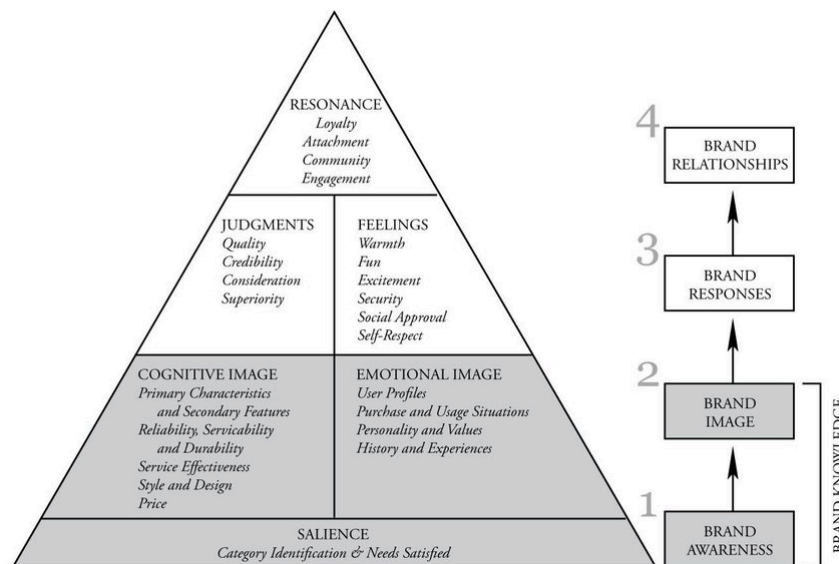


Figure 11. Keller’s pyramid for the Brand Equity Model (Demirbag, 2007)

4.8 Brand Identity

Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism offers a 360 approach to the craftsmanship of brand identities, focusing primarily on the luxury goods sector. The model is composed of six elements that approach all dimensions of brand composition which are physique, personality, culture, relationship, reflection and self-image, and are divided in two categories, constructed source and constructed receiver, and externalisation or internalisation. (Kapferer,2008)

The model discusses how all the aspects come together when the brand is able to communicate and be understood by the consumer. The brand has to be able to relate into specific aspects while keeping the same essence as an effective whole. (Eurib, 2009)

To deep dive into the model for brand identity, the physique dimension discusses the visual characteristics that consumers use to identify and associate with the brand, this includes colours, logo, probably animals or symbols, etc... This is crucial to establish in luxury brands as they aim for visual exclusivity to give a specific and particular identity to the brand. In second place, personality, the dimension explores the personification of the brand, it is the "relatable" component, words like *sincere*, *imaginative*, *charming*, *glamorous*, might come to mind that interact directly with the cultural elements. Approaching the brand's culture, another element of the model, is the importance of establishing clear brand values that are relevant given the context. . (Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003)

Contrastingly, the brand should also include some internal elements which focus on creating deeper connections with the consumer, which is tied directly to relationship, reflection and self image. Relationship is defined as the brand's interaction with consumers,

the experience created to the consumer and the exchange between both parties. Reflection is the personal characteristics, like personality, but targeted towards the externalisation of such through the communication and brand messages like slogans. Finally self-image, a dimension that involves the ways that a brand enables a reflection of self, the way the consumer wants to be perceived by others and by itself after having acquired your product.

These dimensions and the model designed by Kapferer are relevant to the study, as each of these factors can be affected by external and cultural changes, like the narco-culture phenomenon, which shape the market’s luxury brand perception and customer behaviour.

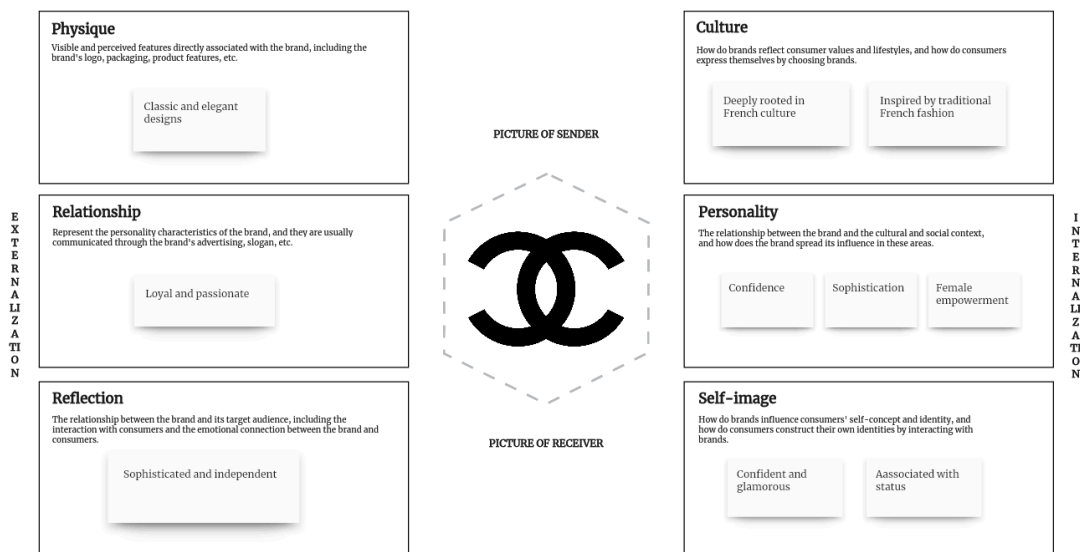


Figure 12. Brand Identity Prism by Kapferer applied to Chanel. (BoardMix, 2024)

4.9 Social Status and Cultural Capital

Understanding what is the relevance of social status is important to interpret the effect of luxury as a status marker within Colombian society. Bourdieu's theory examines the concept of how cultural capital, the contribution of skills, knowledge and possessions, affect the concept of social status. In *Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, (1984), the author explains how the three past elements symbolise or determine someone's position in a social class. This model does not take into account only the financial state of a person, it includes the knowledge and the behaviour and preferences as cultural capital, which can be perceived by others as sophistication, indicating a higher social status. Cultural capital is the reason why luxury is not only seen as an economic consumption or an extra expense, it is seen as a way of showcasing acquired taste and knowledge, acting as a leverage in the social hierarchy.

On the other hand, Veblen discusses the "conspicuous consumption of valuable goods is a means of reputability to the gentleman of leisure" (Veblen, 1899, as cited in Britannica, 2024). Which is reinforcing the cultural capital model of the use of luxury to display wealth, not only economic, but cultural, educational and more, as a reflection of social position to indicate the status in society. According to Carolan, in the contemporary world, there is an increase in the tendency for individuals to use luxury as a way to accentuate their social position, which is done usually through luxury goods. (2005)

5. Methodology

This chapter provides an overview of the research objectives, the methodology of the research, the variables to evaluate, additionally to a theoretical model.

The purpose of this study is to determine to what extent does the Narco culture, in the contemporary world, affect the consumer perception towards luxury fashion in Colombia, diving into the multiple dimensions of perception, while understanding the variables that might mould a consumer towards a line of thought specifically when it comes into luxury fashion.

The variables taken into account are based on already existing theories, like the Seidels (2000) 4 variables for perception, and models, such as the Jiang et al., 2022, model for consumer perception and factors that affect the consumer purchasing behaviour.

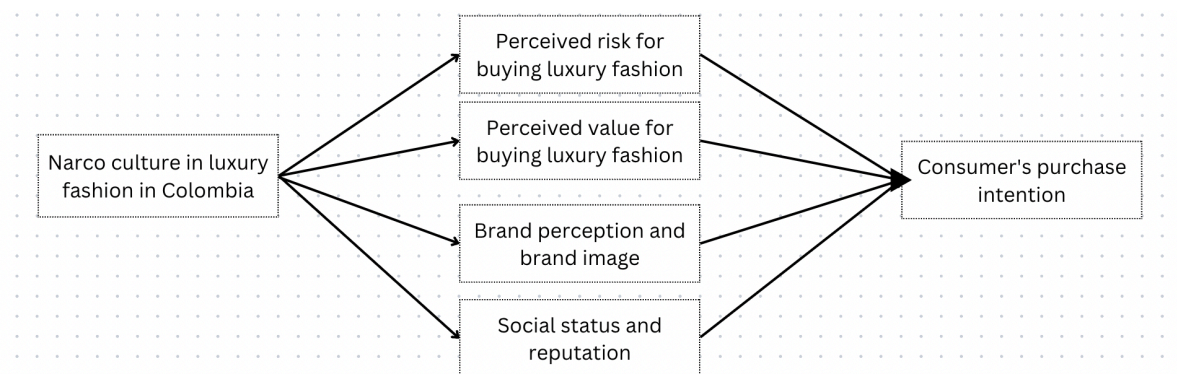


Figure 13. Theoretical model for the research of the effects of Narco culture as a result of violence in the 80's in Colombia, currently affects the perception of luxury fashion in Colombia.

5.1 Hypothesis

H1: Narco culture in Colombia in luxury fashion reflects an increase of perceived risk when buying luxury fashion

H2: Narco culture in Colombia in luxury fashion reflects a decreased perceived risk when buying luxury fashion

H3: The perception of risk when buying luxury fashion in Colombia affects the consumer's purchase intention.

H4: The perception of value when buying luxury fashion in Colombia affects the consumer's purchase intention.

H5: Narco culture in Colombia in luxury fashion has a negative impact in brand perception and brand image

H6: Brand perception and brand image have an impact on the consumer's purchase intention

H7: Narco culture in Colombia in luxury fashion affects negatively the perception of social status and reputation

H8: Social status and reputation have a directly proportional effect on the consumer's purchase intention.

5.2 Sampling method

The research will be done through a quantitative approach to collect relevant data and insights that can give concrete results. This method will be done through surveys and administered to a large sample of participants in order to collect the numerical data on variables like perceived risk and perceived value.

The sampling for the study is a non-probability sampling method, as the participants are selected based on availability and accessibility, and closeness to the nature of the study. (Etikan et al., 2016) This method provides valuable insights, as time and resources were very limited, although not broadly generalizable.

The study uses convenience sampling, targeting Colombians only, who not exclusively live currently in the country, who experienced the 1980's or 1980's firsthand, as well as those born up to 2006, who are now legal of age. The statistical analyses will be done by utilising regression models, descriptive statistics, and inferential methods to explore the relationships and the weight of each to test the proposed hypotheses.

There are 157 participants involved in this study, as convenience sampling is accessed when resources are limited and a larger scale is not possible, and the insights collected from the questionnaire are an initial exploration to uncover the hidden trends and relationships between variables. The conclusions might not be fully representative of all Colombian population, in or abroad the country, but it is effective for exploratory studies. (Etikan et al., 2016).

5.3 Data collection method

A structured survey was used to collect the needed data on the perception of luxury fashion and the influence Narco culture has among Colombian respondents. The survey is divided into sections, directly related to each of the 4 variables studied, A. Perceived risk for buying luxury fashion, B. Perceived value for buying luxury fashion, C. Brand perception and Brand Image, D. Social Status and Reputation, and how do all of these affect the consumer purchase intention. Each section has been carefully designed to gain deep insights. The survey was designed to be 15 to 20 questions long, keeping the time short enough to take around 10 minutes to complete. Each section navigates through the different variables and dimensions of the research question, with a mixture between close-ended and Likert scale

questions. *The full questionnaire is available in the Appendix.* The results will be analysed statistically using SPSS. The survey will be carried out in Spanish as the target population is Colombian, and the official language of the country is not English.

The first section of the questionnaire consists of understanding the demographic information of respondents, in order to segment information and filter by age group, experience in Colombia in the 80s and education level. The demographics allow the patterns within the insights to be identified, as well as understanding the difference of patterns according to several variables, and how luxury fashion and Narco culture are perceived.

For the following section, Narco culture's influence on fashion. The section was designed to gauge the level of awareness and perceived influence of Narco culture on luxury fashion. The purpose of this section is to start the correlation between variables and to connect the cultural background to the perception of fashion and evolution, the central topic of this graduating project.

Section three studies the perceived risk, in terms of social, financial and reputational, that might influence the decision behind a purchase of a luxury item, this again related to Narco culture. Understanding the perceived value is key to determine whether Narco culture enhances or detracts from the allure of luxury items.

Following this, the survey aims to explore how Narco culture impacts the perceived value, this in terms of symbolic and monetary, of luxury fashion. As the financial value might not only be the only variable that increases the perceived value of a product, since culture plays a big part in consumer's behaviour.

The questionnaire will also collect insights on how Narco culture influences the role of luxury fashion as a marker for social status and reputation, as luxury has been culturally associated with wealth, higher social status, or as previously stated, with negative connotation of overspending. This section allows the study to deepen the extent of how luxury fashion is tied to displaying power, specially to a culture tied to power plays and Narco dynamics.

The final section of the survey is purposefully tied to measuring the previous factors such as risk, value, brand perception and social status, and how those can influence the consumer to buy luxury fashion, it is the section that concludes and ties the factors together, showing how the general perceptions might affect the final purchasing decisions.

5.4 Demographic summary

The sample demographics provide context valuable for understanding the study's findings and conclusions. Gender distribution illustrates that out of the 157 respondents, the majority were female (70.7%), followed by male respondents (28.7%), with a small proportion of respondents choosing the option "Rather not say" (0.6%). This gender composition tells that the findings of the study might lean towards a female point of view, rather than an exact middle, which could influence the perspectives of wealth, luxury fashion, perceived risk, perceived value and social status.

In terms of age distribution, it was revealed that the concentration in the 18-24 years old age group (47.8%) is significantly higher than the rest of the groups, suggesting almost

half of the respondents are younger adults. The second largest group is the 45+ (30.6%), a significant representation of older generations. The middle age groups, 25-34 and 35-44, each represent about 10%, meaning the concentration doesn't lay on those. This spread allows to capture a broad range of generational perspectives, that has a high contrast between younger and older participants.

Additionally, 56.1% of participants of the survey reported living in Colombia between the 80s and 90s, the period closest associated with the rise of narco culture and the drug smuggling problem in the country. The firsthand experience could shape respondents' attitudes towards narco culture and the risks or values associated with it. However, 81.6% of the respondents feel familiar or very familiar with the term 'Narco culture', indicating that it is not a term directly related to age nor experience.

6. Analysis and Results

H1: Narco culture in Colombia in luxury fashion reflects an increase of perceived risk when buying luxury fashion

To assess the influence of Narco culture on luxury fashion in Colombia, multiple regression analysis were conducted for the hypothesis. The results supported Hypothesis 1 (H1), are supported. As a brief summary of the results for testing the variables of Narco culture influence and Perceived Risk, the $R=0.199$, showing a weak but positive correlation between Narco Culture and Perceived Risk. Results show there is indeed a relationship, just not a very strong one. Additionally, $R\text{ square}=0.040$, showing 4% of the variance of Perceived Risk explained by Narco Culture's influence in luxury fashion in Colombia. It is a

low percentage, however, the $p < 0.05$, as $p = 0.013$, therefore the results are statistically significant. There is a positive correlation of variables, as Unstandardized $B = 0.265$ has a positive connotation. Although weak, there is a positive relationship between Narco Culture's influence and Increased Risk.

H2: Narco culture in Colombia in luxury fashion reflects a decreased perceived risk when buying luxury fashion

The results for this test about Hypothesis 2 (H2) did not support the data. Given $R = 0.199$, demonstrating a weak positive correlation, $R^2 = 0.040$, $p = 0.013$ for statistical significance and for the Unstandardized $B = 0.265$, indicating a positive B value. The result yields that H2 is not supported as the data suggests a positive relationship, indicating an increase, between the variables for Perceived Risk and Narco Culture.

H3: The perception of risk when buying luxury fashion in Colombia affects the consumer's purchase intention.

To test hypothesis 3 the method used was a multiple correlation, the variables taken into account were perceived risk and purchase intention, using as such the questions "How likely are you to buy luxury fashion brands in Colombia, knowing the possible association with Narco culture?" and "Does the perception of risk (due to Narco culture) affect your willingness to buy luxury fashion in Colombia?". The results from the regression show that Hypothesis 3 (H3) is not supported by the data collected in the study. The regressions show a very low correlation between Perceived Risk and Purchase Intention. The relation is almost negligible ($R = 0.031$). The variance is as low as 0.1%, translating to Perceived risk having no

explanatory power for Purchase Intention. Besides, the relation is not statistically significant as $p=0.697$. Unstandardized $B = -0.016$, indicating that even if it's not statistically significant, there is an inverse relation, so for an increase of Perceived Risk, there is a decrease in Purchase Intention. This result suggests that there is no significant relationship between both variables and that narco culture does not influence consumer's intention to purchase luxury fashion in Colombia.

H4: The perception of value when buying luxury fashion in Colombia affects the consumer's purchase intention.

The perception of value when buying luxury fashion in Colombia is not affected by the consumer's purchase intention. This hypothesis 4 (H4) has a $p=0.054$, designating a not statistically significant state. However due to the closeness to the significance rate, the study could be considered a marginal effect, which suggests that further study is recommended to get clear and precise conclusions. Based on this particular study, where $R=0.154$ and $R^2=0.024$, there is a relationship established between value and consumer's purchase intention however it is not strong enough, which again, explains the low statistical significance. H4 is not supported by the data and therefore there is not a significant relationship.

H5: Narco culture in Colombia in luxury fashion has a negative impact on brand perception and brand image.

The fifth hypothesis (H5) about the impression of narco culture making a negative impact on brand perception and brand image for Colombian consumers, is not supported by

data. The outcome is due to the $R=0.138$, indicating a very weak correlation between the variables of Narco Culture and Brand Perception. R squared represents only 1.9% of the variance in Brand Perception explained by the phenomenon of Narco Culture. There is no statistical significance as demonstrated by the low $p=0.085$, which is lower to the conventional level of 0.05. However for unstandardized $B= -0.176$, the negative value suggests that there is a minimum inverse impact, illustrating that if the perception of narco culture increases, the brand perception and brand image slightly decrease. Nevertheless, the relationship is below the significance level.

H6: Brand perception and brand image have an impact on the consumer's purchase intention

To understand the significance of brand perception and brand image associated with narco culture on the impact of a consumer's purchase intention for luxury fashion in Colombia, a regression model was done. Hypothesis 6 (H6), is not proven by data, meaning that there is no direct impact nor significance of the brand perception or image influenced by narco culture on the consumer's purchase intention. The figures for this model were, $R=0.129$, R squared = 0.017, demonstrating a very weak correlation between both concepts. The relation is almost non-existent. $p=0.0106$, the relationship is not statistically significant, as again, it is greater than 0.05. However, as a slight insight, it is suggested that a slight decrease in Purchase intention, as Brand perception and image become more negative. Yet, the result is not statistically significant nor representative of the whole Colombian population.

H7: Narco culture in Colombia in luxury fashion affects negatively the perception of social status and reputation

Understanding the results for Hypothesis 7 (H7) is the key to understanding if narco culture negatively affects the perception of status and reputation that luxury fashion creates. For this hypothesis, it resulted in it being not supported by the data collected with 157 participants from Colombia. The relevant indicators are $R=0.128$, and R squared represents only 1.6% of the variance in Social Status and Reputation explained by the narco culture's influence, which is not really a significant figure. The $p=0.111$, showing a not statistically representative result exceeding the 0.05 limit. The B value however (unstandardized $B = 0.076$) represents a very slight positive increase between Social Status and Reputation, which increased the perception of narco culture's influence, which demystifies the hypothesis of a negative impact. It is important to recall that the results are not statistically significant.

H8: Social status and reputation have a directly proportional effect on the consumer's purchase intention.

As for the last hypothesis, Social status has an extremely weak correlation with Purchase Intention. The relation between these variables is so low that it could almost be considered non-existent. The $R=0.040$, and the R squared is 0.2%, demonstrating the low value for explanatory power over purchase intention within the context. The $p=0.619$ represents the non-validity for statistical representation, which in other words means that there is not enough reliable information to establish the effect of Social Status and Purchase Intention. The positive value for unstandardized $B=0.019$ represents that if there was a small increment of the purchase intention if the Reputation increases as well. To conclude, this hypothesis is non valid and cannot be supported by the information this study provided.

Table 1. includes the data analysed, see at the Appendix.

7. Conclusions

The findings display a subtle but significant link between narco-culture and perceived risk, aligning with the previously explained theories of criminal or controversial cultural elements which could elevate the perceived risk. This, linked to luxury purchases which may carry a social judgement and a sense of personal identity affected by the environment the subject is in, like Bourdieu's model of cultural capital (1984) explains. However, there is a relatively low effect that implies that even if narco culture influences the perceived risk, it is not really a strong driver of change as other factors might be, but this could be possible due to the desensitisation, or lack of direct emotional connection in certain age groups within the sample.

Contrary to initial expectations, the data does not support the hypothesis in which narco culture reduces perceived risk in luxury. The lack of support could contrast the theory that glorification can turn a culturally relevant group to status-neutral or even enhancing the status, potentially reducing the perceived risks. This finding shines a light on the fact that for Colombians the negative association persists, confirming the stigma and predisposition around illicit groups and luxury fashion brands.

As a third conclusion, the analysis reveals no significant connection between the perceived risk and the purchase intention, meaning that perceived risk when taking into account narco culture is not really directly associated with luxury fashion purchases. The finding of this hypothesis reflects the insight that brand desire and exclusivity might exceed the perceived risk, therefore not affecting the purchase of the goods, and this when a brand is

aspirational or expresses an even bigger symbol, like Veblen (1899) explained. This assumption can be reflected in the outweigh of risks versus desire of belonging to a group.

While the perceived value can be a factor relevant in the decision making for luxury consumption, the results show that narco culture has no significance in the purchase intention. This discovery demonstrates how controversial groups and movements that have influence in value perception don't enhance the purchasing motivation in the Colombian luxury context. The literature on brand identity, such as the Kapferer's brand identity prism (2008) take into account the authenticity, heritage, and brand reputation, which might play a more significant role, than perceived value towards a purchase intention, nonetheless it might also be somehow affected by the narco culture's negative perception.

The impact of narco culture on brand perception and image seems to be very low on this sample, which might be a way of reflecting brand resilience or cultural associations. Whilst brands are sensitive to cultural changes and diverse contexts, a well established luxury brand might overpower the possible negative associations. Additionally, the result from this test can reflect the effect narco culture has on the Colombian consumer; as some may view its low influence regarding the brand perception, which may come attached to the factor of less exposure and direct contact with the conflict.

Continuing the analysis, brand perception and image are not influenced by narco culture, meaning it doesn't affect the consumer's decision to make a purchase. This could mean that exclusivity or symbolism occupy an important space in the consumer's mind, more than the narco culture's influence, considering that brand reputation is not exclusively central

to purchase intention, as self-expression and social status and perception are taken into account.

Interestingly, the data doesn't support the negative effect of narco culture on the perception of social status, in spite of that, the weak positive trend depicts that for some consumers, narco culture can enhance the perceived social status of luxury items. This is a little contradictory towards value versus social status, however it might be explained as it may create an allure towards a luxury good.

Ultimately, the link between social status, reputation, and purchase intention is not statistically relevant, exhibiting a possible shift from status based purchases and consumption triggers towards a more modern consumer focused on experience and individualistic needs for luxury fashion.

7.1 Practical recommendations

Based on the fact that narco culture slightly raises the perceived risk, it is recommended for brands to focus on the enhancement of brand transparency to create a counteraction tactic to the possible limitations that consumers might have. In order to create this, some issues that might be useful to deep dive and to explore are ethical sourcing and craftsmanship, creating a product and process centric strategy rather than just relying on the general public image. Highlighting ethical sourcing and brand ethics can build confidence, elevating the brand's image showing social responsibility but still as aspirational, keeping the luxury status. If value integrity is reassured, and values align to the consumer's, it could

enhance the purchase intention. Tackling these factors may help reduce doubts at the moment of purchase for the Colombian public.

As an implementation plan, it is suggested to work around the transparency aspect through the brand's communication. As a first step, a transparency-focused campaign that contains content specific to ethical standards, key practices, and sustainability efforts that is communicated through the brand's website, social media, and if there is a newsletter available for email marketing. Besides the digital and social media channels, labels and special certification, highlighting "ethical sourcing" or "craftsmanship" elements, which can be implemented in packaging - labels, approaching the consumer directly at the point of sale.

The shift from social status to self-expression in relevance, comes from a shift in the consumer approach to luxury as they weigh bigger the relevance of the experience and on individualistic thoughts. Consequently, the pursuit of individuality and personal identity drive consumers to look for unique personal statements in fashion, rather than getting the purely status driven staple of the brand. Additionally, positioning luxury as creative expression can create an emotional relationship, fostering the construction of meaningful connections as well as higher engagement and brand loyalty.

Personalisation and limited edition collections might be a good road to stimulate the consumer's preferences without losing complete brand identity. Luxury can allow for small personalization in store or online, such as adding charms to bags, or offering unique detailing, that might make the consumer feel that they are making luxury their own, and differentiating from the masses. For online shoppers, a personalization quiz might replace the feeling of an

in person one-to-one session to get special items recommended, reinforcing their individual expression.

As a third recommendation, reframe brand identity to emphasise cultural uniqueness and authenticity over the controversial and negative associations. As seen in the study, narco culture, a negative association, affects the brand perception. In order to counteract this specific situation given the context of Colombia, the suggestion is to leverage over the Colombian dense cultural differences and heritage with the authentic craftsmanship techniques by local artisans. By including these practices, a new framework can be created that appeals to both local and international customers. The separation from the negative associations could potentially tap into a positive deep emotional connection of heritage that can connect to the national cultural identity. This strategy covers all generations and ties luxury fashion to an authentic cultural experience, whilst embracing the novelty and design of contemporary luxury fashion. This recommendation comes hand to hand to the fact of positioning luxury fashion as a cultural experience, such as buying art. The transition to luxury fashion as wearable art can be a way to demonstrate the cultural investment that an item could be, elevating the meaning from meaningless or from superficial garment to a culturally rich asset. This could be supported through the alliance with cultural institutions, like museums, to showcase and exhibit the Colombian cultural relevance that fashion has. Likewise, cultural museums, film festivals, and community art programs serve as a channel to reach the desired audiences.

8. Limitations of the study

Given the nature of the study, the limitations are broad. Currently, there is very limited existing research on the effects of narco culture and luxury fashion in South America. Few studies address specifically how narco culture impacts the consumer purchase intention and perception behaviour focused on luxury fashion. It affects the study's ability to validate findings against the established literature, as there is not a wide variety of data.

This study particularly involves Colombian culture and a unique context of narco culture, different to the conflicts around the world, therefore it is somewhat niche in scope to international audiences. The study might not be relevant to consumers or researchers outside Colombia, Latin America, or brands without the intention of expanding to these geographical areas, as it may not apply to non-Latin American markets.

The sample is largely composed of young adults from the ages of 18-24, and females, which may not be an accurate representation of the Colombian demographics as a whole country, nor of the world's population. This concentration makes the generalisation of findings.

The study itself relies on quantitative data, which ignores the nuanced perceptions and variety of personal interpretations that respondents may have regarding narco culture and luxury fashion. Furthermore, the study focuses on structured hypotheses with no exploratory analysis of additional variables that could impact the perceptions of narco culture and luxury fashion in Colombia. Likewise, the broader cultural trends were not taken into account, such

as minimalism or ethical consumerism, which may influence the general consumer behaviour, shaping the perspectives towards the purchase of luxury fashion.

9. Future directions

Taking into account the limitations of the study, future directions may include the expansion of the demographic representation, including a more diverse sample in terms of age, gender, and socio economic status which could be of relevance to the non generalisation of narco culture's perception, and could spark discussions regarding the replica's luxury market. Besides, to expand the scope, the research would include how Colombian luxury is perceived, or how people see the general influence of narco culture at a global level.

10. Bibliography

- Aaker, D. A. (1991). *Managing brand equity: Capitalizing on the value of a brand name*. The Free Press.
- Agudelo, G. D. V. (2010). *La cultura mafiosa del consumo en Colombia*. Agenda Cultural Alma Máter.
- Awan, I. (2012). *Glorifying and encouraging terrorism: Preserving the golden thread of civil liberties in Britain*. *Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research*, 4(3), 144-154. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17596591211244157>
- Azoulay, A., & Jean-Noël Kapferer. (2003). Do brand personality scales really measure brand personality? *Journal of Brand Management*, 11(2), 143–155. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.bm.2540162>
- Baru, A., & Cincu, A. (2014). *WAR ON DRUGS IN LATIN AMERICA-A FAILED WAR? - ProQuest*. Proquest.com. <https://doi.org/%22>,
- Becerra, A., & Hernandez, D. (2019, March). Fascinación por el poder: Consumo y Apropiación de la ... *scielo*. Intersticios Sociales. <https://www.scielo.org.mx/pdf/ins/n17/2007-4964-ins-17-259.pdf>
- Becerra, T. (2005). *Investigación documental sobre la narcocultura como objeto de estudio en México*. *Culturales*, 6(1), 1–36. <https://doi.org/10.22234/recu.20180601.e349>
- Bellaiche, J. M., Mei-Pochtler, A., & Hanisch, D. (2010, December). The new world of luxury: Caught between growing momentum and lasting change. *Boston Consulting Group*.
- Berg, M. (2020, October 2). The highest-paid actresses 2020: Small screen stars like Sofia Vergara, Ellen Pompeo, and Elisabeth Moss shine. *Forbes*. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/maddieberg/2020/10/02/the-highest-paid-actresses-2020-small-screen-stars-like-sofia-vergara-ellen-pompeo-and-elisabeth-moss-shine/>

Boardmix. (2024). *Brand Identity Prism Examples: How to Create a Unique Brand Identity*.

Boardmix. <https://boardmix.com/examples/brand-identity-prism-examples/>

Bonafide Research. (2023). *Colombia luxury goods market size, share, analysis, trends*.

Retrieved from www.bonafideresearch.com

Boscio, C. D. (2022, August 12). *The Ethics Of Vicuña, The World's Most Costly Fabric*.

Eluxe Magazine. <https://eluxemagazine.com/fashion/the-ethics-of-vicuna/>

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*. Harvard University Press.

Cabigiosu, A. (2020a). An Overview of the Luxury Fashion Industry. *Palgrave Advances in*

Luxury, 9–31. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-48810-9_2

Cambridge Core. (2012). *The influence of narcoculture on popular music*. Cambridge University Press.

Cambridge University Press. (n.d.). Nouveau riche. In *Cambridge Dictionary*. Retrieved October 13, 2024, from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>

Cambridge University Press. (2023). *Latin America: 1700–1870*. In *The Cambridge Economic History of the Modern World*. Retrieved from <https://www.cambridge.org/>

Carolan, M. (2005). The conspicuous body: Capitalism, consumerism, class, and consumption. *Worldviews: Global Religions, Culture, and Ecology*, 9(1), 82-111. <https://doi.org/10.1163/1568535053628436>

Castillo, F. (1987). *Los jinetes de la cocaína*. Editorial Documentos Periodísticos. <https://unov.tind.io/record/73910?ln=en>

Chepesiuk. (2009). *Drug lords. The rise and fall of the Cali cartel*. *Global Crime Vol 10*. <https://doi.org/10.1080//17440570903080152>

- Chung, L., Cho, Y., & Kim, H. (2014). Consumer Perceived Risk in the Korean Mobile Phone Market. *Journal of Distribution Science*, 12(9), 73–82.
<https://doi.org/10.15722/jds.12.9.201409.73>
- CNN Español. (2022, June 1). Así era el Cartel de Cali, la que fue conocida como la organización narcotraficante más grande del mundo. *CNN; CNN en Español*.
<https://cnnespanol.cnn.com/2022/06/01/asi-era-el-cartel-de-cali-la-que-fue-conocida-como-la-organizacion-narcotraficante-mas-grande-del-mundo>
- Cobo, A. (2008, June 28). *La estética del narcotráfico*. Publicaesfera. Retrieved from
<https://publicaesfera.wordpress.com/2008/06/28/la-estetica-del-narcotrafico/>
- CPP Luxury. (2024). *The growth of accessible luxury in Latin America*. CPP Luxury. Retrieved from www.cpp-luxury.com
- David Rodríguez Goyes, Katja Franko. (2022). *Profiting From Pablo: Victimhood and Commercialism in A Global Society*. *The British Journal of Criminology*, 62(3), 533–550. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azab078>
- Dei V, & Myke Towers. (2021). Trending Remix [Song]. On *Single*. Warner Music Latina.
- Demirbag, M. (2007, July). *Product Appearance and Brand Knowledge: An Analysis of Critical Relationships*. *ResearchGate*.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/312488818_Product_Appearance_and_Brand_Knowledge_An_Analysis_of_Critical_Relationships
- Djangi, P. (2024, February 5). Ascenso y caída de Griselda Blanco, la “madrina” de la cocaína de los 70. *National Geographic*.
<https://www.nationalgeographic.es/historia/2024/02/griselda-blanco-quien-fue-madrina-cocaina-70>
- Edberg, M. C. (2001). *El narcotraficante: Narcocorridos and the construction of a cultural persona on the U.S.-Mexico border*. University of Texas Press.

El Komander. (2014). *Cuernito Armani* [Song]. On *Single*. DEL Records.

El Tiempo. (2022, June). La vida con Gilberto Rodríguez Orejuela, contada por su exmujer.

El Tiempo.

<https://www.eltiempo.com/cultura/gente/gilberto-rodriguez-orejuela-la-vida-del-capo-segun-aura-rocio-restrepo-676800>

Florea, D.-L. (n.d.). *A THEORY OF CONSUMER'S PERCEIVED RISK UNDER THE HALO EFFECT*. https://www.mnmk.ro/documents/2015_X1/16-16-1-15.pdf

García, D. (2021, September 24). *Del sicariato barrial al Congreso: la oscura vida política de Pablo Escobar*. *El Tiempo*.

<https://www.eltiempo.com/cultura/gente/pablo-escobar-como-fue-su-vida-politica-620562>

Gootenberg, P. (2007). The “PreColombian” Era of Drug Trafficking in the Americas: Cocaine, 1945-1965. *The Americas*, 64(2), 133–176. *JSTOR*.

https://www.jstor.org/stable/30139084?read-now=1&seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

Gordon, M. (2023). Human rights and glorification: Addressing narratives of violence in a modern context. *Human Rights Law Review*, 23(2), 87-102.

Gosh. (2023). For Colombia's textiles-fashion industry sustainability is not a plus, but a must.

Retrieved from <https://texfash.com>

Haidar, Julieta. (2018). Narcoculture? Narco-trafficking as a semiosphere of anticulture.

<https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/sem-2016-0151/html>

Harvard ReVista. (2023). *Cultural heritage in South American luxury*. Harvard University Press.

Holland, J. (2019, June 26). Navigating uncertainty: Tourists’ perceptions of risk in ocean cruising. *ResearchGate*.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/339513025_Navigating_uncertainty_Tourists'_perceptions

IMDb. (n.d.). *Pablo Escobar: El Patrón del Mal*. IMDb. Retrieved October 26, 2024, from https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2187850/?ref_=ttawd_ov

Jacoby, J., & Kaplan, L.B. (1972). *The Components of Perceived Risk*. Proceedings of the Annual Conference of the Association for Consumer Research, 10, 382-393.

Jiang, A., Yang, Z., & Jun, M. (2013, April 8). *Measuring consumer perceptions of online shopping convenience*. ResearchGate; Emerald.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/240917798_Measuring_consumer_perceptions_of_online_shopping_convenience

Katz, J. (2006). *The WHY SOME MEN HURT WOMEN AND HOW ALL MEN CAN HELP*.
<https://xyonline.net/sites/xyonline.net/files/2019-09/Katz%2C%20The%20Macho%20Paradox%20-%20Why%20Some%20Men%20Hurt%20Women%20and%20How%20All%20Men%20Can%20Help%20%282006%29.pdf>

Keller, K. L. (1993). *Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity*. *Journal of Marketing*, 57(1), 1-22.

Le Monde Diplomatique Colombia. (2013, December 12). *Colombia: los ochenta, la década del miedo - El Diplo*. Le Monde Diplomatique Colombia.
<https://www.eldiplo.info/colombia-los-ochenta-la-decada-del-miedo/>

Los Tigres del Norte. (1997). *El jefe de jefes* [Song]. On *Jefe de Jefes*. Fonovisa Records.

Luxonomy. (2024). *The evolution of luxury in Latin America: Blending cultural heritage with modernity*. Luxonomy. Retrieved from <https://www.luxonomy.com>

Martínez, L., Short, J. R., & Zafra, M. I. (2019). A fragile hold on consumption: Consumption and the new middle class in Colombia. *Review of European Studies*, 11(3), 73–83. <https://doi.org/10.5539/res.v11n3p73>

- Miranda (2019, April 2). 1989: por qué hace 30 años Colombia vivió el peor año de su historia reciente - *BBC News Mundo*. *BBC News Mundo*.
<https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-47742991>
- Niemiec, R. (2012). *Prohibition in the USA*. Uj.edu.pl.
<https://ruj.uj.edu.pl/xmlui/handle/item/183636>
- Pérez, M. J. (2016). *Luxurificación de la narco-cultura: Una propuesta de modelo (thesis)*. Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Bogotá.
- Pinterest. (n.d.). [Women dressed in costumes for a Narco themed party]. Retrieved [25 October 2024], from <https://pin.it/4zGPxmr41>
- Rabe, S. G. (2016). *Alliance for Progress*. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Latin American History*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199366439.013.95>
- Raja, N. (2018, April 18). La véritable histoire de Virginia Vallejo et Pablo Escobar. *Vanity Fair*.
<https://www.vanityfair.fr/pouvoir/medias/story/la-veritable-histoire-de-virginia-vallejo-et-pablo-escobar/1856>
- Redacción El Tiempo. (2004, October 3). *EL REY, UN MITO DE AMOR Y SANGRE*. *El Tiempo*. <https://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-1584815>
- Salazar, J. A., Peña, B. D., & Giraldo, M. P. (2017). *Narcoestética en Colombia: entre la vanidad y el delito. Una aproximación compleja*. *Semantic Scholar*.
<https://doi.org/10.21501/24631779.2261>
- Sandoval Piñeros, D. A. (2020, September 10). *Los problemas empíricos de la narcocultura como concepto para el Análisis de la Violencia, El Consumo y la corrupción en Colombia*. *Cuadernos de la Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias Sociales*. Universidad Nacional de Jujuy.

http://www.scielo.org.ar/scielo.php?pid=S1668-81042020000200002&script=sci_arttext

Sheth, J. N., Newman, B. I., & Gross, B. L. (1991). Why we buy what we buy: A theory of consumption values. *Journal of Business Research*, 22(2), 159-170.

Spencer-Oatey, H. (2012). What is culture? A compilation of quotations. *GlobalPAD Core Concepts*. Available at *GlobalPAD Open House*.

Statista. (2024). *Luxury Fashion - Colombia | Statista Market Forecast*. Statista.

<https://www.statista.com/outlook/cmo/luxury-goods/luxury-fashion/colombia#revenue>

The Guardian. (2013, October 29). *Escobar's Rolex seized from Colombia drug lord linked to Farc*. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/oct/29/escobar-rolex-seized-colombia-drug-lords-farc>

Thompson, G. (2021, October 19). Griselda Blanco: The Black Widow who revolutionized Miami's cocaine industry in the 70s. *National Geographic*. Retrieved from

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/griselda-blanco-miami-cocaine-70s>

TN Internacional. (2023, December 2). A 30 años de la muerte de Pablo Escobar: Qué pasó con su fastuoso zoológico privado. *TN*. Retrieved from

<https://tn.com.ar/internacional/2023/12/02/a-30-anos-de-la-muerte-de-pablo-escobar-que-paso-con-su-fastuoso-zoologico-privado/>

Tsiros, M., & Heilman, C. M. (2005). The Effect of Expiration Dates and Perceived Risk on Purchasing Behavior in Grocery Store Perishable Categories. *Journal of Marketing*, 69(2), 114–129. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.69.2.114.60762>

UNIDO. (2023). *What Is CSR?* United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

<https://www.unido.org/our-focus/advancing-economic-competitiveness/competitive-tr>

[ade-capacities-and-corporate-responsibility/corporate-social-responsibility-market-integration/what-csr](#)

Valdez-Cárdenas, J. (2009). *Miss Narco. Belleza, poder y violencia. Historias reales de mujeres en el narcotráfico mexicano*. México: Aguilar.

Varela, J. P. (2019). *Fashion after Narcos the reconfiguration of Colombian aesthetics*. Researchgate.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332706331_Fashion_after_Narcos_The_Reconfiguration_of_Colombian_Aesthetics_to_the_World

Veblen, T. (1899). *The theory of the leisure class*. New York: Macmillan.

VIII Cátedra Anual de Historia “Ernesto Restrepo Tirado” Análisis histórico del narcotráfico en Colombia. (n.d.).

<https://www.museonacional.gov.co/imagenes/publicaciones/analisis-historico-del-narcotrafico-en-colombia.pdf>

Wade, Lisa, & Ferree, Myra. (2019). *Gender ideas, interactions, institutions*. W.W. Norton.

Wiedmann, K.-P., Hennigs, N., & Siebels, A. (2007). Measuring consumers' luxury value perception: A cross-cultural framework. *Academy of Marketing Science Review*, 7(7), 1-21.

World Bank. (2015). *Understanding poverty and improving equity in Colombia*. World Bank Group.

Zeithaml, V. A. (1988). Consumer Perceptions of Price, Quality, and Value: A Means-End Model and Synthesis of Evidence. *Journal of Marketing*, 52(3), 2-2.

<https://doi.org/10.2307/1251446>

11. APPENDIX

1. Survey conducted for the study on narco culture and luxury fashion in Colombia.

Section Demographics

1. What is your age?
 - 18-24
 - 25-34
 - 35-44
 - 45+
2. What is your gender?
 - Male
 - Female
 - Prefer not to say
3. What is your highest level of education?
 - High school
 - Technical or university studies
 - Graduate degree
4. In which city do you currently live?
5. Did you live in Colombia during the 1980s or 1990s?
 - Yes
 - No

Section Influence of Narco Culture on Fashion

1. How familiar are you with the term "Narco culture"?
 - Not at all
 - 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
 - Very familiar
2. Do you believe that Narco culture has influenced fashion trends in Colombia?
 - Strongly disagree

- 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
 - Strongly agree
3. Do you associate any of these luxury fashion items specifically with Narco culture?
Select all that apply.
- Bags
 - Shoes
 - Jackets
 - Jewellery
 - Sunglasses
 - Watches
 - None associated
4. To what extent do you believe Narco culture has shaped luxury fashion consumption?
- No influence
 - 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
 - Great influence

Section Perceived Risk When Buying Luxury Fashion

1. How risky do you believe it is to purchase luxury fashion items in Colombia, given the context of Narco culture?
- No risk
 - 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
 - High risk
2. Do you believe that Narco culture increases the chances of being judged negatively for wearing luxury fashion in Colombia?
- Yes
 - No
3. Do you think there is a social stigma associated with showing wealth through luxury fashion in Colombia?
- No stigma
 - 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
 - High stigma
4. Does Narco culture make you hesitant to buy luxury fashion in Colombia due to safety or social judgment concerns?

- Yes
- No

Section Perceived Value When Buying Luxury Fashion

1. Do you believe that the association of Narco culture with luxury fashion in Colombia affects the perceived value of these items?
 - No impact
 - 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
 - Great impact
2. Do you think luxury brands in Colombia gain or lose value due to their association with Narco culture?
 - Gain value
 - Lose value
 - No impact
3. How important is exclusivity and the status symbol associated with luxury fashion in Colombia, considering Narco culture?
 - Not important
 - 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
 - Very important
4. Do you feel that Narco culture affects the desire for certain luxury fashion brands?
 - Yes
 - No

Section Brand Perception and Brand Image

1. Do you believe that Narco culture has a negative or positive influence on the image of luxury brands in Colombia?
 - Very negative
 - 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
 - Very positive
2. Does association with Narco culture make you more or less likely to trust luxury brands?
 - More likely
 - Less likely

- No impact
- 3. How important is a brand's reputation to you when purchasing luxury fashion in Colombia, considering cultural influence?
 - Not important
 - 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
 - Very important

Section Social Status and Reputation

1. Do you believe that owning luxury fashion in Colombia enhances social status due to the influence of Narco culture?
 - Yes
 - No
2. How important is it to display luxury fashion items as a status symbol in Colombian society?
 - Not important
 - 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
 - Very important
3. Do you believe luxury fashion consumption in Colombia is more about projecting power and wealth due to Narco culture?
 - Strongly disagree
 - 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
 - Strongly agree

Section Consumer Purchase Intention

1. How likely are you to purchase luxury fashion brands in Colombia, knowing the possible association with Narco culture?
 - Very unlikely
 - 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
 - Very likely
2. Does the perception of risk (due to Narco culture) affect your willingness to buy luxury fashion in Colombia?
 - Yes
 - No

3. Does perceived value (due to Narco culture) influence your intention to buy luxury fashion positively or negatively?
- Positively
 - Negatively
 - No impact

2. Table 1. Summary table of regression's results.

Hypothesis	Model	R	R Square	Sig.	Unstandardized B	Standardized Beta	Predictor(s)
H1	1	0,199	0,04	0,013	0,265		¿Cree que la Narco cultura ha influido en las tendencias de la moda en Colombia?
H2	1	0,199	0,04	0,013	0,265		¿Cree que la Narco cultura ha influido en las tendencias de la moda en Colombia?
H3	1	0,031	0,001	0,697	-0,016		Perception of risk
H4	1	0,154	0,024	0,054	-0,079	-0,154	Perception of value
H5	1	0,138	0,019	0,085	-0,176		Narco culture influence on brand perception
H6	1	0,129	0,017	0,106	-0,213		Brand perception
H7	1	0,28	0,016	0,111	0,076		Narco culture influence on social status
H8	1	0,4	0,002	0,619	0,019		Social status and reputation