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The Impact of Negative Electronic Word-of-Mouth on Consumer Attitudes and Purchase Intentions

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Abstract. This study will explore the impact of negative electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions during the crisis of luxury brands. The main case study of the research is the Balenciaga advertising crisis of 2022. Under the framework of the qualitative research procedures, including focus group conversations and case study analysis, this paper explores the impacts of negative eWOM in fueling moral anger, by spreading virally through social media, and on consumer loyalty. The findings indicate that brand loyalty can partially defend against negative publicity, yet that a moral transgression can readily breach that defense, and that loyal customers become vocal critics. The research is relevant to the comprehension of brand immunity in crisis communication and offers management implications to luxury brands to control online image and customer confidence.

Keywords: Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM), Luxury Brand Crisis, Consumer Attitudes, Brand Loyalty, Focus Group

1. Introduction

In the digital world, consumers' perceptions of brands are no longer shaped by the brands themselves alone, but increasingly influenced by user-generated content (UGC) – particularly electronic word of mouth (eWOM). Compared to traditional advertising or magazine promotions, eWOM is characterised by rapid dissemination, broad influence and high reliability, proving especially potent during brand crises. Recently, the reputational risks faced by certain luxury brands during crises have highlighted the threat posed by negative eWOM. Luxury brands leverage brand reputation, scarcity, and symbolism as their most important differentiating features and value proposition to high-performing products and purchasing decisions [1].

Consequently, when they are faced with criticism aimed at them on the internet, they behave as if they are more susceptible to it. This kind of criticism can have a devastating effect upon a brand's reputation in very little time. When negative sentiment prevails, consumers are going to easily challenge the brand's worth, as well as have a hard time turning their loyalties around towards a new brand. In the year 2022, Balenciaga came under fire for an ad campaign that ended up in a lot of negative discussion on various social media platforms, which severely damaged the brand reputation. This case study therefore acts as a prototype for exploring the ways in which brand detractors in the form of negative electronic word-of-mouth may impact consumer perception and the likelihood of buying luxury products.

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Our research explores if negative electronic word-of-mouth (EWOM) communication about luxury products has importance for brand attitude and purchasing intention. In this study, we examine whether negative electronic word-of-mouth about luxury goods significantly affects the attitude toward the brand and purchase intention among consumers. The study concerns the negative impact electronic word-of-mouth on the brand attitude and purchase intention regarding luxury goods. Through gathering responses for the 2022 Paris Saint-Germain child's pornographic suggestive ad, and its accompanying negative electronic word-of-mouth, and by conducting case studies and interviews among the particular groups of society, we will try to analyze the occurrences and determine the main findings. If it is found that negative electronic word-of-mouth matters, we will be able to recommend some strategies regarding the intervention luxury brands can make in crisis public relations and brand management.

Along the lines of previous research on consumer psychology and crisis communication, it is argued that negative online word of mouth is one of the pivotal processes for brand perception in case of brand crises. Thus, we claim that negative online word-of-mouth (WOM) will exhaust the word-of-mouth capital to a certain extent and will thus damage the brand image. This research intends to empower the tentative approach of this hypothesis by a case study of Balenciaga's advertising mishap, and support the theory behind crisis communication and brand management.

2. Literature review

2.1. The dual effect of eWOM: why negative matters more

With the rapid development in digital media, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) has been recognised as a central factor influencing consumer decision-making, attitudes, and purchase intentions. Due to the advantages boosted by technology, eWOM's performance is enhanced largely in contrast to traditional word-of-mouth: speed, reach, and persistence [2]. EWOM, under both positive and negative, affects consumer behavior. However, consistent findings suggest a more impactful result in negative than positive messages. For instance, Chevalier and Mayzlin demonstrates that while favourable reviews increase consumption behaviours, one-star reviews suppress demand more significantly [3]. Additionally, Erkan and Evans [4] also showed that the persuasiveness of eWOM is affected by information quality and credibility, and the negative messages are especially prone to being adopted when they are estimated to be credible [4]. The negative eWOM is particularly harmful to brands due to the negativity bias.

2.2. Formation of attitude, negative eWOM, and the luxury context

Changes in attitudes are the prime pathway through which negative eWOM occurs, and this subsequently influences purchase intention. Cui, Niu, and Guo affirmed the fact that exposure to negative reviews reduces attitudes and that this decline results in a decrease in purchase intention [5]. Lee and Youn further specified that consumers place less belief in marketing claims and tend to believe negative comments of their peers, which further magnifies the effects [6]. In the case of luxury brands such as Balenciaga, the effect of this mechanism is magnified. Luxury goods rely heavily on symbolic value and consumer attachment [7]. In conflicts with social norms, such as the campaign in the case of Balenciaga's 2022 campaign, the impact of negative eWOM on social media is more visible and better spread, undermining even positive previous attitudes. The loyal consumer will make an effort to protect the brand, yet in cases where the message seems credible, attitude is undermined, and so is the repurchase intention. Even the neutral or potential customers are most

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likely to revoke interest quickly. According to this, the available literature reveals that brand loyalty has a complicated contribution to moderating the reaction of consumers to unfavorable electronic word-of-mouth. The protective effects have been highlighted in some studies, whereas other studies have pointed out the negative influence of a strong attachment when the moral boundary is transgressed.

2.3. Loyal consumers and future consumers: different trajectories

The luxury fashion industry is too reliant on a small number of frequent clients. According to the scholarly literature, two opposite approaches are distinguished: firstly, loyalty can take on the role of stabilisation, since consumers are less likely to listen to or be influenced by negative electronic word-of-mouth [4]. This has been attributed to the concept of brand immunity, which assumes that loyal consumers will evade or justify negative information in order to maintain a continued, positive image of the brand [8]. In turn, loyalty may serve as a psychological security, preventing consumer disposition changes. On the other hand, whenever a scandal offends the moral or social mores at first sight, this immunity can be undermined, which leads to what Aaker, Fournier, and Brasel refer to as the mixed emotions effect [9]. Under these conditions, pre-existing attachment might transform into strong repudiation, which is triggered by what appears to be a moral transgression or disappointment. The 2022 Balenciaga scandalous case is a perfect illustration of such a dynamic since some loyal customers defended the brand, and some perceived the action as pushing the boundaries of morality, thus turning followers into critics. Negative electronic word-of-mouth is easily internalised by prospective consumers who do not have high attachment, thus exposing them to the risk of reputational damage. Overall, loyalty may act as both a fortification and a weakness to luxury brands; it serves as a defensive mechanism against generalized critique, but when a scandal occurs, which goes against the current moral standards, its defense mechanism vanishes. In these conditions, therefore, negative reviews online cause harm to the brand image and put the loyalty of the most loyal clientele at risk.

3. Methodology

3.1. Focus group

The three groups of consumers that we invited during the focus group discussions in this study [10, 11] included a total of 15 consumers who had never bought Balenciaga products, occasional Balenciaga customers, and consumers who had purchased Balenciaga products more than five times, whom we termed Balenciaga loyalists. The qualitative research design and the focus-group method were used in this study to investigate the attitudes, emotions, and perceptions of the participants. Consumer-behavior research is especially well-suited to the crisis situation when using focus groups since it allows researchers to obtain rich and subtle information and the social interaction process among participants that may be missed in a quantitative methodology [12]. The comparison between their attitudes and responses to the 2022 advertising scandal also gave us more vivid results and enabled us to understand the variations in emotional reactions, perception, brand image, and purchase intention among various consumer groups. Not only do these variations indicate differences in brand engagement and loyalty levels of the groups, but they also indicate the impact of negative online word-of-mouth on the desire of consumers and brand reputation in case of a luxury brand crisis [13].

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Table 1. Focus group responses to the Balenciaga advertising crisis

Dimension	Non-buyers(n=5)	Occasional Buyers(n=6)	Loyal Consumers(n=4)
Initial Reaction	Shocked, uncomfortable, but passive; treated as a public issue.	confused, surprised; did not see as brand's malicious intent.	Strong emotions; divided between defending and feeling betrayed.
Attribution	Saw ad as morally inappropriate, poor oversight.	Attributed to excessive creativity or weak review.	Split: execution error vs. crossing ethical boundary.
Brand Perception	Negative impressions reinforced; no effect on behavior.	Trust reduced, but design/luxury value still acknowledged.	Rapid shifts; some loyal, others turned strongly negative.
Purchase Intention	No purchase intention before or after.	Critical but retaining"; dependent on brand's crisis response.	Most uncertain: loyalty, hesitation, or rejection.
Overall Role	Passive bystanders; amplifynegative e-WOM.	Middle group; conditional trust.	High-risk group; highly polarized reactions.

3.2. Discussion of the focus group

3.2.1. Non-purchasers

To begin with, non-purchasers express the same feelings as visitors do. The interaction can be more passive, and bystanders may regard such controversies as public occurrences or media events that they do not connect with when it comes to their consumption behaviors and decision to purchase. For example, one participant said: "I was just surprised and cautious when I saw the ad; yet buying this brand was never in my plans"—it is a typical example of the bystander response in this situation: they are frustrated, but the weak brand loyalty or low involvement does not convert this frustration into the purchase intention amongst them.

The concept of the attitude-behavior inconsistency has also been relevant to investigations of the brand crisis and communication in online environments: scholars observe that when consumers have distant relations with the brand or play a role on the periphery, their behavioral expressions or evaluative responses may remain separated from the negative feelings generated [14, 15].

The majority of those questioned stated that "avant-garde, controversial, and even eccentric" always came to their mind when they seriously considered Balenciaga. According to them, only this advertisement crisis could give a significant impetus to the formation of the negative perception without further changing the way they buy products. Therefore, such purchasers will not receive the advertising information in a nearby setting—like the mix of childish elements and the more adult-looking symbols—except through social media discussions or critiques done by influencers.

If they are left alone to provide their dialogue, they might not even acknowledge the fact of the controversy's extreme nature. This implies the potential of negative eWOM to act as a "catalyst" as well as a "reinforcer" among these crowds; it may not do much in terms of altering the purchasing decision in these cases. Scholarly literature documents that during the crisis, less loyal consumers act mainly as information gatherers and spreaders. While they are at risk of developing bad attitudes, this fact does not suggest that they are also likely to withdraw or boycott [16].

In addition, such amplifiers as outsiders of the brand are drawn out by experts, being special for public opinion during the time of crisis [17]. They can repost or comment on social media and are striving to be involved more unlikely to adjust non-existent purchasing behavior due to the crisis.

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This means that although non-purchasers themselves do not directly affect sales performance, their attitude changes can lead to the secondary spread of negative word-of-mouth, thereby intensifying the external impact caused by the crisis [18].

However, the negative attitudes held by those who did not purchase the item exhibit a certain "boundary-line" quality – meaning their criticism may remain confined to the advertisement's expression and moral judgement, without extending to an overall assessment of the brand's values. They may deem the advertisement inappropriate, criticise insufficient vetting, or raise concerns about ethical boundaries, yet still perceive this as a single misstep. It is insufficient to cause them to completely reject Balenciaga's entire design ethos, style, or standing.

3.2.2. Occasional purchasers

Occasional purchasers and non-purchasers responded somewhat differently to the incident, as their prior purchasing experience with the brand had fostered a degree of familiarity and heightened expectations. When facing a crisis, their response is often "criticism but retention". When encountering an advertising controversy, the respondents expressed surprise, unease or confusion, although the majority did not immediately decide to abandon the brand. Many attributed the problem to overly enthusiastic creativity, marketing mistakes or imperfect review procedures, rather than fundamental moral flaws of the brand itself. This perspective enables them to rationally separate the advertising incident from the overall value of the brand. A 21-year-old male respondent described this advertisement as "somewhat confusing", but insisted that the brand "could not have intentionally harmed children", believing that the core issue was that the advertisement "might be misunderstood". After watching the online comments, he still think that "public reaction was excessive", and emphasized that he would not abandon the brand just because of one advertisement [19]. The occasional buyers group often distinguishes "the problems of the advertisement itself" from "the overall value of the brand". One respondent said: "I do think this advertisement has problems, but that doesn't mean I won't buy clothes from Balenciaga in the future." Others emphasiz that : "An advertising error is not equivalent to the entire brand." These comments are indicative of occasional buyers who treat advertising controversies apart from brand equity, as they would rather assess how a brand responds before making their final decision whether to continue consuming or not. During this critical period, people that are said to belong to this group will mostly adopt the stance "criticism but retention". This is in line with the studies on crisis management, who show that the adequacy of brand response strategies minimizes the reactions of consumers, even when brand trust has been eroded, and leaves room for a continuation of consumption [20].

Moreover, ccasional buyers may also be more susceptible to a brand's next public relations moves: if the mark reacts promptly, apologizes sincerely, and trains public follow-up measures, such buyers easily agree on being partially retained. On the other hand, if the motion of the brand is small in size or the response is made later, there are chances of some buyers dropping out one by one because of the destroyed trust. This view is supported by the research findings, indicating the importance of the pace of the crisis response on consumer evaluations [21]. Response speed and communication strategy of a brand in the aftermath of a crisis event not only shape consumers' opinions about the current episode but profoundly influence the long-term interconnectedness of brand-consumer relations [22]. Accordingly, if a brand reacts quickly, clearly, and sincerely to customers' questions in a critical period for the organization, these customers are likely to see the brand as one fully responsible and committed to putting things right. This lessens the negative feelings and keeps a certain level of trust instead. Use of non-committal or late silence would be seen as an attempt to elude or not being real with customers. This would consequently trigger

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negative perceptions, implication of brand reputation over time, and possibility of customers switching to other brands.

Overall, occasional buyers may fall with the "critical retention" spectrum and represent a crucial middle group in crisis management. They are neither the most zealous supporters nor passive observers, but rather individuals whose loyalty may be maintained, withdrawn, or adjusted depending on the quality of the brand's response strategy [23].

3.2.3. Loyal purchasers

Loyal fans' perception of the brand problem to "poor communication" or "potential misunderstandings", while others quickly turn to disappointment. They stating outright that "there are serious problems with the advertisement, making me confuse about the brand's values". This difference clearly indicates the extreme fluctuations in the attitudes of devoted fans during crises: some, driven by their protective instincts, defend the brand, emphasizing external misunderstandings or excessive public supervision; others, however, consider this unacceptable and believe that the brand has crossed moral boundaries and even betrayed the principles they once supported. A 25-year-old female fan said that the "frequent advertising controversies and perfunctory public relations" of Balenciaga led her to conclude: "Since so many negative events have occurred, I don't want to pay for unhappiness." She emphasized that she would only reconsider to support the brand if the brand conducts systematic reflection rather than superficial public relations.

Some respondents confessed that as soon as this advertisement conveys a message that bypasses their psychological defense, the total destruction of the brand's psychological image will happen immediately. This drastic modification of attitude could intensify the result already gained: consumers with high brand loyalty more often struggle with cognitive dissonance and emotional conflicts in times of crises, which can hence cause mood changing. While it can, in some cases, show the supporter's clearness, usually it may be a reason for an absolute break [24]. Besides that, crisis research demonstrates that the more aroused the consumers are about the negative emotions and the level more of threat, the more they have tendencies to take behavioral reactions such as returns, complaints, or social dissemination, which negatively affects their consumption patterns and the trust towards the brands [16]. With regard to the loyal fans' tendencies toward negative electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), this group exhibits distinct polarization characteristics. The fact is that they may engage in spreading, making counteractions, and defending the trademark alone or with assistance from others, their champions, from this time forward, and also the most critical voice when something discouraging is found. As one other customer commented, taking children for advertising and marketing in an inappropriate way is very reasonable, and they avoid reinforcing these negative feelings by saying such comments, which make their position towards a brand even worse. As it turned out, the other respondents reported that when individuals said that the ads were too graphic for young children, it was as if they immediately believed that their ideas were reshaped into brand negativity. This sudden change in attitude is consistent with the existing research results: consumers with high brand loyalty are more likely to experience cognitive dissonance and emotional conflicts during crises, leading to extreme changes in attitude. Regarding purchase intentions, the loyal fan group shows the most uncertain trajectory. Some people still firmly support the brand out of "loyalty", insisting that a single advertising mistake cannot define the entire brand; others clearly state that they will abandon the purchase, claiming "even though I like this design, I cannot accept such value issues".

The reactions of loyal fans show a clear polarization and uncertainty. During a brand crisis, they may become the most steadfast supporters, or, if their sense of identification is weakened, they will

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turn into the most dangerous critics and disseminators of negative emotions. Luxury brands must prioritize loyal fans in crisis management, treating them as key communication targets, because their emotional fluctuations and comments have higher authenticity compared to other groups, although it may increase the intensity of emotions. Therefore, the reactions of loyal fans determine the trajectory and intensity of brand crisis communication.

3.2.4. Findings

The focus group results show that negative e-WOM impacts consumer groups differently depending on prior brand engagement. The results highlight clear differences among consumer groups in their reactions to the Balenciaga 2022 advertising controversy. Non-buyers mainly acted as bystanders: they described the advertisement as shocking or uncomfortable, but negative e-WOM only reinforced their existing scepticism without affecting actual purchase behaviour. Because they were not part of the Balenciaga customer base anyway. Occasional purchasers adopt a "critical but retaining" stance, distinguishing advertisements from the brand. Whether they will continue to purchase largely depends on the response from Balenciaga. Quick and sincere communication is regarded as the key to maintaining trust. Loyal consumers have shown the most intense and polarized reactions: some defend the brand, while others feel betrayed and quickly withdrew their support. These results confirm that negative online word-of-mouth has a significant impact on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions, and the extent of this impact varies depending on the level of consumer loyalty, thus resulting in distinct emotional and behavioral responses during luxury brand crises.

4. Case study

4.1. Introduction

This study used a qualitative case study in addition to the focus group discussions of the 2022 child sexualisation scandal of Balenciaga. This case was chosen as it is one of the most visible and polarising examples of negative electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) in the luxury fashion sector, which is a bright example of how the brand reputation can be ruined due to the online discourse.

4.2. Brand history and marketing context

Balenciaga was founded in 1919 by Cristobal Balenciaga, and it has always been considered one of the most innovative and avant-garde luxury brands. Under the creative direction of Demna Gvasalia, the brand has developed a cult of provocative and boundary-challenging style that defies regular classification between art, irony, and fashion. This provocative picture belongs to the marketing plan of Balenciaga, which consciously pursues the polarisation in order to remain visible and relevant to culture. It has often used its campaigns to capitalize on efforts of social media virality and celebrity collaboration, which amplifies online interaction efforts and heightens reputational exposure to risk. An example of this risk was the 2022 campaign entitled Gift Shop, where children were shown with teddy bears in bondage outfits. The advert soon came under fire as both indecorous and exploitative, and created a global furor and one of the hottest online scandals in the history of the brand itself.

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4.3. Data rationale for case selection

The scandal of Balenciaga was selected as it shows how the dependence of luxury brands on the symbolic capital and transgressive advertisement may be backfire in the digital realm. The case presents an excellent source of opportunity to study how the negative eWOM leads to the strengthening of the moral outrages, the enhancement of the Internet backlash, and the loss of consumer trust. Differences in the consumer responses between the loyal and potential buyers, as observed in the focus group, also make the brand best suited to explore the polarised identity that the brand already has.

4.4. Data collection

The secondary data was collected from various sources, including:

1. Social media posts on Instagram and TikTok.
2. Online news reports documenting the escalating nature of the scandal [25];
3. Public reactions, such as calls for boycotts, memes, and criticism from influencers.

Typical examples include a widely circulated news timeline that outlined the controversy caused by the event, and a funny image widely shared on TikTok that showed Kylie Jenner's response. Both of these demonstrate the rapid spread of negative comments across various platforms.

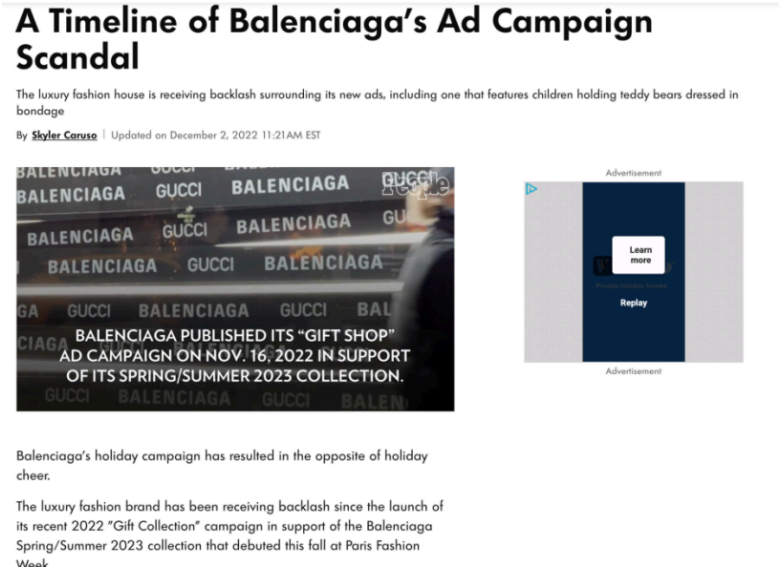


Figure 1. Screengrab of a People Magazine news piece, entitled A Timeline of Balenciaga news campaign scandal, summing up the scandal of the 2022 Gift Shop news campaign and its reaction in the media. *Source:* [25]

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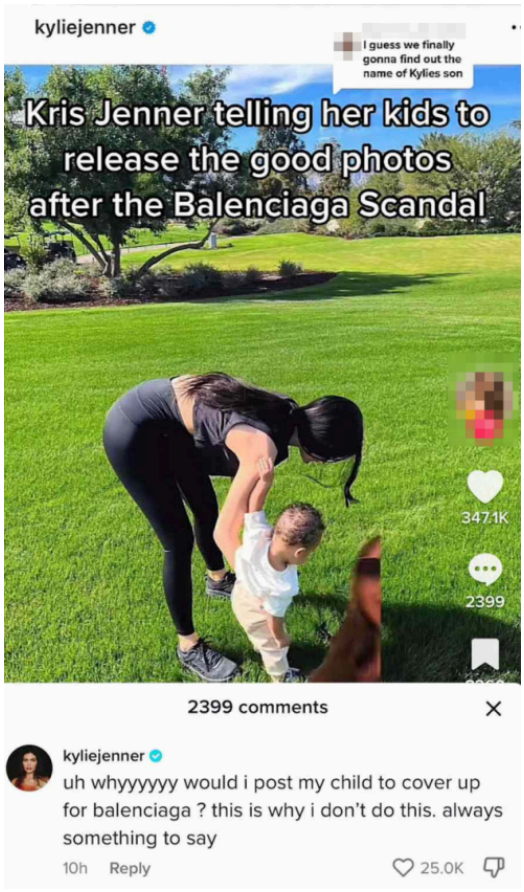


Figure 2. A viral post on TikTok mentioning Kylie Jenner in the reaction to the Balenciaga scandal, which was a meme spreading criticism against the brand. Source: [26]

4.5. Data analysis

The thematic analysis method was used. The coding was devoted to three aspects:

1. Message Content: A lot of users positioned the campaign as morally inadmissible and harmful to children;
2. Diffusion of Messages: Negative eWOM propagates on social media and is fueled by influencer and news coverage participation.
3. Consumer Response: There were contrasting responses between the loyal and the disillusioned critics, which created a love-hate relationship that was akin to that of the focus group

4.6. Integrated findings

The outcomes of the case study are added to the data of the focus group, which demonstrates the similarity in the behavioural patterns. Negative eWOM was found to cause an extremely negative effect on consumer trust, purchase intention, and polarisation of consumer loyalty in both strategies.

According to the focus group, responses ranged from moral condemnation to defence, and these were reflected in the online discussion of the scandal. Non-purchasers were chiefly observers who added to the negative commentary, and loyal consumers were highly emotionally volatile, some expressing their sense of artistic freedom of Balenciaga at Balenciaga, others that a severe moral offence had been committed.

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Finally, the Balenciaga case shows how the provocative marketing approach of luxury brands can be both appealing and threatening in the digital age. The fact that the real-world discourse analysis and a focus group discussion are used to conclude on the idea that negative eWOM has a disproportionate impact on the brand attitudes and brand loyalty is a serious challenge to the crisis management and reputation in the long term.

5. Implications and research limitations

The research results show that negative electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) strongly influences consumer attitudes and purchase intentions during a luxury brand crisis. This finding offers important insights for luxury marketing practice. To the marketer, they have to engage with consumers in an active and clear way. Prompt and clear responses can assist the luxury brands in rebuilding their reputation and minimizing the adverse feelings among consumers. In relation to consumers, the research shows that what is said online can easily change the minds of consumers. In relation to consumers, the research shows that what is said online can easily change the minds of consumers. Therefore, when dealing with brand controversies on social media, they need to remain objective and conduct more in-depth thinking.

Although the focus group method has provided diverse data, we also recognize some limitations. Firstly, the sample size of the focus groups is relatively small, which limits the scope of the research results. Because of the limited number of participants, the findings may not fully represent the global consumer base of Balenciaga.

Second, most participants were young adults between the ages of 20 and 25.

Furthermore, the case study method also has its own limitations. Since it mainly relied on secondary data collected from social media and online news articles [25, 26], the analysis may not fully capture private attitudes or offline discussions of consumers. Online content often reflects the most extreme opinions, which can lead to an overrepresentation of outrage and moral criticism. Moreover, because the Balenciaga scandal was analysed as a single case, the findings cannot be easily generalised to other luxury brands or industries. Finally, there is a risk of researcher bias in the interpretation of online posts and emojis, as their tone and intent are often difficult to clearly determine.

In spite of such shortcomings, the results of the focus group and case study proved to be useful in our study, nonetheless. Collectively, they disclosed how online negative reviews and viral controversies together influence the consumer perception, brand trust, and loyalty in the case of a luxury crisis. To enhance the practical applicability of the luxury brand marketing strategies, future research should consider a sample of a broader age range and extension of the sample size to strengthen the findings and make them more practical. Primary data would also be useful to include in future case studies (interviews or surveys) to more accurately confirm the effectiveness of online sentiment as a measure of real consumer attitudes.

6. Discussion

The combined results of the questionnaire survey, focus group discussions, and case studies indicate that negative electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) has a significant impact on consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions, especially in the case of luxury brand crises. According to the results of the questionnaire survey, 78% of the respondents stated that after seeing this scandal, their perception of the Balenciaga brand became more negative, and 65% of them indicated that their willingness to purchase the brand decreased. However, these effects varied depending on the previous level of

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brand engagement. Among the loyal consumer group, 40% initially supported the Balenciaga brand, but more than half of them later expressed disappointment, indicating that loyalty only provides temporary support [1, 12].

The data collected from the focus groups further explain this shift: non-purchasers are mostly mere spectators; occasional purchasers have a "critical but reserved" attitude; while loyal consumers exhibit strong defensive and rebellious emotions. This case study has confirmed these behavioral trends, indicating that the rapidly spreading social media posts and emojis in the form of a virus have accelerated the spread of moral anger and shaped the collective dissatisfaction [4, 20]. Overall, these findings confirm that negative electronic word-of-mouth serves both as information and as moral judgment. Loyalty may buffer minor criticism, but when moral boundaries are crossed, it may collapse into rejection.

7. Conclusion

This study shows that when luxury brands encounter crises, negative online reviews can have a powerful impact on consumers' perceptions and behaviors. The 2022 Balenciaga scandal demonstrated that if improper marketing conflicts with ethical standards, it can have negative effects, turning consumers' loyalty into hostility. For marketers, this result implies that timely, open, and value-oriented communication is crucial for avoiding reputational damage. In summary, negative online reviews are not only a reflection of public sentiment but also an amplifier of it. Their influence extends beyond sales data to the emotional and moral relationships between the brand and consumers. Future research can expand this study through cross-cultural comparisons or longitudinal data research to explore the situation of brand recovery after digital crises, thereby providing deeper insights for luxury brands in rebuilding trust environments after crises.

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