

# Chanel Brand Equity in the Eyes of Male Consumers

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คุณค่าตราสินค้าชาแนลในสายตาของผู้บริโภคชาย



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By	Miss Alexandra Grace Sheehan
Field of Study	Strategic Communication Management
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ธรรม

งานวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาคุณค่าตราสินค้าชาแนลในสายตาผู้บริโภคชาย โดยใช้ระเบียบวิธีวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพ ในการรวบรวมข้อมูลผ่านการสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึกจำนวน 12 คน ผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์เป็นกลุ่มตัวอย่างคนไทย เพศชาย เจนเนอเรชั่นมิลเลนเนียล จำนวน 12 คน ที่มีอายุระหว่าง 23 - 38 ปี อาศัยอยู่ในกรุงเทพฯ ประเทศไทย และได้ซื้อผลิตภัณฑ์ชาแนลภายในระยะเวลา 12 เดือนที่ผ่านมา ผลการวิจัยครั้งนี้พบว่า ผู้บริโภคเพศชายสามารถจดจำตราสินค้าชาแนลได้เป็นอย่างดี ผู้บริโภคเพศชายมีมุมมองเชิงบวกต่อชาแนล และมองว่าเป็นแบรนด์ที่อยู่เหนือกาลเวลา และเป็นแบรนด์หรูระดับท็อปที่มีราคาแพงเมื่อเทียบกับแบรนด์อื่นๆ ในท้องตลาด โดยนำเสนอผลิตภัณฑ์ที่สามารถนำมาใช้ประโยชน์ได้หลากหลายรูปแบบในชีวิตประจำวัน ผู้บริโภคเพศชายเชื่อว่าชาแนลเป็นตราสินค้าสำหรับผู้หญิงที่มีผลิตภัณฑ์คุณภาพสูงและให้บริการที่ดีมาก พวกเขาเชื่อว่าชาแนล เป็นแบรนด์ที่น่าเชื่อถือและไว้วางใจได้ ซึ่งถูกใช้โดยกลุ่มประชากรที่มีฐานะร่ำรวยซึ่งมีไลฟ์สไตล์ที่หรูหรา ผู้บริโภคเพศชายมองว่าชื่อและสัญลักษณ์ของตราสินค้าชาแนล เป็นเหตุผลที่สำคัญในการทำการซื้อครั้งแรกของพวกเขา รวมถึงมองว่าตราสินค้านี้มีความหมายกับการแสดงตัวตนของตัวเองและให้ประโยชน์ทางสังคมโดยการยกสถานะสังคมของพวกเขา บทบาทของสื่อ รวมถึงผู้มีชื่อเสียงที่ใช้ผลิตภัณฑ์ชาแนลที่รับชมผ่านช่องทางออนไลน์มีอิทธิพลต่อการรับรู้ของชาแนลต่อกลุ่มตัวอย่าง นอกจากนี้ประเทศฝรั่งเศสซึ่งเป็นต้นกำเนิดของชาแนลยังกำหนดความคิดของผู้บริโภคเพศชายเกี่ยวกับภาพลักษณ์ของตราสินค้าเนื่องจากประเทศฝรั่งเศสมีบทบาทสำคัญในเอกลักษณ์ของตราสินค้าและคุณภาพผลิตภัณฑ์ของชาแนล

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ลายมือชื่อนิสิต .....  
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Alexandra Grace Sheehan : Chanel Brand Equity in the Eyes of Male Consumers. Advisor: Asst. Prof. SUTHILUCK VUNGSUNTITUM, Ph.D.

This research aims to study male consumers' brand equity of Chanel. A qualitative method was used to collect data through 12 in-depth interviews. The respondents are 12 Thai male millennials, who are aged between 23 - 38, living in Bangkok, Thailand, and have purchased a product from Chanel within the last 12 months. The findings of this study indicate that male consumers had a good brand recall of Chanel. Male consumers have a positive brand image of Chanel and view them as a timeless brand, a top-tier luxury brand that is expensive in comparison to other luxury brands on the market, offering products that can be utilized in an array of ways in their everyday lives. Male consumers' believe that Chanel is a feminine brand, with high-quality products and accommodating services. They believe that Chanel is a trustworthy and credible brand that is utilized by wealthy demographics of people who have a luxurious lifestyle. Male consumers regard Chanel's brand name and symbol as a reason for making their initial purchase and that the brand provides them with self-expression and gives them social benefits by alleviating their social status. The role of media has influenced their perceptions of Chanel, along with celebrities that utilize its products seen through online platforms. Chanel's French origin shapes the male consumers' thoughts on the brand's image as France plays a big role in Chanel's brand identity and product quality.



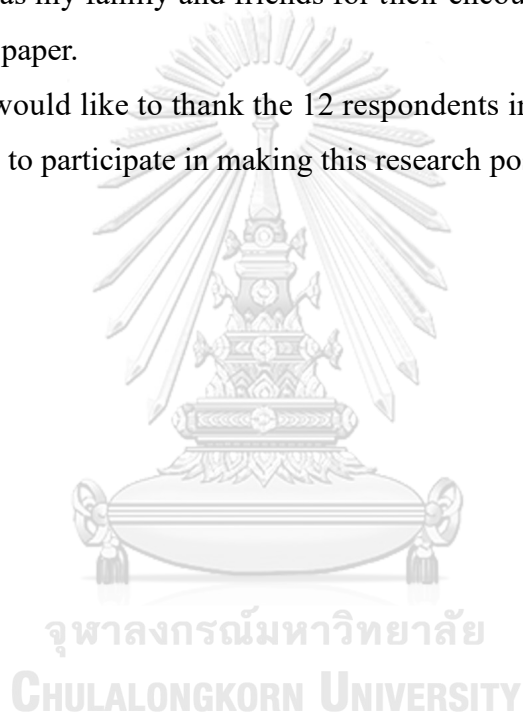
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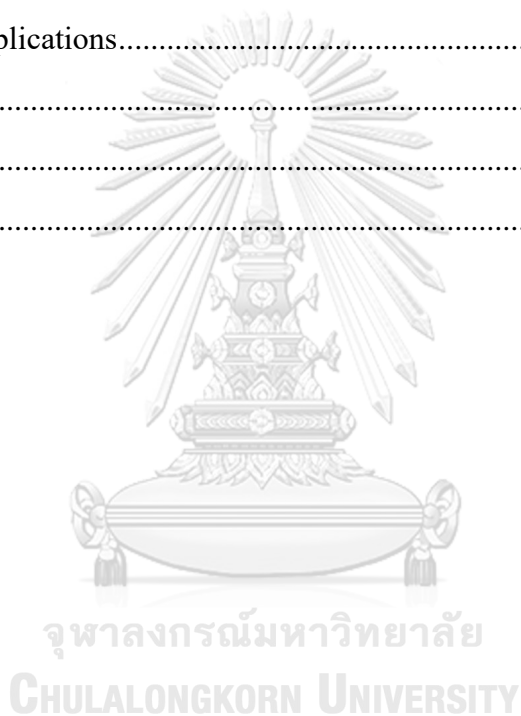
Alexandra Grace Sheehan



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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Significance of study

Luxury brands have held a unique and strong place in the everyday lives of their consumers and the current market environment. Brands have effortlessly become an integral part of their consumer's lives by having an impact on consumers' choices, identities, and perceptions of how they view themselves and the world around them, in addition to their purchasing behaviors. In modern times, countries in Asia such as Thailand are tempting prospects for luxury brands, as the number of high-net-worth consumers is growing rapidly (Chitrakorn, 2023). The demand for luxury brand products has seen a significant increase, as in Thailand, revenue in the luxury goods market amounted to 4.64 billion US dollars in 2023 (Statista, n.d.). Since the Asian region is gaining significance for the luxury brand industry, it entices brands to be on the front lines of this growing market (Wassener, 2013).

The concept of Asia being a collectivist society stimulates the need for people to purchase such luxury items as the culture is heavily influenced by how others view them (Xi et al., 2022). Luxury brands have a symbolic value that elevates consumers' sense of self-worth, their level of social acceptance, and their ability to satisfy their emotional demands. Additionally, consumers buy luxury items to satisfy not just their fundamental wants but also their need for emotional fulfillment (Xi et al., 2022). In Britain, consumers attach less psychological meaning to luxury brands and are more drawn to the product's social acceptability and symbolisms connected to achievement prestige. However, in Asian countries such as India, China, and Indonesia their

cultures are more focused on the status they gain and social acceptance (Shukla, 2015).

Consumers purchase luxury goods not with the priority of fulfilling basic life needs, but for the symbolic value that they attain from luxury brands which increases their self-esteem, gives them recognition by others, and meets their individual emotional requirements (So et al., 2017). Within this, luxury brands can be interpreted by the consumer by their high quality, high price, and conspicuous image. It allows consumers to see the brand's functional and emotional value, in turn creating a deep connection with the brand (Ko et al., 2019). The emotions of these consumers play a major role in how they perceive and affiliate with luxury brands. The feeling of pleasure and status that is associated with the brand makes its consumers want to be part of its image. Since emotions drive decisions, luxury brands create an emotional connection with their consumers, which allows brands to become more desirable and give their consumers feelings of meaning and belonging (Sus, 2023).

In Bangkok's main shopping district, there is an abundance of luxury brand stores that continue to make sales, such as Chanel. It is a globally renowned luxury brand that ranks third among Thailand's luxury brand leaders, behind Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton (LVMH)

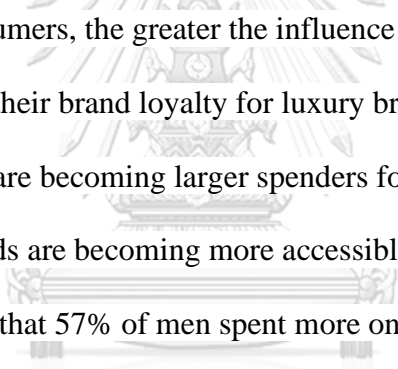
and Hermès SA (*Mordor Intelligence Industry Reports*, n.d.). Chanel is a luxury fashion house founded by Gabrielle Chanel in 1910 in Paris, France. It is a privately held company that is owned by Alain and Gérard Wertheimer, grandsons of Pierre Wertheimer, who was an early business partner of Coco Chanel (*Chanel / Company Overview & News*, n.d.). In addition, China is the second largest market for Chanel's

products behind the U.S. Giving the Asian market more relevancy and attractiveness to the Chanel fashion house. According to Forbes (n.d.), Chanel is known for its clothes, fragrances, handbags, and watches. Particularly, the Chanel No. 5 perfume, the Chanel suit, and the "Little Black Dress" which are the company's most iconic products. In 1983, Karl Lagerfeld became the creative director of Chanel, a position he held until his passing in February 2023. Within Chanel, their product line consists of fashion items such as clothing, bags, shoes, fragrances and accessories in which these products are primarily designed for women (Chanel, n.d.).

According to Chanel, they have no current endeavors or desire to produce product lines for men (La Torre & La Torre, 2019). However, at the recent Chanel Cruise 2023/2024 show in Los Angeles California, Chanel invited male music celebrities such as Snoop Dog and G-dragon to sit in the first row of the fashion show wearing custom Chanel apparel (Morra, 2023). With the aim of including men as part of the entertainment and visuals part of the show, allowing Chanel to look more gender inclusive and open to unisex fashion within social media and the public. In recent times, Chanel has been gaining more popularity within the male consumer group. As new fashion trends circulate, male consumers that prefer styles with a hint of femininity are experimenting with brands such as Chanel (Tashjian, 2019). Moreover, regarding the brands history the founder 'Coco Chanel' found inspiration from menswear when creating the designs, we still see in the stores today, which resonates with male consumers that are passionate about fashion (Tashjian, 2019).

Within the current market, male consumers are spending more on themselves more than ever before (Wertz, 2021). Thus, giving opportunity for brands to see the

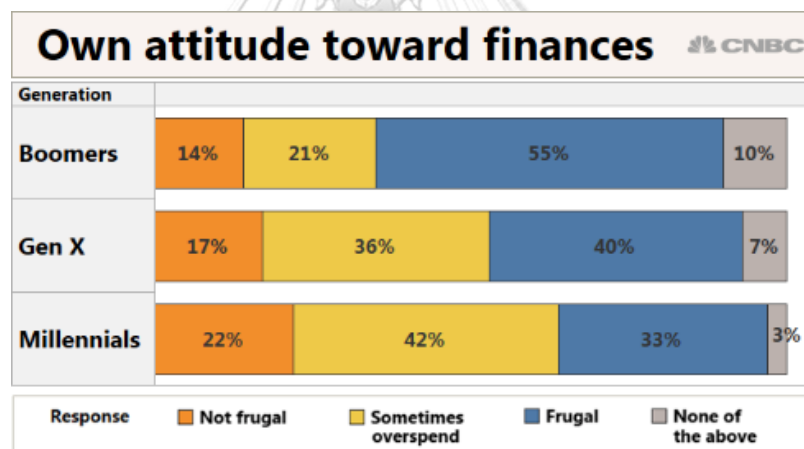
male consumer base as a prospective market. Researchers are starting to consider the role of gender regarding how it influences the consumers self-image and their general consumption of various products (Kimmel, 1999). Moreover, consumers select products based on if it coincides with their self-image or to achieve a more desirable self-image. The self-concept is how people perceive themselves, and the ideal self-concept is how they would like to be perceived by others and themselves, and their social self is how they wish to be perceived by others (Kimmel, 1999). Therefore, a brand could be favorable to the consumer based on if it's consistent with their current self-image or their desired self-image.

With male consumers, the greater the influence of brand satisfaction regarding brand trust, the greater their brand loyalty for luxury brands (Wertz, 2021). In recent years, male consumers are becoming larger spenders for luxurious brands on the market. As luxury brands are becoming more accessible than in the past, The Economic Times states that 57% of men spent more on luxury products in 2021 than ever before (ET Bureau, 2022). Thus, making the male consumer of luxury goods increasingly more important and relevant to brands.  RSITY

Regarding spending habits, we delve into the concept of Generation which refers to 'cohorts of people who are a comparable age and life stage and who were shaped by a particular span of time such as events, trends, and development (Pueschel et al., 2020). Additionally, there are six generations that have been distinguished: Pre-depression generation (born before 1930), Depression generation (1930-1945), Baby boomers (1945-1965), Generation X (1965 - 1977), Generation Y or Millennials (1977 - 1994) and Generation Z (born after 1994). The demand for luxury

consumption did not serve the same psychological functions for generations before millennials; however, in present times, the growing demand for luxury products demonstrates the power of its value amongst their consumers (Pueschel et al., 2020). A survey by CNBC stated that millennials are most likely to admit that they are not frugal with money and are susceptible to overspending habits. According to Forbes, millennials represent 32% of the luxury spending market, but by 2025 they are expected to represent 50% of the market. Additionally, millennials are looking for innovations in designs that reflect their individuality and values (Danziger, 2019).

Figure 1 - Millennials own attitude towards finances

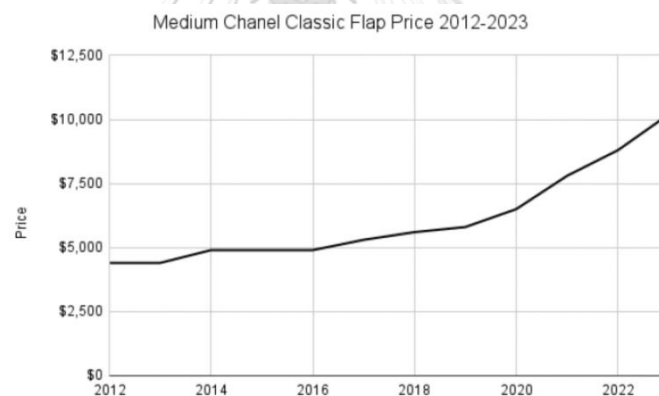


Source: Konish, L. (2019, April 15). This generation is least frugal with money, and their parents could be partly to blame. CNBC.

<https://www.cnbc.com/2019/04/15/this-generation-is-least-frugal-with-money-parents-could-be-to-blame.html>

Additionally, in current years luxury brands have become more affordable for middle-class consumers, with luxury brands such as Alexander Wang and Balmain creating licensed collaborations with price-accessible brands such as H&M (Rosendo-Rios & Shukla, 2023). In addition, with the upsurge and attractiveness of the normalization of sustainable fashion, consumers can purchase second-hand luxury brand items products for cheaper costs on the condition that their products are pre-owned (Danziger, 2019). Resulting in the surge for higher spending habits amongst millennials within current times.

Figure 2 - Medium Chanel Classic Flap price



Source: Kagan, E. (2023b). *The Luxury Price boom: Why you should invest in Chanel Handbags today* | *Handbags and Accessories*  
<https://www.sothebys.com/en/articles/the-luxury-price-boom-why-you-should-invest-in-chanel-handbags-today>

Regardless of the significant shift in the luxury brand marketplace, Chanel's product prices continue to soar. In 1983 the Chanel medium classic flap bag was released in-store retailing for \$1000 USD. In 2023 the price for the same medium



Chanel flap classic bag retailed at \$10,000 USD. Thus, making it mostly accessible to a more affluent consumer base (see figure 2).

Chanel is one of the few brands that will likely increase in value rather than depreciate (Kagan, 2023b). When it comes to a second-hand Chanel handbag that has been well maintained and in excellent condition, on average it increases in value at 10-15% per year. The demand for Chanel bags in both the retail and re-sell market has remained strong over the last 10 years, with its increase in value inclusive of influences such as growing economic inflation. This makes Chanel bags a more justifiable investment for its consumers, allowing the brand to boost the prices of their products as consumers will continue to pay regardless as they are assured that there is a thriving market in place. According to Chanel, 'the price of a Chanel bag reflects not only a sense of exclusivity, but also our values', in other words, the consumer is not just buying the craftsmanship of the product, but the whole Chanel image that comes with purchases (Kagan, 2023b). Moreover, the soaring prices of Chanel products add to the charm, allure, and opulence of the brand which correlates to the brand offering exclusivity and wealth to its consumers.

With Chanel consumers fulfilling their desire to attain the Chanel image when consuming the products, this fosters loyalty amongst consumers. The concept of brand equity, as per Aaker (1991), is measured through brand awareness, perceived quality, brand association, brand loyalty, and other proprietary brand associations. A brand possessing superior brand equity can effectively promote customer loyalty, demand a premium market price, and successfully compete with other brands (Aaker,

1991, 1996). If a brand has strong assimilation towards its consumer's brand equity, it will in return build them a loyal consumer base, uphold themselves in the premium market, and increase their product prices from high demands. For the brand to have good brand equity, this also increases prospects for a successful brand extension strategy, offers protection from competition, and acts as a strong entry barrier for competitors (Farquhar, 1989).

This study aims to explore the male consumers' brand equity of Chanel. Despite the number of studies that have been conducted that attribute to what defines a luxury brand, there has been a scarce amount of research conducted that investigates how to analyze and interpret the minds of consumers about their perceptions of luxury brands (Romaniuk & Huang, 2019). Therefore, this study will provide insight into understanding the minds of male Thai consumers regarding their brand equity and their purchasing behaviors to determine how it is a key factor for the Chanel brand to stay relevant and uphold its novelty in the market.

## **1.2 Research Objectives**

1. To study male consumers' brand equity of Chanel.
  - 1.1 To identify male consumers' brand awareness of Chanel.
  - 1.2 To identify male consumers' brand association toward Chanel.
  - 1.3 To identify male consumers' brand loyalty toward Chanel.
  - 1.4 To identify male consumers' perceived quality with Chanel.

### 1.3 Research Questions

1. What is the male consumers' brand equity of Chanel?
  - 1.1 What is the male consumers' brand awareness of Chanel?
  - 1.2 What is the male consumers' brand association toward Chanel?
  - 1.3 What is the male consumers' brand loyalty toward Chanel?
  - 1.4 What is the male consumers' perceived quality with Chanel?

### 1.4 Scope of Study

This study is conducted through an exploratory research design and is qualitative in nature. This research was conducted through twelve in-depth interviews. Through in-depth interviews, the researcher seeks to examine points of view, experiences, feelings, and perspectives (Lee & Leung, 2020). Furthermore, this method is applied in this study because it enables the researcher to interact in a direct and personal setting with the sample.

The selected respondents were individuals with Thai nationality, are male, currently residing in Bangkok, and are millennials between the ages of 25 - 38 (Pew Research Center, 2023). Respondents are required to have purchased Chanel Brand products from the retail or re-sell marketplace at least once within the last 12 months. The interviews were done individually through face-to-face settings as per the participant's convenience. The in-depth interviews were conducted throughout the 2nd to the 20th of November 2023.

## 1.5 Operational Definitions

### *Brand Equity Towards Chanel*

The concept of Brand Equity as defined by Aaker (1991) is “A set of categories of brand assets (liabilities) linked to a brand’s name or symbol that add to (subtract from) the value provided by a product or service”.

Regarding this study, brand equity towards Chanel is discussed through the four dimensions.

1. *Brand awareness* refers to the consumer's ability to recall Chanel from memory when the product class of luxury brands is made known.
2. *Brand association* refers to the thoughts, experiences, and beliefs that the consumer may have regarding Chanel and the consumer's thoughts on Chanel’s brand attitude, emotional features, and experiential benefits.
3. *Perceived quality* refers to the consumer's judgment regarding Chanel’s superiority and excellence in regard to the overall product quality in comparison to its competitors.
4. *Brand loyalty* refers to the attachment that the consumer has to Chanel. With regards to Chanel, the threat from competitors is reduced due to the loyalty of consumers, which provides Chanel with the ability to demand a high luxury price within the market.

### *Luxury brand*

Regarding the characteristics and elements that define luxury brands, there are several ways in which a can be considered what is a luxury brand. According to Bernard Dubois (2005), characteristics such as exclusivity, uniqueness, scarcity, premium price, quality, and aesthetics are all dimensions that should be taken into consideration to conceptualize the term Luxury brand (Hudders et al., 2013). Regarding this study, these characteristics will differ for each respondent as they have their own views, perceptions and thoughts on Chanel.

### *Male millennials*

According to the Pew Research Center (2023), anyone born between 1981 and 1996 (ages 23 - 38) is considered a millennial (Pew Research Center, 2023). Regarding this study, millennials are selected as part of the case study since generations before millennials stress the importance of savings and are more likely to purchase necessary items (*'New Frugality' Among Boomers*, 2018). As generations before millennials that have experienced economic hardships are likely to develop more frugality regarding their purchasing behaviors. Regarding Generation Z, a study by Business Insider claimed that 60% of this generation still financially depend on their parents as their main source of income (Tan, 2023). Whereas millennials are more susceptible to having spending habits where they are more likely to be inclined to splurge on more expensive items (Konish, 2019). Therefore, since Chanel has an affluent consumer base, Millennial male's may be more prone to indulge in purchasing luxury products.

### **1.6 Expected benefits of study**

The results of this study are expected to bolster knowledge of brand equity towards luxury brands while using Chanel as the case study. In addition, this study aims to provide academic researchers with information about luxury brands within the Asian market regarding male consumers' brand equity in the brand itself. The findings of this study can yield significant insight into male millennials in the Asian market's perception of luxury brands in the current state of research. It can also serve as a reference point for marketing practitioners to analyze the changes in male millennials' perceptions of luxury brands and their overall brand equity across luxury brands over time. As mentioned previously, Chanel's product line caters mostly to female consumers, therefore this study delves into the minds of Chanel's male consumer base.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The aim of this study is to explore male consumers brand equity of Chanel. To fully understand the concepts of this study, this chapter aims to break down each variable. This chapter is segmented into three parts based on the two concepts of this study, the first concept is regarding brand equity, the second concept is based on millennials, and the third concept touches on high involvement.

#### 2.1 Brand Equity

Brand equity is a fundamental intangible part of every successful brand as it gives off a representation that the brand has value, recognition, and trust when consumers associate with that brand. To have brand equity is to embody emotional connections, perceptions, and loyalty toward a brand, thus in turn giving the brand the ability to hold premium prices, consumer loyalty and survive market turbulence. Brand equity can provide or subtract value for its consumers, as it can help them interpret, process, and store huge quantities of information about products and brands. Furthermore, it can affect consumers' confidence in purchasing decisions due to either past usage experiences or familiarity with the brand and its characteristics (Aaker, 1991). Having brand equity has been an important concept in marketing as researchers have stated that brand equity leads to the increase in the probability of choosing a brand, retention of consumers, consumers' willingness to pay premium prices, effectiveness of marketing communication, and for brands to develop brand extensions (Sharma, 2017).

### **Definition of brand equity**

Firstly, this study focuses on the concept of Brand Equity which is defined by Aaker (1991) as “A set of categories of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand, name or symbol that add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or to that firm's customers”. Furthermore, brand equity can be determined by assets or liabilities that are connected to the brand's name and/or symbol. Some or all the brand's assets or liabilities may be impacted and even lost if the name or symbol changes, however, some may be shifted to a new name and symbol (Aaker, 1991). Within Aaker's definition, he discusses these assets and liabilities on which brand equity is based through five dimensions which are Brand awareness, Brand association, Perceived quality, Brand loyalty, and other proprietary brand assets (Sharma, 2017).

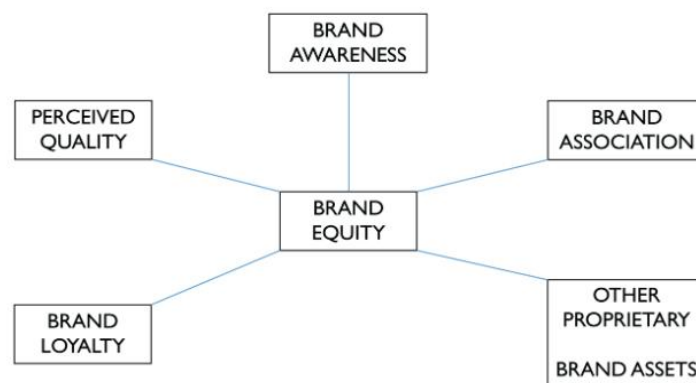
### **Dimensions of Brand Equity**

This study conceptualizes brand equity from Aaker (1991) which is the most widely and broadly accepted model proposed within various research. Aaker (1991) has advocated five main elements of brand equity which are perceived quality, brand loyalty, brand awareness, brand association, and other proprietary brand assets as depicted in *Figure 3* below (Sharma, 2017b). However, within this research, only four dimensions from Aaker (1991) will be utilized which are brand awareness, perceived quality, brand association, and brand loyalty as only these four dimensions have been frequently used by most researchers (Sharma, 2017b). Brand equity has been referred to as the perceived utility and desirability conferred on a product of its brand name. When customers have high levels of brand knowledge and familiarity in addition to



strong, favorable, and distinctive brand associations, this can be referred to as a situation where brand equity exists. Thus, giving brand equity is a way to explain the brand's significance within the marketplace.

*Figure 3 - Aaker's (1991) model of brand equity*



*Source: Figure 2.1 - Sourced from Aaker, D. A. (1991). Managing brand equity. Simon and Schuster.*

The first of Aaker's (1991) brand equity dimensions, is *brand awareness* which relates to how consumers recognize and remember the brand, while the brand image pertains to the perceptions and associations that the consumer may have with the brand. Moreover, brand awareness involves a continuum ranging from an uncertain feeling that the brand is recognized, to a belief that it is the only one in the product class (Aaker 1991). Depending on the brand, each consumer will value the strengths differently which is referred to as brand awareness in the brand equity concept. Referring to the consumer's capability of brand identification or recognition (Sharma, 2017b). Regarding *Figure 4* below, brand awareness can be measured on three levels, excluding being unaware of the brand.

*Figure 4 - Aaker's (1991) Brand awareness*



*Source: Aaker, D. A. (1991). Managing brand equity. Simon and Schuster.*

Within *Figure 4*, The bottom level of brand awareness suggests that the consumer is completely unaware of the brand and would be unable to recall the brand when asked. The second level of brand awareness is brand recognition whereby respondents are given a set of brand names from a product class and are asked to identify the brands that they have heard of before, as brand recognition is the minimal level of brand awareness (Aaker, 1991). The third level of brand awareness is brand recall which is when a person is asked to name the brand in the product class, this term is called 'unaided recall' as within this level, the person is not provided the brand's names. Brand recall is substantially more challenging than brand recognition because in order to have a brand recall, there needs to be a stronger brand association from the consumer (Aaker, 1991). The fourth level of brand awareness is top-of-mind awareness, where the brand would be ahead of all the other brands in that person's mind (Aaker, 1991).

The second dimension is *brand association* which by definition is ‘Anything linked in memory of a brand’ (Aaker, 1991). The consumer's link to the brand will be stronger based on the different experiences and exposures to the brand's communication. Within associations, we discuss brand image as ‘a set of associations, usually organized in a meaningful way’ (Aaker, 1991). Furthermore, a brand that is well positioned will be attractive to its competitors as it will be backed up by strong associations from the consumer. Brands are given value because in most cases they will have meaning to people. According to Aaker (1991), as shown in *Figure 5*, there are eleven types of brand associations which are the product attributes, the intangibles, customer benefits, relative price, use/application, user/customer, celebrity/person, lifestyle/personality, product class, competitors and country/geographic area.

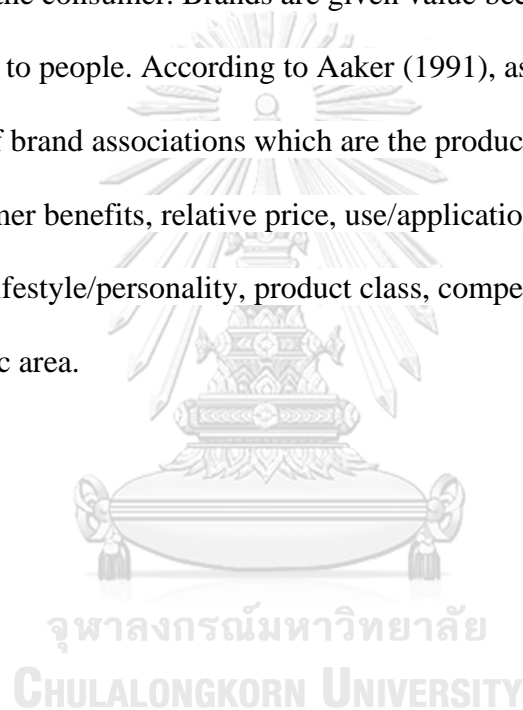


Figure 5 - Aaker's (1991) Brand association



Source: Aaker, D. A. (1991). *Managing brand equity*. Simon and Schuster.

The third dimension is perceived quality which can be defined as ‘The consumer’s perception of the overall quality or superiority of a product service with respect to its intended purpose, relative to alternatives’ (Aaker, 1991). According to Aaker (1991), perceived quality can differ from each consumer as their perceptions are subjective from one another. However, this can be broken down into three related concepts as follows:

1. The actual or objective quality to which the product or service delivers the consumer superior service in comparison to other brands.
2. The product-based quality regarding the features of the product and the services that the brand provides.
3. The manufacturing quality refers to the overall quality of the products themselves and the goal of offering 'zero defects' (Aaker, 1991).

The perceived quality of a brand and its products is subjective to the consumer as it is based on different perceptions and judgments, and it may differ depending on satisfaction levels. A consumer may be satisfied because they had low expectations about the performance level of the brand in the first place (Aaker, 1991). Perceived quality may also differ based on the consumer's attitude. A positive attitude from the consumer could be the reason a product from a different brand could be not of as great quality and at a cheaper price point. On the other hand, there have been cases where a consumer had a negative attitude merely because they believe that a high-quality product is overpriced (Aaker, 1991). Quality dimensions depend on the context such as the perception and experience of the consumer. To find out about the relevant reasons on the consumer's quality judgments, Aaker (1991) suggests that researchers must ask questions based on the following quality dimensions within the product context:

1. *Performance* - This involves the primary operating characteristics of the product.
2. *Features* - These are classified as secondary elements of products as the features of a product can be a tiebreaker to which features on the product the consumer may prefer if similar.
3. *Conformance with specifications* - This is if the product has little to no defects, as reducing the number of defects can interfere with the consumer's perception of its quality.
4. *Reliability* - This relates to the consistency of what the product delivers.
5. *Durability* - This regards the economic life of the product and whether owning the product is sustainable in the long term.
6. *Serviceability* - This relates to the ability and accessibility to service the product.
7. *Fit and finish* - This is the overall 'feel and quality of the product'.

The fourth dimension is brand loyalty which according to Aaker (1991) the brand loyalty of the consumer base is at the core of a brand's equity. Aaker (1991) defines brand loyalty as 'A measure of the attachment the consumer has to a brand'. If a consumer is apathetic to a brand and buys their products with respect to features, price, and convenience with minimal concern for the brand name, there is likely sparse brand equity. However, if the consumer will continue to purchase the brand even though there may be competitors with better features, cheaper prices, and convenience, this shows that the consumer sees significant value in the brand (Aaker

1991). Regarding brand loyalty, in *Figure 6* there are several levels of loyalty that will differ for each consumer.

As stated in *Figure 6* below, the bottom loyalty level is a non-loyal buyer who is indifferent to the brand. These consumers tend to switch brands often because they value price over the brand name as this plays a little role in their purchasing decision (Aaker 1991). The second loyalty level is buyers who are currently satisfied with their product rather than dissatisfied. These consumers are pleased with their purchase enough to not stimulate changing brands. They are habitual buyers and are not open to trying alternative brands which challenges competitors. The third loyalty level are consumers who are also satisfied; however, they are susceptible to changing brands because they prioritize time, money, and performance risk. This is associated with switching brands as these consumers are also known as ‘switching-cost loyal’ (Aaker 1991). To prevent this group of consumers that are ‘switching-cost loyal’, brands need to offer benefits that are large enough to compensate for them. The fourth level of loyalty regards consumers who genuinely like the brand. The preference of these consumers can be based on factors such as symbols, experiences, and high perceived quality. However, this level is subjective as in some cases liking a brand might not come down to anything specific and identifying why a consumer likes the brand could be hard to trace (Aaker, 1991). Moreover, this segment can also be known as ‘friends’ of the brand as there is usually a strong feeling of emotional attachment. The fifth level of loyalty is regarding loyal consumers as they have strong pride in being users of that brand. Within this case, consumers feel that the brand is very important to them, and they use the brand to express themselves.

Figure 6 - Aaker's (1991) levels of Brand loyalty



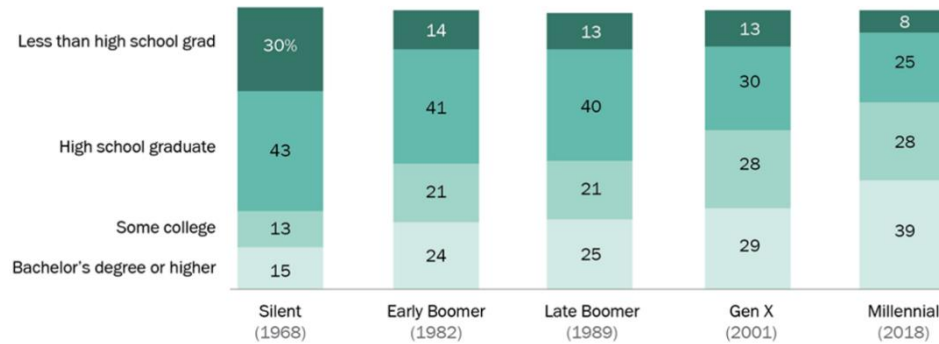
Source: Aaker, D. A. (1991). *Managing brand equity*. Simon and Schuster.

## 2.2 Millennials

Millennials are according to Pew Research Center (2023), anyone born between 1981 and 1996 within the age group of 23 - 38 (Pew Research Center, 2023). As shown in *Figure 7* below, the percentage of millennials that have a degree or education is significantly higher than prior generations with 39% of millennials having a bachelor's degree or higher.



Figure 7 - Millennials education levels

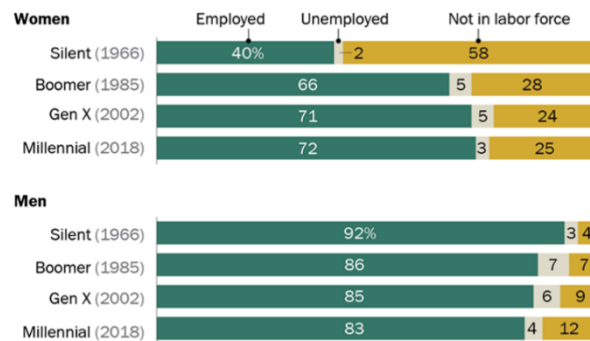


Source: Pew Research Center. (2023, May 22). *Where Millennials end and Generation Z begins* | Pew Research Center.

<https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2019/01/17/where-millennials-end-and-generation-z-begins/>

Regarding employment, As stated in *Figure 8* below 83% of millennial men are currently employed and are part of the workforce, correlating to the fact that they have their own sources of independent income (Pew Research Center, 2023). As studies show, millennials are more susceptible to having spending habits where they are more likely to be inclined to splurge on more expensive items (Konish, 2019). Therefore, making this generation liable to spend their own earnings on luxurious items.

Figure 8 - Millennials employment rates



Source: Pew Research Center. (2023, May 22). *Where Millennials end and Generation Z begins* | Pew Research Center.

<https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2019/01/17/where-millennials-end-and-generation-z-begins/>

According to Forbes, millennials are a socially conscious generation because they have grown up with the internet and social media presence (Cheng, 2019). A generation that has grown up with technology and the internet makes them aware of themselves and others around them through being always connected. A study conducted in 2012 states that millennials are more politically disengaged and more focused on materialistic values such as money, fame, and their image in society; as this generation is also known as ‘Generation Me’ (Main, 2017). Furthermore, studies show that millennials never experienced economic recessions and hardships as a generation, therefore the concept of frugality is not as common within this generation, thus giving them ulterior priorities, such as focusing on themselves as an individual and

having a stronger materialistic mindset (Pueschel et al., 2020). Therefore, luxury consumption can be a way for them to represent their self-image and social status.

### **2.3 Male Consumer**

Studies show that millennial men are the driving force behind many current trends in consumerism. Male millennials are likely to spend more of their money on products if they believe that the quality of the product is superior to other brands (Team, 2023). Furthermore, they buy clothing products more often than males from generations ago, picking up new clothing products for themselves on average twice a month. According to a study by Nielson Newswire about 70% of millennial men use social media and websites to make their purchasing decisions, as well as being more consciously aware of trends from being constantly connected through online channels (Team, 2023).

Forbes stated that the average male consumer is spending more money on consumer goods that they used to in current times (Wertz, 2021). This shift in the market and growth comes opportunity for brands to consider the male consumer base. Moreover, Forbes state that males tend to be more brand loyal than women, with 41% of male's purchasing products from brands they know over women's 22% (Wertz, 2021). With male's being a more brand loyal consumer, this enables them to be more open to purchasing goods they are introduced to from their social feeds and influencers they are loyal to. Regarding a study by the Wharton School of Business, they claim that males are more likely to spend money on themselves, they tend to think logically when making purchasing decisions and they like to research about products and rely on previous experiences with brands and through word of mouth

before purchasing (Robinson, 2022). Moreover, in the current market, women spend more on clothing and fashion related items at 46% while in comparison to males at 14%. This is in result of male consumers taking price into account more than women. However, this study states that currently with the shift in the market, males are starting to spend more. With male's outnumbering women as a proportion of consumers who reported higher spending in 2021 (Robinson, 2022).

This research will assess the brand equity of male consumers of Chanel. The research will focus on one concept which is brand equity based on the scholar Aaker, (1991). Furthermore, the study delves into this concept based on male Thai millennials regarding Chanel. The following chapter entails the methodology of the research.

#### **2.4 Involvement**

Involvement can be defined as "A person's perceived relevance of the object based on their inherent needs, values, and interests" (Solomon, 2019). Depending on the need that the consumer wants to satisfy, the involvement increases as they think more about the product or if they experience a strong emotional response to the product or brand. There also are higher levels of involvement in product categories that demand a big investment of money, as well as products that affect a consumer's self-esteem.

### *Product involvement*

Product involvement can be referred to as “a consumer’s level of interest in a particular product” (Solomon, 2019). Consumers who make product decisions are likely to be more highly involved if the consumer believes that there is a lot of perceived risk or negative consequences if the wrong option is chosen. According to Solomon (2019), The types of perceived risk (See figure 9) are monetary risk which consists of money and capital, Functional risk, which is risk of performance function, physical risk which consists of affecting physical health, social risk which consists of self-esteem and self-confidence, and phycological risk which consists of affiliations and status (Solomon, 2019). The risk would be considered greater if the product is expensive or complicated, as well as how others perceive what the consumer chooses could also be deemed as a risk.

Figure 9 - Solomon's (2019) types of perceived risks

	BUYERS MOST SENSITIVE TO RISK	PURCHASES MOST SUBJECT TO RISK
<b>MONETARY RISK</b>	Risk capital consists of money and property. Those with relatively little income and wealth are most vulnerable.	High-ticket items that require substantial expenditures are most subject to this form of risk.
<b>FUNCTIONAL RISK</b>	Risk capital consists of alternative means of performing the function or meeting the need. Practical consumers are most sensitive.	Products or services whose purchase and use requires the buyer's exclusive commitment are most sensitive.
<b>PHYSICAL RISK</b>	Risk capital consists of physical vigor, health, and vitality. Those who are elderly, frail, or in ill health are most vulnerable.	Mechanical or electrical goods (such as vehicles or flammables), drugs and medical treatment, and food and beverages are most sensitive.
<b>SOCIAL RISK</b>	Risk capital consists of self-esteem and self-confidence. Those who are insecure and uncertain are most sensitive.	Socially visible or symbolic goods, such as clothes, jewelry, cars, homes, or sports equipment are most subject to social risk.
<b>PSYCHO-LOGICAL RISK</b>	Risk capital consists of affiliations and status. Those lacking self-respect or attractiveness to peers are most sensitive.	Expensive personal luxuries that may engender guilt, durables, and services whose use demands self-discipline or sacrifice are most sensitive.

Source: Solomon, M. R. (2019). *Consumer behavior: Buying, Having, and Being, Global Edition*. กรุงเทพมหานคร

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When a consumer is highly involved with a product, marketers consider this to mean that the consumer exhibits brand loyalty (Solomon, 2019). Moreover, this means that the consumer buys this product repetitively or that they have a strong positive attitude toward the product or brand. Within this research on male consumers' brand equity of Chanel, we can utilize the concepts in involvement to gain more understanding of the discussions in chapter 5.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This study is qualitative in nature and is conducted as an exploratory research design. What this study aimed to achieve was to identify male consumers' brand equity of Chanel. This study is conducted qualitatively, through in-depth interviews to allow the respondents to have the willingness to answer truthful answers within topics that may be sensitive, personal and questions that tap into their subconscious without negatively impacting their ego or status (Malhotra, 2010). This study consisted of 12 in-depth interviews on a one-on-one basis, which provided the experience of an unstructured, direct, and personal interview to uncover the respondent's underlying beliefs, motivations, attitudes, and feelings (Malhotra, 2010). Moreover, in-depth interviews were utilized to provide an opportunity to delve into the participant's viewpoints at a personal level to explore complex topics on a deeper scale to offer a safe and confidential space.

The use of a semi-structured question guideline allowed respondents to 'phrase' their own views and elaborate on issues that they felt were relevant and important. This also allowed the researcher to follow up and explore new information that is discovered throughout the interview (Sutton & Thompson, 2001). The following chapter provides information regarding the research sample, the sampling methods, the research instrument used, the basic procedures, the methods of data collection and analysis, and the validity of the study.

### 3.1 Research sample and sampling method

The technique that was utilized was the purposive sampling method for the interviewees to have met the correct sample criteria. Purposive sampling allowed the researcher to sample the participants in a strategic way to ensure variety such as age diversity (Lee & Leung, 2020). Additionally, the researcher used snowball sampling methods to further seek the right sample criteria. Within this study, participants were males, aged between 23 - 38 years within the millennial generation gap (Pew Research Center, 2023). Additionally, the interview participants had purchased a product from the Chanel retail store or from the re-sell market within the past 12 months and must be Thai nationals currently residing in Bangkok to meet the objectives of this study.

The interviewee must meet the following *selection criteria*.

1. Interviewees must be between the ages of 23- 38 within the millennial generation (Pew Research Center, 2023).
2. The interviewee must be a male consumer of Chanel.
3. Interviewees must have purchased a product from the Chanel brand retail store or from the re-sell market within 12 months prior.
4. The interviewee must be a Thai national and is currently residing in Bangkok.



### 3.2 Research instrument

This study used a semi-structured question guideline as the research instrument which are questions carefully articulated, orderly arranged and adjusted by the researcher. The first section of questions is the demographic questions, section two is general questions, and section three through to section six follows each dimension of Aaker's (1991) brand equity.

Before each interview, the participants were asked three screening questions to ensure that they follow the correct sample criteria before proceeding with the interview. For the participants who do not meet the sample criteria, they were asked to not participate in the following interview.

#### *Screening questions*

1. What is your current age? (If not 23 - 38 years old, close interview).
2. Have you purchased a Chanel brand product either from the official store or from the re-sell market within the past 12 months? (if haven't purchased their product within 12 months, close interview).
3. Are you a Thai national passport holder and are currently living in Bangkok? (If not Thai nationality or currently living in Bangkok, close interview).

The semi-structured question guideline consists of six sections which are (1) Their demographic information, (2) General questions, (3) Their brand awareness towards Chanel, (4) Their brand associations with Chanel, (5) Their brand loyalty towards Chanel, (6) Their perceived quality towards Chanel (see appendix). The interview was conducted in the English language. The overall question guideline is as follows:

1. *Their demographic information.* This section is at the beginning of the interview where the participants are asked five questions to gain demographic information (See section 1, appendix).
2. *General questions.* This section consists of three questions that focus on the type of products they own from Chanel (See section 2, appendix).
3. *Brand awareness towards Chanel.* This section comprises two questions that will ask about their overall brand awareness of Chanel (See section 3, appendix).
4. *Brand associations towards Chanel.* This section comprises fourteen questions that are in regard to their overall brand association with Chanel (See section 4, appendix).
5. *Brand loyalty towards Chanel.* This section will include five questions that are in regard to their brand loyalty towards Chanel (See section 5, appendix).

6. *Perceived quality towards Chanel*. This section entails three questions that are in regard to their thoughts on their perceived quality of Chanel (See section 6, appendix).

### 3.3 Procedures

Within this research, this section discusses the researcher's procedures before, during, and after the in-depth interview process.

#### *Before the in-depth interview process*

1. Consider the research objectives, formulate interview questions, and finalize the question structure that is significant to this study.
2. Select the target participants for the one-on-one interview using the selected criteria and gather their contact details.
3. Inform the participants, explain the integrity of the study, inform consent, and schedule an appropriate interview time.
4. Prepare the appropriate interview logistics such as the time to the convenience of the interviewees.
5. Test and rehearse the questions with someone who represents the target audience and refine if needed.
6. Brief the interviewee participants on the Google Meet software and ensure all devices are charged and working.
7. Familiarize with the interview questions for preparation with the interviews.

*During the in-depth interview process*

1. The researcher introduces herself and explains the objectives of the study.
2. The researcher can ask informal questions to make the interviewee feel more comfortable before the interview begins (Malhotra, 2010).
3. The researcher proceeds to ask general questions which are followed by a semi-structured question guideline format from the questions (See appendix) where the direction of the interview will depend on the interviewee's responses (Malhotra, 2010).
4. During the interview, the researcher may attempt to hold a comfortable atmosphere to gain truthful and meaningful information from the interviewee.
5. Short note taking during the interview is recommended for the researcher.
6. The researcher ends the interview and will thank the interviewees for their time and insights.

*After the in-depth interview process*

1. The researcher makes sure that the equipment did not fail during the interview and revisit the keynotes that were taken by hand. ¶Y
2. The information that was received was revised once again and transcribed.

### **3.4 Validity of the study**

The study used a semi-structured question guideline with a structure based on the dimensions, concepts, and previous studies of brand equity (Aaker, 1991). Therefore, the concepts from these scholars make sure that this study meets appropriate validity. Additionally, the project advisor and research committee re-checked and advised on the research questions to confirm relevance to the study.

### **3.5 Data Collection and Data Analysis**

The in-depth interviews were conducted through the Google Meet application, as all respondents preferred the convenience of participating in the interview online. Each In-depth interview was conducted within the 30 minutes to one-hour time frame (Malhotra, 2010). The findings were collected from the transcribed version of the interview as well as the notes that the interviewer took during the interview process. The findings were further interpreted to uncover meaningful patterns and themes that emerged from each interview (Malhotra, 2010). The researcher analyzed the findings from the in-depth interviews regarding the concepts of brand equity and then segmented the findings into themes. The research findings will be further discussed in chapter 4.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS

After the in-depth interviews were completed, the findings were transcribed and collected from the answers of 12 millennial men who are of Thai nationality and have purchased a Chanel product within the last 12 months. The following chapter will be divided into six sections whereby the first section follows the demographic profile of the respondents. The second section entails general questions that give a foundation of the respondent's luxury consumption in regard to Chanel. The last four sections follow the four dimensions of Brand equity by Aaker (1991) which are brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. The findings will be based on male consumers' brand equity towards Chanel.

#### **4.1 Demographic profile and General Consumer Behavior**

This first section follows the demographic profile of the respondents. There are a total of twelve respondents that participated in the in-depth interview that are millennial men in the age ranges of 25 - 38 with Thai nationality and are currently residing in Bangkok, Thailand. The respondents all had a bachelor's degree, three respondents had a master's degree, and one respondent had an additional Doctorate degree. The occupations of the respondents ranged from students, working in organizations, freelancers, working in family businesses and influencers (see table 1). All respondents had purchased a Chanel product within the last 12 months.

In the second section, the respondents were asked about the type of product(s) that they had purchased from Chanel within the last 12 months. Furthermore, the respondents were asked if they had purchased their product from the official store or a second-hand store and they were asked to describe the other luxury brands they own excluding Chanel. All respondents had purchased their product from the official Chanel store. The type of Chanel products that the respondents had purchased within the last 12 months ranged from jewelry, bags, small leather goods and perfume (see table 1). This section allows the researcher to get insight into the type of products that the respondents had purchased from Chanel and their purchasing experience to gain a clearer understanding of their overall product and service experience of Chanel.

*Table 1 - Summary of demographic profile*

<b>Respondent number</b>	<b>Age (years)</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Chanel product(s) purchased within 12 months prior.</b>
1	25	Family business, manufacturing sector	Classic handbag
2	26	Actor, Influencer	Large pouch
3	25	Consultant, financial advisory	Jewelry/bracelet
4	23	Master's degree student	Jewelry/bracelet
5	26	Interior designer	Wallet/card holder
6	27	Media agency	Jewelry, bracelet
7	25	Family business, Food and beverage sector	Perfume

<b>Respondent number</b>	<b>Age (years)</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Chanel product(s) purchased within 12 months prior.</b>
8	38	Professor, University lecturer	Perfume
9	24	Master's degree student	Classic handbag
10	31	Media agency	Perfume
11	25	Model, influencer	Clothing
12	23	Bachelor's degree student	Perfume

#### **4.2 Respondents brand equity of Chanel.**

This section follows the question sections 3 - 6 (see appendix) whereby the findings below are segmented based on key themes, recurring statements and relevant information regarding what the respondents stated during the 12 in-depth interviews. With reference to the question sections 3 - 6, the respondents were asked questions regarding their brand awareness, brand association, brand loyalty and perceived quality of Chanel.

##### ***Good brand recall***

All respondents had brand recognition and were aware of Chanel as a brand as respondents had purchased a product from Chanel within the last 12 months.

Respondents were asked if they could name three luxury brands in the luxury product class that first came to their mind. Five respondents mentioned Chanel in their answers, however the rest of the respondents did not. A respondent answered, *“For three luxury brands in my mind right now, I think of Dior, Chanel, and Hermes”*.

Another responded stated *“Hermes, Louis Vuitton and Chanel”*. On the other hand,



the respondents who did not mention Chanel mentioned other luxury brands instead such as YSL, Dior, Hermes, Armani, Prada, Rolex, Patek Phillip, and Celine.

### ***Timeless brand***

The respondents were asked what was the first thing that comes to their mind when they think of Chanel, most respondents answered that it's a timeless brand, feminine, and luxurious. A respondent stated, *"I think of timeless, I think its pieces that age well all over time and the colorways and style is quite versatile, it goes with everything"* Another respondent mentioned *"It's quite a feminine brand, For elite society for like influencers and stuff like this"*.

### ***Media and other influences***

Some respondents discussed how their personal experiences with Chanel also come from what they see online media and it has influenced their perception of the brand. A respondent mentioned *"From looking at what you see online, they started to become more androgynous, in terms of their runway looks and it has become more gender fluid and its starting to become more popular in our age bracket"* Another respondent mentioned *"I think that when I go on social media I see a lot of people use this brand and it makes them look luxurious and it looks stylish in the pictures, this made me feel like I want to start buying from them"*.

Moreover, a respondent touched on how their experiences with the brand started when they were younger which made them aware of the brand from childhood. This respondent stated, *"I have positive perceptions of it because my mother really*

*likes the brand, so I grew up seeing the brand in my house often". Another respondent stated how they had a personal experience of being out in public. This respondent said "I was walking past a person, and I happened to smell his perfume and I asked him what he used, and he said he used Chanel. With that in mind, I felt that it got me interested in their product, and if that product can make me go up to a random person that's wearing it, and it smelled nice enough for me to go up to them and ask, that says a lot and shows that the product is good. I think that perfume needs to attract other people".*

#### **Top tier luxury brand**

Respondents were asked what tier they would place Chanel within the luxury brands market. Eleven respondents stated that they would place Chanel as a top tier luxury brand. A respondent stated *"I think it's top tier. I think because of its iconic, cause of the pricing as well, they are quite exclusive as well in terms of who can be able to afford it".* Another respondent said, *"I think it's top tier because they are a really known brand and I think it's one of the most luxurious".* One respondent stated that they believe that Chanel is a middle tier luxury brand. This respondent stated *"I think its middle tier, there are more expensive brands for cosmetics, perfume, to be in luxury, there needs to be something that's not mass, needs to have some customization. Not one formula for everyone, brands like Jo Malone that customize your smell to a certain level, that's more luxury than Chanel. For me, luxury means customizable".*

### ***Trustworthy and credible***

The respondents were asked if they felt that Chanel was trustworthy and credible. All respondents felt that Chanel was trustworthy and had credibility within the luxury market, one respondent stated that *“I think it’s a pretty trustworthy brand, there hasn’t been any scandals that I know about, and they’ve been around for a really long time which shows that the brand can be trusted”*. Another respondent stated, *“I feel like I can trust them cause I’ve seen my mother wear it since I was young, so it feels common to me”*. Moreover, another respondent stated *“Chanel’s reputation is quite good, they made people think that they’re luxurious and only the high-class people wear it. I think that they have never created any problems on the news or something like this, so I think that they’re quite trustable, you never hear anything bad about them”*.

### ***Social benefits and elevates social status***

Eleven respondents stated that the benefit that they get from using their Chanel product is a social benefit and it elevates their social status of how others may perceive them. A respondent stated *“To me, it sounds bad, but I think social status and for statement purposes. It automatically makes you look wealthy when you wear it, so people assume that you’re doing well in your career and stuff like this”*. Another respondent stated *It’s like a status item, it elevates your status and social status when you wear it, and people may perceive you and treat you differently in a professional or social setting. It’s also a conversation starter because you don’t see many men wear Chanel too”*. Another respondent also stated *“Social benefits, it’s definitely up there it makes your self-worth look higher, when you speak in public it makes you*

*more credible it makes you look trustworthy. It goes well with many clothes so it's practical".*

On the other hand, A respondent focused on the style aspect of Chanel and how it benefits them in their daily fashion. That respondent stated, *"I think a benefit is since the products are minimal and timeless, it looks good, and it goes with my style and most of my outfits and it's unique cause not many men use it, and I like wearing unique pieces"*.

#### ***Expensive in comparison to other brands***

Most respondents stated that they thought that Chanel's product prices were more expensive than other luxury brands in the market. Some respondents stated *"Its products are a little bit more expensive for a luxury brand. It's more expensive than Louis Vuitton and Gucci. It's one step higher in terms of pricing in comparison to other brands. I think they can do this because of their untouchable image"*. Another respondent also stated *"For some stuff they sell, I think it's okay like the wallet and the jewelry, but the bags are really expensive in comparison to other luxury brands. But I think you're not just paying for the product; you're paying for how others react to your product"*.

On the other hand, one respondent mentioned that they didn't mind the prices of the products as they see it as an investment purchase. That respondent stated *"For me it's fine, because I know that lots of people buy it for investment, in terms of a business standpoint I think its fine. But if you were to ask me if the quality and overall*

*is worth it in comparison to other brands, I think it's similar for what it is but a little more expensive”.*

### **Multi usage products**

Some respondents stated that they would use their product for special occasions and events. A respondent stated *“I would use it in only special occasions, depending on my outfit because like I said its quite unique for men’s style. I wouldn't use it for everyday wear because of that”* Another respondent mentioned *“It’s not as practical as other bags because you can’t really throw it around and its mostly a fashion statement so I would use it for important social gatherings or when I want to use it randomly with outfits.”*

On the contrary, some respondents stated that they would use their product within their everyday lives. A respondent stated *“I use it when I’m running errands, going to events where I don’t need to bring large items cause u can’t really put much inside. I wear it at nice dinners and when I want to look nice but also when I want to look chill, it complements the outfits well”*. Another respondent stated *“I would use my product like I use a wallet, I use it every day, I carry it around with me everywhere. I sometimes don’t want to carry a bag, so I just carry the wallet and it looks nice”*.

### ***For wealthy and luxurious people***

Respondents were asked if they could describe the type of person, they thought would use Chanel. All respondents described that the type of person they felt would use Chanel products were wealthy or luxurious people. A respondent stated, *“Probably wealthy people or people who are able to afford stuff like that, I guess we're talking about the 5% of people in Thailand at least, and everyone here wants that kind of status”*. Another respondent stated, *“The brand has a wealthy vibe just because the products are generally more expensive than other brands, so the overall person would be quite wealthy and maybe snobby”*.

Moreover, a respondent stated that the type of person who would more likely use the brand is someone wealthy within the Asian community. This respondent stated, *“Maybe someone in the Asian community or high-class people, it's really broad like it could be a wealthy mum too, but generally someone with a big inheritance, someone rich or famous”*. In addition to being wealthy, some respondents discussed how the person would have to be a fashion advocate as well. A respondent stated, *“I think that this person is rich, they are quite wealthy and luxurious, they like fashion as well”*. Another respondent stated, *“If we're talking about guys, I think this person would have to appreciate luxury even if they're not rich and they would have to be quite a fashionable person”*.

### ***Celebrity influence***

The respondents were asked if they could think of any celebrities or famous figures that represent Chanel to them. Most respondents mentioned celebrities that derive from K-pop and Asian artists. A respondent said, *“For celebrities, I can think of Jennie from Blackpink or Wang Yibo, I’ve seen them wear Chanel stuff quite often, so I think of them first”*. Another respondent stated, *“For Chanel jewelry, I think of G Dragon, or Jennie with a lot of the other stuff, I’ve never really noticed other people other than them”*. A respondent discussed how they see western rappers wear Chanel products. That respondent stated, *“For guys I think I saw ASAP Rocky, Frank Ocean, and Drake wear some stuff from Chanel as well on their Instagram”*.

In addition, some respondents link the celebrity called Johnny Depp to Chanel as the person that they thought represented the brand. The respondents both had good and bad things to say about this famous figure. A respondent stated, *“I think of Johnny Depp and Jennie, I see his advertisements everywhere and I see Jennie post on her Instagram all the time with Chanel”*. Another respondent stated, *“In Thailand, I think of Johnny Depp, but I think that he is too scruffy, and I don’t think I like that, I prefer someone more groomed than Johnny Depp”*.

One respondent also stated that they think of famous figures that associate themselves within the LGBTQIA+ community as well as other celebrities. This respondent stated, *“I think of people in K-pop bands like Blackpink, or famous people in the LGBTQIA+ community”*. Moreover, there was one other respondent that stated that he couldn’t think of any celebrity or famous figure that represented Chanel. This respondent stated *“To be honest, I don’t know much about celebrities and I couldn’t*

*tell you about any that I can remember that represent the brand, but if I had to say something I would still say it's Pharrell Williams because his association with the brand reflects Chanel's willingness to embrace creativity and appeal to a diverse audience, but he doesn't represent the brand, he's just known as a fashion icon in general".*

Respondents were further asked if they can think of any celebrity endorsements or partnerships that stand out to them from Chanel. All respondents were able to name a celebrity endorsement or partnership in regard to Chanel. Most respondents stated that Jennie from Blackpink stood out to them regarding Chanel. A respondent stated, *"I think Jennie because she's known to be the face of the brand because she's a famous celebrity and she kind of made Chanel quite fashionable and appealing to younger people"* Another respondent stated *"For sure Jennie from Blackpink, I see so many of her posts on Instagram wearing Chanel, I think she's only allowed to wear Chanel brand products, so I think of her. She's really popular right now so she could have been one of the reasons for its popularity"*. A respondent mentioned how the famous figure Lily Rose Depp's partnership with Chanel stood out to them. This respondent stated, *"I think about Lily Rose Depp, she's the latest one I think, I prefer her to K-pop girls because she gives an 'old money' vibe, and it suits the image of Chanel"*. Another respondent stated that they saw some western rappers wear the brands products on their social media platform which opened the brand to have a more male friendly image. This respondent stated, *"I saw rappers wear it before on their Instagram's and this made me become curious about the brand at first"*



*and made me feel more open to look into their products as the image seems more unisex now”.*

### ***Luxurious lifestyle***

Respondents were asked what kind of personality or lifestyle a consumer of Chanel would have. All respondents mentioned that they thought that someone from a wealthy background or has a luxurious lifestyle would use Chanel. A respondent stated *“I think of someone who enjoys luxurious things, who has a lot of social lifestyles that they can wear it to, and someone quite wealthy or from a wealthy background. I feel like it’s an old money brand but there are people who are new money as well who want to become old money, so they use Chanel”*. Another respondent stated *“This person could be rich with a lot of friends and loves to take pictures for social media to show their life and their style. Just generally someone who enjoys luxurious things”*.

Some respondents also stated that the brand’s image is more luxurious than other brands on the luxury market. A respondent mentioned *“I think that it's image is more luxurious to other brands because the prices are a lot higher, with other brands I think it’s more accessible to the public but with Chanel it’s not, like they’re more untouchable”*. Another respondent stated, *“It's more luxurious than your normal luxury brand like Celine and YSL but it’s similar to brands like Louis Vuitton and Hermes, it’s like a whole other level of luxury”*.

Additionally, A respondent stated that the consumer does not have to be rich but, what to look rich on the external front of how they present themselves as a part of their lifestyle. This respondent stated *“It could go both ways; a person could be super rich, and Chanel is normal to them because they are wealthy or you could have someone that wants the luxurious lifestyle to match their social circle to feel rich, so they buy Chanel for that purpose. I feel like if you buy something from Chanel, you want people to see it and that’s the kind of lifestyle that person would have”*.

When asked about how Chanel made the respondent feel, some respondents stated that it made them feel luxurious and gave them additional confidence whilst utilizing its products. A respondent stated *“I feel like because I’m in the entertainment industry with other actors, it makes me feel not as intimidated by others because it makes me look like I’m successful enough to get something like that for myself. It gives my image an expensive vibe”*. A respondent stated, *“Makes me feel quite luxurious and makes me feel like I worked hard to get it cause it’s more expensive than other brands”*. Another respondent mentioned *“I feel more collected, I know my stuff, I’m confident, and I feel presentable to the public”*.

### ***Feminine brand***

Some respondents mentioned that they thought that the type of person that would use Chanel are females or people with a more feminine way of expressing themselves. A respondent stated *“I think that for this brand it’s mostly women who like brand bags, I feel like these kinds of people want to flex their luxurious life and they want to look good and expensive. I see a lot of high-class girls and boys that have a feminine style wear it at events”*. Another respondent stated *“Someone who likes to*

*show wealth and dress up quite classy, and like going to parties or taking pictures, because it reminds me of people on Instagram posing with their bags, like these people would want others to know that they have Chanel. Many men don't do this though unless they've got a unique or girly style of dressing up".*

The respondents were asked if they could describe Chanel's image in comparison to their competitors. Some respondents stated that they felt that Chanel's image was quite feminine in comparison to their competitors. A respondent said, *"It's feminine and not as male oriented, their main demographic is women, so I guess their image suits that really well"*. Another respondent stated, *"The products are harder to obtain and its very high class and stands out quite well, it's quite a feminine brand comparing to the other brands and so it's rare to see men have it"*. Additionally, another respondent stated, *"If I had to compare, I think of more of a clean look, practical, I think of black leather, luxury and maybe a little pretty like feminine"*.

Additionally, respondents stated that Chanel makes them feel unique and because their products aren't targeted towards men. A respondent stated *"It makes me feel fabulous, makes me feel a bit more blinged out, like I can wear something basic but not basic. It makes me feel elevated because it's unique and a good conversation starter because men don't really use it. It's like almost risky but quite fashionable"*.

### ***French origin influence***

Respondents were asked if the French origin of Chanel has an impact on how they perceive its overall image. Some respondents stated that the French origin of the Chanel does not have an impact on how they perceive the brand. A respondent said,

*“No not really, it’s kind of the same for other brands like Dior and Hermes are also French so it is quite common and doesn’t make Chanel stand out”* Another respondent stated, *“No not at all, I didn’t really know that they were French, I just thought it was European like Italian or French or something, but I never really thought about it too much”*. Additionally, another respondent mentioned *“I don’t think so I never really thought about that, I just think that Chanel is made in Europe and that’s it. Brands from Europe seem to be more luxurious and expensive compared to Asian brands but that’s all”*.

On the other hand, some respondents stated that the French origin does have an impact on how they perceive Chanel, and its European heritage. A respondent stated, *“Yeah kind of, because it influences its design and heritage and its brand story and gives me the vibe of fine French or European luxury”*. Another respondent mentioned *“Yes it does because it matches the vibe of the brand. It’s got the Parisian style to its products. It wouldn’t seem the same if it was from Italy or Spain or something like this”*.

Additionally, some respondents mentioned how they felt that Chanel is more credible because it’s French origin and their credibility and image would be different if they were from an Asian background. A respondent stated *“I think it does have an impact because, nowadays when Thai people think about beauty fashion and cosmetics, they think of South Korea, but for perfume the country of origin coming from France makes a big difference. If Chanel is from an Asian country, I would not feel this way about the brand. It would dilute how I perceive the value of the brand. Luxury to me, if it’s Asian I feel like it’s not the same. And France has a long history*

*of luxury goods. When I was growing up, luxury meant European”.* Another respondent stated *“Yeah for sure, generally French or Italian brands are known to be great quality. However, I think if it wasn’t made in France, it wouldn’t be the same, if it was an Asian brand then things would be different for them in terms of success”.*

### ***Positive brand image***

When asked what they liked about Chanel and its positive aspects, all respondents mentioned statements about what they liked about Chanel and its positive aspects. Furthermore, this is based on their personal preferences such as their feelings, experiences, and their high perceived quality of Chanel. A respondent mentioned *“I like Chanel because I like its classic pieces, it’s timeless, it’s very expressive, it’s top notch in quality, the design is expressive, and each one represents the individuals that like classic bags”.*

### ***Brand name and symbol***

Respondents were asked if Chanel’s name and symbol were one of the reasons why they purchased its products. Some respondents stated that the Chanel brand’s name and symbol was not the reason why they made their initial purchase. A respondent stated, *“Not for me because I wanted a pouch for practical reasons, and I was undecided about which brand to buy from so I went to each different brands and looked at what they had and I thought the Chanel one suited what I wanted at the time, and it had a reasonable price, so I bought it”.* On the other hand, some respondents stated that the Chanel’s name and logo was one of the reasons why they purchased their product. A respondent stated *“Yeah it is one of the reasons, if you get something from Chanel, it’s a unique piece especially for men, so you buy to*

*specifically use the brand. If you buy something from Chanel, you want people to know that you bought it from there because of its luxurious image.”*

### ***Not up to date on product launches***

Respondents were asked if they are up to date on Chanel’s new product launches and updates. All respondents stated that they were not up to date on Chanel’s new product launches and updates. A respondent stated *“No I’m not up to date, I don’t sign up to their subscription or emails and I don’t need to follow them to decide to buy something. If I want something, I’ll go in and buy it myself. Because there’s generally no real change as well in terms of its products over the years and there’s no point of being up to date because you get what you expect”*. Another respondent mentioned *“Not at all, I just go in if I’m looking for a specific type of piece from Chanel like a bracelet or like my pouch, I don’t spend time looking at its new launches because the products have been the same over many years and I feel like I don’t need to check the updates”*.

### ***Self-expression***

The respondents were asked if they felt that Chanel is part of their identity and how they expressed themselves. Some respondents stated that they can express themselves through using Chanel products. A respondent said *“When I was learning about the brand, I learned that the designer was a rebel and in real life, so using Chanel allows me to express that side, of me. I might not act like a rebel, but it makes me feel like I’m a little bit of a rebel myself. The product allows me to break through my box in my daily life, because I’m a lecturer, I need to follow a way to behave as*

*part of work and putting on Chanel allows me to break through that in a way”.*

Another respondent stated *“Yes, because I’ve always admired the brand and wanted to feel luxurious because it’s a hobby of mine and it’s my style”.*

On the other hand, most respondents stated that Chanel is not part of their identity and how they express themselves. A respondent said *“I don’t think Chanel is part of my identity as most of the Chanel products lean more towards the women's target, whether it’s a bag, clothing, and cosmetics. So, I think it is quite complex for most of the gentlemen to be Chanel’s target and relate to the brand unless they are keen in fashion, design, and get informed about the latest trends”.*

However, A respondent stated that Chanel isn’t their identity but more of an extension of who they are. A respondent stated, *“I don’t think it’s my whole identity but it’s more of an extension of how I already am, I like luxury stuff and I am quite feminine, so I feel like it influences my personality and image in that way”.*

A respondent stated that using their product from Chanel makes them feel more like themselves and it makes their day special. This respondent said *“It makes me feel special, it makes my day special, I don’t think I’m better than other people, but it fills my day, but it makes my day better, I had many instances and I had to drive back just to put on the perfume. I would feel not myself.”*

### ***High quality products***

All respondents stated that the quality of the product features from Chanel delivers high quality, the product is reliable and holds its durability. One respondent stated *“The quality for jewelry is about at a 9/10 the quality feels expensive, and it lasts quite a long time. I wore mine a few times this year already and it’s done me well”*. Another respondent shared *“It’s quite reliable and durable so far, I found that the product was good so far, there aren’t any scratches or anything like this yet and I use it every day so that’s good”*.

All respondents mentioned that they thought that the manufacturing quality of Chanel met and exceeded their expectations from the day of the initial purchase. A respondent stated *“Yeah, my expectations were met, it is still in good condition and the finishing looks fine, like when I bought it, so I think it’s worth it. A lot of other brands like Dior their bracelets rust and stuff but for this it didn’t.”* Another respondent also stated, *“Yes I think I got what I paid for, it was the right thing I needed when I was looking for a pouch, I can say that it’s never failed me yet and there’s still no scratches and it looks brand new, so for now it has met my expectations”*.

### ***Accommodating service experience***

Furthermore, when asked about Chanel’s service experience, most respondents mentioned that their service experience while purchasing their product from the store was good and accommodating. A respondent stated *“The experience I got was quite good, it’s what’s expected from them, if I want to buy something that expensive, I expect a great experience too. But that goes for other brands too, I expect the same*



*standard from all” Another respondent also mentioned “The service experience was good. I found that the employees were very helpful. The wallet I wanted wasn't in stock at that branch at the time, so they delivered it to me on the same day. I felt quite happy, and it made me luxurious that they did this for me for free, it made them look very helpful”.*

On the other hand, two respondents stated that the employees weren't as accommodating and gave a more negative impression. A respondent stated *“The staff was playing hard to get, I was standing in front of the counter, and looking at what I wanted to buy and to my surprise normally staff from other places will approach but no one did until I had eye contact with them and had to call them over, then they approached me. I don't know if they're trained to do that, or if they're ignoring me.”* Another respondent also stated *“The customer service was generally good, but only when they knew I was going to make a purchase. They didn't really treat me nicely because I guess I don't look like a typical Chanel customer, and I wasn't really wearing anything designer that day.”*

The respondents were also asked if they had any personal experiences or stories related to Chanel that have influenced its perception of it. Some respondents stated that the salespersons when they went to purchase their products influenced their perception of Chanel. A respondent discussed *“The salesman was very personalized, the lounge and how they approach you when you purchase, the service was good and it made me enjoy the experience more, I know that my sales associate at Chanel will treat me well”*. Another respondent also touched on *“When I bought the pouch, the*

*seller was helpful and nice cause I was undecided about what brand I wanted for a pouch. I wanted a pouch that I could take to meetings and castings for work, and I really liked how they took care of me and recommended stuff too. It's nice that they go out of their way like that”.*

### **Good product quality**

Respondents were asked what product features stood out to them in comparison to other luxury brands. Most respondents mentioned that the materials that Chanel uses for its products are good in comparison to other luxury brands. A respondent stated, *“The stitching, the leather finishing is pretty good in comparison to other brands”*. Another respondent stated *“I think the quality of the materials in terms of the leather. I don't see many other brands use such nice materials. If I buy a product from another brand I question the leather, but for Chanel I've always been stunned by the craftsmanship”*.

Moreover, some respondents discussed how the quality of materials is similar to other brands, but the design itself is what makes the products look unique to other luxury brands. A respondent stated *“I think it's quite all the same as other brands or at least the difference is very small in terms of the quality of products. But I think that the designs are unique to the brand but that's about it”*. Another respondent also mentioned *“I think that there are some product features like the logo, and the patterns. If you see a Chanel pattern or logo, it's obvious and it stands out from other brands”*.

### 4.3 Summary of findings

Table 2 below shows the overall summary of findings from this research. The table provides the overall themes that have been generated through the overview of the findings. The table provides an overview of the findings based on the four dimensions of brand equity which are brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality and brand loyalty.

Table 2 - Summary of Findings

Dimension	Theme	Sample of Coded Text
Brand Awareness	Good brand recall	<p><i>“For three luxury brands in my mind right now, I think of Dior, Chanel, and Hermes”.</i></p> <p><i>“Hermes, Louis Vuitton and Chanel”.</i></p>
	Timeless brand	<i>“I think of timeless; I think it’s pieces that age well all over time and the colorways and style is quite versatile, it goes with everything”.</i>
Brand Association	Media and other influences	<p><i>“From looking at what you see online, they started to become more androgynous, in terms of their runway looks and it has become more gender fluid and its starting to become more popular in our age bracket.”</i></p> <p><i>“I think that when I go on social media, I see a lot of people using this brand and it makes them look luxurious and it looks stylish in the pictures, this made me feel like I want to start buying from them”.</i></p> <p><i>“I think that when I go on social media, I see a lot of people use this brand and it makes them look luxurious and it looks stylish in the pictures, this made me feel like I want to start buying from them”.</i></p>
	Top tier luxury brand	<p><i>“I think it’s top tier. I think because of its iconic, cause of the pricing as well, they are quite exclusive as well in terms of who can be able to afford it”.</i></p> <p><i>“I think its top tier because they are a really known brand and i think it’s one of the most luxurious”</i></p>

	Trustworthy and credible	<p><i>“I think it’s a pretty trust-worthy brand, there hasn’t been any scandals that I know about, and they’ve been around for a really long time which shows that the brand can be trusted”.</i></p> <p><i>“I think that they have never created any problems on the news or something like this, so I think that they’re quite trustable like you never hear anything bad about them”.</i></p>
	Social benefits and elevates social status	<p><i>“To me, it sounds bad, but I think social status and for statement purposes. It automatically makes you look wealthy when you wear it, so people assume that you’re doing well in your career and stuff like this”.</i></p> <p><i>“It’s like a status item, it elevates your status and social status when you wear it. And people may perceive you and treat you differently in a professional or social setting”.</i></p>
	Expensive in comparison to other brands	<p><i>“Its products are a little bit more expensive for a luxury brand”.</i></p> <p><i>“For some stuff they sell I think it’s okay like the wallet and the jewelry, but the bags are really expensive in comparison to other luxury brands. But I think you’re not just paying for the product; you’re paying for how others react to your product”.</i></p>
	Multi usage products	<p><i>“I would use it in only special occasions, depending on my outfit because like I said its quite unique for men’s style. I wouldn’t use it for everyday wear because of that.”</i></p> <p><i>“I would use my product like I use a wallet, I use it every day, I carry it around with me everywhere”.</i></p>
	For wealthy people	<p><i>“Probably wealthy people or people who are able to afford stuff like that”.</i></p> <p><i>“The brand has a wealthy vibe just because the products are generally more expensive than other brands, so the overall person would be quite wealthy and maybe snobby”</i></p>
	Celebrity influence	<p><i>“I think about, Lily Rose Depp, she’s the latest one I think, I prefer her to K-pop girls because she gives an 'old money' vibe, and it suits the image of Chanel”.</i></p>

		<i>"I think Jennie because she's known to be the face of the brand because she's a famous celebrity and she kind of made Chanel quite fashionable and appealing to younger people".</i>
	Luxurious lifestyle	<i>"I think of someone who enjoys luxurious things, who has a lot of social lifestyles that they can wear it to, and someone quite wealthy or from a wealthy background".</i>  <i>"This person could be rich with a lot of friends and loves to take pictures for social media to show their life and their style. Just generally someone who enjoys luxurious things".</i>
	Feminine brand	<i>"I see a lot of high-class girls and boys that have a feminine style wear it at events".</i>  <i>"Many men don't do this though unless they've got a unique or girly style of dressing up".</i>
	French origin influence	<i>"It's kind of the same for other brands like Dior and Hermes are also French so it is quite common and doesn't make Chanel stand out".</i>  <i>"It matches the vibe of the brand. It's got the Parisian style to its products. It wouldn't seem the same if it was from Italy or Spain or something like this".</i>
Brand Loyalty	Brand name and symbol	<i>"If you get something from Chanel, it's a unique piece especially for men, so you buy to specifically use the brand. If u buy something from Chanel, you want people to know that you bought it from there because of its luxurious image".</i>
	Positive brand image	<i>"I like Chanel because I like its classic pieces, it's timeless, it's very expressive, it's top notch in quality, the design is expressive, and each one represents the individuals that like classic bags".</i>
	Not up to date on product launches	<i>"No, I'm not up to date, I don't sign up to their subscription or emails and I don't need to follow them to decide to buy something".</i>  <i>"Not at all, I just go in if I'm looking for a specific type of piece from Chanel like a bracelet or like my pouch, I don't spend time looking at its new launches because the products have been the same over many years".</i>

	Self-expression	<p><i>“When I was learning about the brand, I learned that the designer was a rebel and in real life, so using Chanel allows me to express that side, of me. I might not act like a rebel, but it makes me feel like I’m a little bit of a rebel itself...”</i></p> <p><i>“I’ve always admired the brand and wanted to feel luxurious because as it’s a hobby of mine and it’s my style”.</i></p>
Perceived Quality	High quality products	<p><i>“It’s quite reliable and durable so far, I found that the product was good so far, there isn’t any scratches or anything like this yet and I use it every day so that’s good”.</i></p> <p><i>“The stitching, the leather finishing is pretty good in comparison to other brands”.</i></p> <p><i>“I think the quality of the materials in terms of the leather. I don't see many other brands use such nice materials. If I buy a product from another brand I question the leather, but for Chanel I’ve always been stunned by the craftsmanship”.</i></p>
	Accommodating service experience	<p><i>“The service experience was good. I found that the employees were very helpful. The wallet I wanted wasn't in stock at that branch at the time, so they delivered it to me on the same day. I felt quite happy, and it made me luxurious that they did this for me for free, it made them look very helpful”.</i></p> <p><i>“The salesman was very personalized, the lounge and how they approach you when you purchase, the service was good and it made me enjoy the experience more, I now that my sales associate at Chanel will treat me well”.</i></p> <p><i>“The seller was really helpful and nice...I really liked how they took care of me and recommend stuff too, it’s nice that they go out of their way like that”.</i></p>

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter is regarding the summary and discussion section of this study as a way to decipher the findings through the theories. This chapter will cover the overall summary from the findings that were gathered, secondly a discussion of the consumer's brand equity by Aaker (1991) through the four dimensions. The last section will discuss this study's limitations, directions for future research and practical implications.

#### **5.1 Summary**

Within this study there are 12 respondents that had participated in the in-depth interviews. The respondents are millennial males aged between 23 - 38 and have purchased a product from Chanel within the last twelve months (see table 2). The respondents are also currently residing within the Bangkok, Thailand area. This section will encompass the four dimensions of brand equity which are, brand awareness towards Chanel, brand association towards Chanel, brand loyalty towards Chanel, and perceived quality towards Chanel through the themes based on the summary of findings.

##### ***Good brand recall***

The respondents all had heard of the brand before as all respondents had purchased their product at the official Chanel store within the last twelve months. There were five respondents that mentioned Chanel in their list of three. The respondents that mentioned Chanel in their list of three chose Chanel in their list

because it is a top tier luxury brand in comparison to other luxury brands while some chose Chanel because they admire the brand and like their products.

There was a total of three out of twelve respondents that stated Chanel as the first luxury brand they could think of on the top of their minds. A respondent stated Chanel as the product from Chanel that they own is one of their most prized fashion pieces, another respondent stated Chanel because they saw a lot of Chanel's content through endorsements and advertisements currently and the last respondent stated Chanel because they believe that it embodies luxury.

### ***Timeless brand***

The recurring statements that ten out of twelve respondents mentioned about what the first thing that they thought about when they think of Chanel is that it is a timeless brand. The respondents discuss that Chanel's timeless and minimal designs embody luxury as well as how the brand uses its pricing strategy in comparison to other brands on the market, to target a wealthier demographic. The respondents furthermore stated how Chanel does not often bring new products onto the market as they are known for their classic products and similar designs over the years.

### ***Media and other influences***

The respondents stated that Chanel's presence on media channels such as social media and advertisements influences how they perceive the brand's image. By the brand being frequent and present online gives the respondents the feeling of the brand being more inclusive to all genders, the brand emulating its luxurious presence



and the popularity of its products by seeing a lot of influencers and other consumers post content with its products.

### ***Top tier luxury brand***

Respondents stated that they would place Chanel as a top tier luxury brand. This is due to Chanel's pricing strategy, as it is said by the respondents that it is generally more expensive in comparison to other luxury brands in the market. This pricing strategy gives the brand exclusivity amongst its consumers which makes it seem more luxurious than other brands.

### ***Trustworthy and credible***

All respondents felt that Chanel is a trustworthy brand and had credibility within the luxury market. The answers that the respondents mentioned are divided into four groups, (1) Chanel has not had any scandals or issues within media in recent years, (2) The brand has been around in the luxury market for a long time, (3) They have seen the brand around since childhood, (4) Chanel's reputation is for the wealthy consumer, therefore the people that associate with the brand are celebrities and the wealthy demographic.

### ***Social benefits and elevates social status***

Respondents stated that the benefit that they gain from using their Chanel product is a social benefit as it elevates their social status. Respondents believe that if they wear their Chanel product, it makes them look wealthy and it may elevate their social status. Moreover, respondents state that it can increase their self-worth in

regard to their career and family background which would make them seem more credible and trustworthy in both professional and social settings.

### ***Expensive in comparison to other brands***

Regarding the relative price dimension, respondents stated that they thought that Chanel's product prices were more expensive than other luxury brands in the current market. The respondents felt that the pricing for the products is one step higher than other luxury brands. Moreover, it is discussed that this could be a strategy from Chanel to sell exclusively as well as its products. The respondents feel that when buying a Chanel product, its consumers are also paying for how others perceive them for wearing the products.

### ***Multi usage products***

In terms of when the respondents would use their Chanel product in their everyday lives, under the use/application dimension, eight of the respondents stated that they would use their Chanel product for special occasions and social events, on the other hand the other four respondents stated that they use their Chanel product within their everyday lives in formal and informal social settings. Some examples of utilizing their product in their daily lives include running errands, dinners to when they want to dress relaxed because their product makes their outfit feel put together.

### ***For wealthy people***

All respondents described that the type of person that they felt would use Chanel products would be wealthy or luxurious people. Respondents felt that even if they weren't wealthy as a person, they would still be someone who appreciates luxurious things and wants status pieces to achieve that. They stated that Chanel gives its consumers a wealthy image as the products is generally more expensive than other luxury brands on the current market.

### ***Celebrity influence***

Respondents stated that they felt that celebrities from Korean pop and Asian artists such as Jennie from Blackpink, Wang Yibo and G Dragon represented Chanel to them. There were two respondents that stated that they think that western rappers such as ASAP Rocky, Drake and Frank Ocean wear pieces from Chanel that were seen online as well. To the respondents, these rappers introduced Chanel providing products that can be seen as unisex pieces and additionally normalized the brand in the male community. Thus, introducing a trend in men's fashion. Respondents that felt that the American actor Johnny Depp represented Chanel well as they see his advertisements often for the brand on all the busy areas of Bangkok.

All respondents were able to name a celebrity endorsement or partnership in regard to Chanel that stood out to them. The main celebrity that was mentioned by the respondents was Jennie from Blackpink. The respondents feel that she is one of the main faces of the brand and she's made Chanel fashionable and appealing to the younger demographic. Moreover, she is one of the most popular A-list celebrities at

this current time, thus they claim that she could have contributed to making Chanel popular as well by being constantly seen and photographed in their products.

### ***Luxurious lifestyle***

All respondents mentioned that they thought that someone from wealth or enjoys living a luxurious lifestyle. The respondents state that a Chanel consumer would be someone that enjoys a social lifestyle with a lot of events that they can dress up and go to. In other words, someone who enjoys displaying their luxurious lifestyle on the external front online and offline.

The respondents stated that the brand's image is more luxurious in comparison to other brands within the luxury market. This is due to Chanel's pricing strategy being more expensive on their products in comparison to other brands. Respondents state that other brands within the same luxury market's pricing strategy is lower than Chanel, therefore other brands are more accessible to a broader demographic of consumer and Chanel is higher level of luxury.

Moreover, using Chanel products made them feel luxurious and gave them additional confidence whilst using them. It makes the respondents feel more confident in social and professional situations and it elevates their image and makes them look luxurious.

### ***Feminine brand***

Five out of ten respondents stated that Chanel's image is feminine and is not male orientated. The respondents explain that Chanel's products are aimed for women, therefore their image will be feminine. The respondents feel that Chanel is

more feminine in comparison to other luxury brands in the market because they don't really cater to the male consumer at all. However, its minimal design and colors make some of the brand's products seem unisex. Moreover, they stated that the type of person that would use Chanel products would be a fashion advocate in addition to appreciating luxuries as the products are unique to the male demographic and the pieces are statement regarding men's fashion.

The respondents state that Chanel consumers are generally female as that is who their products are targeted to. Moreover, the respondents state that if a male uses product a from Chanel, this would mean that that person would have more of a feminine way of expressing themselves through fashion, or is a fashion advocate in general who likes exploring unique styles through clothing.

### ***French origin influence***

Respondents stated that the French origin of Chanel has an impact on how they perceive their overall image. Respondents state that it influences the design, image of the brand and heritage story. Moreover, Chanel brand represents fine French or European luxury. Respondents believe that the brand would not be the same if it originated from another country such as Italy or Spain. Respondents say that Chanel being from France emits the Parisian luxury style that is expressed through the image and products. Additionally, respondents mentioned how they felt that Chanel is more credible because it's from France and their credibility would be different if Chanel was from an Asian brand. Moreover, they state that France is known for its craftsmanship with leather products that comes from their long history of producing world class luxury goods.

### ***Brand name and symbol***

From the findings, seven out of twelve people stated that Chanel's name and symbol was one of the reasons why they purchased its products. The respondents stated that the brand does not offer many products that are targeted towards the male consumer, therefore when they purchase something from the brand, it's unique for men's fashion and these pieces are usually statement pieces. Therefore, they would buy products specifically because the brand is Chanel. Additionally, the respondents feel that buying products from a top tier brand like Chanel means that you want others to see you wear it because of its luxurious image. The respondents that didn't purchase Chanel because of its name and symbol stated that since Chanel doesn't offer many male or unisex products, they don't usually go into the store thinking that they would buy something. Therefore, they purchase the products from Chanel more based on the designs and quality.

### ***Positive brand image***

Within the interviews, all respondents made statements about what they liked about Chanel and its positive aspects. This varied on the respondent's thoughts, feelings and perceptions of Chanel. All respondents stated that they like Chanel because of its (1) designs and craftsmanship, (2) How it makes them feel while using the product, (3) quality of products.

### ***Not up to date on product launches***

All respondents stated that they were not up to date on Chanel's new product launches and updates. The respondents stated that there has been generally no change in terms of their products' designs in recent years and there was no point in being up to date because the designs are what's expected. Moreover, Chanel's products are mostly for the woman consumer, therefore the updates would be mainly on products that they weren't interested in.

### ***Self-expression***

When it comes to if Chanel is a part of the respondent's identity, five respondents stated that Chanel is part of their identity and how they express themselves. Some respondents stated that they resonate with the brand's history and heritage. Other respondents stated that Chanel compliments their style and therefore they feel that it's part of their identity. Additionally, another factor is that Chanel makes them feel luxurious and that's who they want to be, therefore they feel like it's part of their identity or an extension of who they are. The other respondents stated that they felt that it wasn't part of their identity because Chanel doesn't fully cater to their needs as a male consumer and the brand is too feminine to feel like they can identify with it. Some of the respondents also stated that it makes them feel unique because Chanel's products stereotype is usually for women and to wear a brand that's feminine makes them feel fashionable.

### ***High quality products***

All respondents stated that the quality of the product features from Chanel delivers high quality materials and craftsmanship. Additionally, the respondents feel that the product is reliable and delivers durability. Since purchasing their product within the last 12 months, their products have not been damaged, deteriorated or proven faulty. The respondents feel that their product has retained the same quality since they purchased it on the from the first day and still is delivering high quality.

The respondents were asked what product features stood out to them in comparison to other luxury brands. They mentioned that the materials are good in comparison to other luxury brands on the current market. Some product features that were mentioned are the stitching, the leather, the craftsmanship, and the hardware of the products. However, other respondents stated that it's not the quality of the products that stand out or are superior to other brands, but the overall designs are what stood out to them in comparison to other brands.

### ***Accommodating service experience***

Respondents stated that their experience with Chanel's services while purchasing products from the store was good and accommodating. There were two respondents that stated that the salesmen weren't accommodating and gave them a negative impression. All respondents felt that they thought the manufacturing quality of Chanel met and exceeded their expectations from the day of their initial purchase. The respondents stated that the products were still in good condition even after frequent use, which exceeded their overall expectations of the product.



All respondents' experience with Chanel's services influenced their overall experience with the brand. The respondents stated that the salespeople treated them well and were helpful. Moreover, respondents stated that their experience with Chanel is not just influenced by the store itself, but from their interactions of the brand within their online media platforms. By looking at Chanel's content online, the respondent feels that the brand is starting to become gender fluid and more popular within the younger age bracket.

## 5.2 Discussions

The discussions section of this study integrates the findings section with the literature review of this study. This section will incorporate the male consumers of Chanel's thoughts on Aaker's (1991) brand equity. The findings will be analyzed through the four dimensions of brand equity which are brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality and brand loyalty.

The respondents' recent purchases made over the last twelve months from the official Chanel store demonstrate their continued exposure to the brand. Regular interaction with its products keeps the brand in the respondents' minds, which strengthens their brand awareness. In regard to the third stage, "brand recall stage" is when a person is asked to name the brand in the product class. This term is called 'unaided recall' as within this level, the respondents were not provided the brand's names, just the luxury product class. Brand recall is more challenging than brand recognition because if the respondent is to have brand recall from Chanel, there needs to be a stronger brand association from the consumer (Aaker, 1991). From the findings of this study, when the respondents were asked to name the first three brands

that came to mind when they think about a luxury brand. There were five respondents that stated Chanel within their list of three, giving the respondents a decent brand recall level. According to the study by Nielson Newswire, men purchase products from brands that are familiar to them and their purchasing decisions can be based on previous experiences and their exposure the brands online (Team, 2023). Moreover, the respondents of this study stated that Chanel's presence online through media channels and advertisements exposure shapes their perception and overall image of the brand.

In regard to the top-of-mind awareness level from Aaker's (1991) brand awareness levels, there were three out of the twelve respondents who said that the first luxury brand that immediately entered their minds was Chanel. According to Aaker's (1991) model, this indicates a high level of top-of-mind awareness within the respondents, which is the highest level of brand awareness. When customers connect a brand right away with a particular category or cue, it shows that they are deeply aware of and prominently display that brand in their minds (Aaker, 1991). From the findings, there were ten out of the twelve respondents that stated that they thought of Chanel as a luxury brand, which indicates a strong relationship with luxury. This shows high levels of brand awareness since it shows that the respondents associate Chanel with luxury. Additionally, respondents mentioning Chanel's price strategy in relation to other brands show that they have an increasing level of brand awareness. The respondents being aware of Chanel's pricing strategy emulates that consumers have a greater understanding of the brand's positioning and target market.

The product characteristics mentioned by the respondents such as the products hardware, craftsmanship, stitching, and leather quality emulate the features of Chanel's products. Depending on the consumer's link to the brand, it will be stronger based on the respondents' different experiences and exposures to the brand's products and services. Within Aaker's (1991) explanation on brand associations, brand image is 'a set of associations, usually organized in a meaningful way'. The respondent's ability to identify and assign certain qualities to Chanel products in comparison to other luxury brands shows strong product association. Furthermore, the respondent being able to distinguish and identify product qualities evokes thoughts on their perception of its luxurious image whereby the respondent can be able to align themselves with their mental imagery of the brand. The researcher can identify that male consumers see the brands worth through the craftsmanship of the products and through identifying themselves through the feminine and timeless designs. The salespeople at Chanel showing helpfulness and the respondents having an overall positive experience at Chanel can aid in the respondent feeling a positive way about the brand and in turn feel more connected to its services. The experience that the respondents get from how they associate with the quality and value of Chanel's products and the service-related characteristics affects their product association levels (Aaker, 1991). The salesmen giving the respondents a personalized and helpful environment when purchasing the products, indicates that this positively influenced the male consumers perception of Chanel, thus contributing to their perception and image of the brand.

The researcher is able to identify that intangibles and product class contributes to creating a unique identity and differentiation in comparison to other luxury brands. The intangible aspects and the respondents being able to identify Chanel as a top tier luxury brand fosters emotional connections with the respondents, leading to their advocacy of the brand as they place the brand on a high tier in comparison to other brands (Aaker, 1991), even though the brand does not offer many male products. Within the findings, the researcher can identify that male consumers felt that Chanel was trustworthy and had credibility within the luxury market. According to Aaker (1991), trust and credibility are fundamental for a brand's consumer to feel more confident about making purchase decisions. Additionally, Aaker (1991) explains that if a brand's consumers trust the products, quality, services and its reliability, then this will in turn reduce the perceived risks. Moreover, as mentioned previously, Forbes state that males tend to be more brand loyal than women, with 41% of male's purchasing products from brands they know over women's 22% (Wertz, 2021).

Respondents stated that the benefit that they get from using their Chanel product is a social benefit and it elevates their social status of how others may perceive them. By the respondents feeling that they gain social benefit by using Chanel's products, this creates a unique selling proposition that is in this study's case, more beneficial to male consumers than the product's features. According to Aaker (1991), brands that offer social benefits create an emotional connection with their consumers. This gives the respondents the feeling of self-fulfillment, confidence and encourages positive outcomes. Under the framework of Aaker's (1991) customer benefits, in addition to functional benefits, brands can provide social benefits that are

in regard to the emotions and desires of the customer. The respondents of this study felt that Chanel's product prices were placed as more expensive than other luxury brands in the market. This alludes to male consumers considering Chanel's pricing strategy of its products being more attainable to the wealthier demographic. Thus, indicating that male consumers feel that this gives Chanel the feeling of luxury because the brand is priced as more expensive than other brands on the market.

Additionally, within Aaker's (1991) framework, relative price refers to how the consumers view the brand's pricing strategy in comparison to other brands. Within this study, the respondents stated that they thought that Chanel's product prices were more expensive than other luxury brands in the market. Aaker (1991) mentions that a key aspect of the relative price dimension is value perception. He states that this focuses on the consumer's thoughts on the value they gain with regards to the prices that they are paying for the product (Aaker, 1991). The respondents feel that they are not just paying for the product itself, but for other benefits that they gain while utilizing the products. As mentioned previously, men take price more into account when spending money on themselves than women, however from this study, male consumers can prioritize other benefits over price when it comes to Chanel. The researcher can identify that male consumer's state that the value they gain is an elevated social status, confidence and the feeling of luxury to fit their lifestyles.

The use/application dimension in accordance with Aaker's (1991) framework is how the consumers would perceive Chanel's relevance. Moreover, he discusses how understanding how the consumer would use their products in different areas of

their life is important. Within this study, the respondents would use their product for special occasions and events. As the respondents had previously stated that the brand provides them with confidence and elevates their status, they use their products in contexts and situations where they need to feel confident and present themselves in the best way to others. Aaker (1991) also states that it's crucial for brands to understand the different situations that their consumers would utilize their products as this can aid in the brand generating a wider appeal. There are some respondents that stated that they would use their product within their everyday lives. This shows that Chanel's products offer versatility and further shows that their products can be utilized within an abundance of settings for the male consumer. The researcher can highlight that Chanel's products fulfil the male consumers' needs in effectively being able to be utilized within various different contexts in their everyday lives.

In Aaker's (1991) user/customer dimension, he refers to this as perceptions and characteristics of the brands consumers. Understanding the personalities and lifestyle of the brand's consumer can benefit in tailoring its strategies to fulfill each consumer's needs. From this research, male consumers described that the type of person they felt would use Chanel products were wealthy or luxurious people. As previously mentioned, male consumers feel that utilizing Chanel's products gives them the feeling of confidence, makes them feel luxurious and elevates their social status. The research thereby can identify that they want to gain what they perceive is the 'typical' consumer of Chanel, by using its products. Respondents also mention that they believe the person who would utilize Chanel's products are from the Asian community. As mentioned prior within this study, the concepts of Asia being a

collectivist society stimulates the need for people to purchase more luxury items as the culture is heavily influenced by how others view them (Xi et al., 2022). Thus, indicating that male consumers are also influenced by how others see them as utilizing Chanel's products give them confidence, feelings of luxury and is a way of self-expression.

The celebrity/person dimension focuses on if there are any personality traits or attributes that the respondent can assign with the brand (Aaker, 1991). Currently, the Korean Pop world and Asian artists are gaining a lot of popularity worldwide, thus top tier brands such as Chanel, are looking for celebrities that can draw consumers into the brand. Since K-pop and Asian artists are widely popular, this can aid in fostering emotional connections from the brand to the consumer. Within this study, male consumers believe that celebrities that derive from K-pop and Asian artists are people that they feel represent Chanel. This is due to seeing the sponsorships, partnerships and content through social media. Aaker (1991) discusses that it is important for brands to show the brand's personality through different contexts and communication channels. Moreover, the researcher can identify that with regard to male consumer's, the consistency of seeing these celebrities through various channels has created a more desirable and image for them (Aaker, 1991). As mentioned previously, there has been a trend in male rappers in western media utilizing products from Chanel. Male rappers' general image is to wear fashion items that 'no one else is wearing' to be above the trends (Tashjian, 2019). Thus, appealing to male consumers thoughts on the brands exclusivity and luxury aspect. Some respondents stated how Jennie from Blackpink made the brand more popular and appealing within the

younger demographic. According to Aaker (1991) if a brand can develop a personality, this can set them apart from other brands within the same market and can create a desirable personality that its consumers want to attain. From this research, male consumers were able to name a celebrity endorsement or partnership regarding Chanel. Most stated that Jennie from Blackpink stood out to them about Chanel.

In regard to Aaker's (1991) dimension of competitors, this focuses on the positioning of the brand in comparison to its competitors. Moreover, he discusses that a brand must have differentiation on how the consumers will perceive it and it must have a different aspect that will make them different from other brands (Aaker, 1991). From the findings of this study, male consumers believe that they felt that Chanel's image was quite feminine in comparison to their competitors. This impacted their choice of purchasing the brand as the researcher can identify that they feel that this is what makes Chanel unique and fashionable in comparison to other luxury brands. Additionally, male consumers also stated that the brand's image is more luxurious than other brands on the luxury market. Competitive advantage is important for brands as this can influence the consumers choices when purchasing (Aaker, 1991). Male consumers feel that Chanel is more luxurious due to its high pricing strategy and exclusivity of being able to afford its products. This is Chanel's unique selling point as they offer their consumers exclusivity when purchasing their products which in turn influences the respondents brand image of Chanel and according to the respondents, gives them more value.

The country/geographic dimension discusses if the brand's country of origin influences the consumers perceptions of the brand (Aaker, 1991). Consumers



associate the characteristics, presumptions, and overall quality of a brand with the country that the brand originates from (Aaker, 1991). With accordance to the findings of this study, male consumers believe that the French origin of Chanel does not have an impact on how they perceive the brand. The researcher can conclude that male consumers feel that Chanel is a top tier brand with a good reputation for their products and the country of origin never crossed their minds. However, male consumers state that the brand would not be how it is today if it originated from another country. Aaker (1991) discusses that brands can carry cultural associations that are from their country of origin. Male consumers feel that there is value in the craftsmanship and quality of luxury products that originate from France.

In the context of Aaker's (1991) dimension of lifestyle/personality, this delves into the link between the brands and their consumer's lifestyles and personality. Furthermore, he states that brands emit certain personality traits that they think will resonate best with their consumers (Aaker, 1991). Male consumers deem that they thought that someone from wealthy background or has a luxurious lifestyle would use Chanel. The brand is viewed by male consumers as a luxurious brand that makes its consumers look wealthy which fits in Chanel's target consumer profile. They furthermore state that they believe that the type of person that would use Chanel are females or people with a more feminine way of expressing themselves. The researcher is able to presume that male consumers presume that Chanel embodies a feminine image that influences the respondent's image of them.

With regard to the male consumers brand loyalty towards Chanel, Aaker (1991) focuses on their measurement of attachment that they have to the brand.

Within the questions, the respondents are encouraged to answer questions, based on their loyalty levels. These loyalty levels include, whether the respondent is a non-loyal consumer of Chanel, if they are currently satisfied with their product over dissatisfied, if the consumers are satisfied but are susceptible to purchase another luxury brand's products, if they genuinely like the brand, and if they have strong loyalty to Chanel.

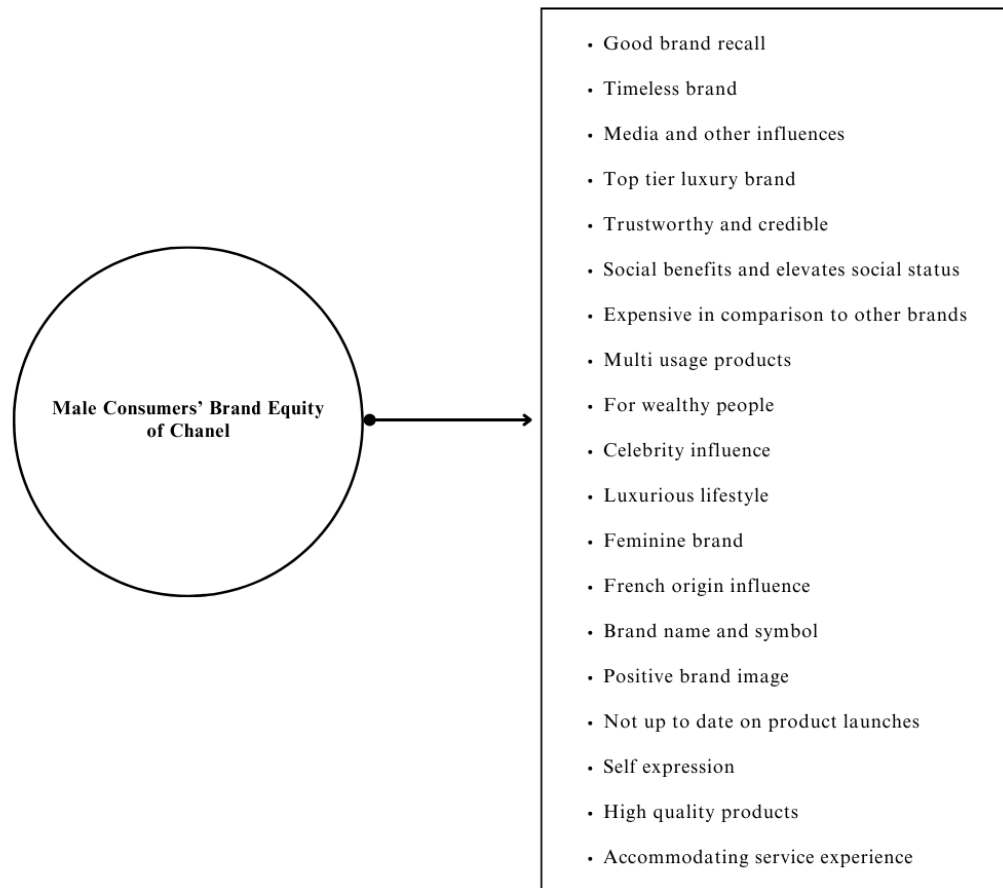
Moreover, a non-loyal consumer of a brand would switch brands often because they value the price and other components of the products over the brand itself (Aaker, 1991). Within this study, all male consumers mentioned statements about what they liked about Chanel and its positive aspects. From this, the researcher indicates that male consumers are advocates to the brand. As mentioned previously, men rely on word of mouth to make a purchasing decision (Robinson, 2022). As the respondents were able to discuss what they liked about the brand, this makes them likely to recommend their product to others. Moreover, Aaker (199) discusses that consumers that are loyal and have good word-of-mouth become brand advocates. Within this research, male consumers express that the Chanel's name and logo were one of the reasons to why they purchased from the brand. Consumers that are loyal to a brand show a stronger preference to that brand and are less likely to be influenced by other brands on the market (Aaker, 1991). Therefore, the researcher deduces that male consumers have a strong loyalty to Chanel as they had purchased its products due to its name and logo. Within Aaker's (1991) level of brand loyalty, these respondents would be under the likes of the brand and consider it a friend level of brand loyalty. However, other respondents state that they did not make their purchase

at Chanel due to its logo and brand name. These consumers would be within the satisfied buyer with switching costs level of Aaker's (1991) brand loyalty.

According to Aaker (1991), perceived quality refers to the consumer's perception of the overall quality or superiority of a product service with respect to its intended purpose, relative to alternatives'. Moreover, this dimension focuses on the quality of Chanel's products and services in comparison to other brands. From the findings of this research, the researcher can conclude that male consumers felt that the quality of the product features from Chanel delivers high quality, the product is reliable and holds its durability. Male consumers thought that the manufacturing quality of Chanel met and exceeded their expectations from the day of initial purchase.

Additionally, in accordance with Aaker's (1991) dimensions of quality, the respondents of this study feel that their products meet their conformance with specifications, performance, reliability and fit and finish needs. By looking into the findings, the researcher presumes that male consumers feel that their service experience while purchasing their product from Chanel was good and accommodating. Regarding Aaker (1991), he states that a good experience with a brands service can create long term relationships with the consumer and the brand. Positive experiences lead to the consumer feeling that the brand is credible and creates a loyal consumer base (Aaker, 1991). The researcher can conclude that male consumers feel that the products delivered objective quality, exceed product-based quality and met their expected manufacturing quality.

Figure 10 - Framework of discussion themes



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To conclude, the male consumer's brand equity toward Chanel is notably prominent as discussed through Aaker's (1991) dimensions of brand equity, which are perceived quality, brand associations, brand loyalty and brand awareness. The findings from the themes of the respondents' thoughts and perceptions gives significance by providing a deeper understanding of the male consumers' brand equity towards Chanel (see figure 5.1). This study's limitations, direction for future research and practical implications will be discussed in the sections below.

### 5.3 Limitations

The researcher of this study avoided any limitations that could occur in the study by thorough preparation, however there were limitations within this research that were unavoidable. This study had limitations with collecting the samples due to time constraints and within the sampling method of purposive sampling. The respondents of this study had to have purchased their product within the last 12 months, which was a big limitation of this study as high involvement products such as luxury items take a longer period to purchase. Within the methodology section of this study the researcher stated that they would select 13 respondents, however the researcher could only select 12 respondents that fit the sample criteria.

Due to the nature of this study, a quantitative approach would be beneficial to represent the whole population, whereby the researcher can collect data from other samples such as women to study their brand equity to compare and contrast for more valuable information. This approach would allow for more segmentation towards the respondents, which would give deeper understanding.

This study also had limitations regarding how the respondents identified themselves through their gender. As the nature of this study focuses on male consumers of Chanel, during the process of the researcher collecting respondents through purposive sampling methods, some potential respondents declined to be part of this research as they did not identify as male.

Within the questions, some did not correlate correctly to Aaker's (1991) brand equity model. Within the brand awareness section, the questions discussed solely the

brand recall stage. Another limitation was that the researcher did not formulate the correct questions regarding the intangible's dimensions within brand association. Furthermore, some questions (see appendix) could be deemed biased and were leading questions.

#### **5.4 Direction for future research**

To provide improved results for this research, future researchers are highly encouraged to gather more information to represent the whole population by increasing the sample size and by considering a quantitative approach. This study only focused on one brand with Chanel being the case study brand, but there is an abundance of luxury brands on the market alongside Chanel, and each brand could pose a different outcome. This study was also focused on the male consumers of Chanel, however by exploring another potential consumer groups, this could bring a way to compare the outcomes and give a deeper insight into the discussion section.

### **5.5 Practical implications**

The findings of this study provide insights into male consumer's brand equity of Chanel. The application of this research could be utilized within the realm of marketing communication, branding and the luxury market.

This study could provide targeted marketing strategies in regard to how Chanel and other brands within the luxury industry designs its marketing efforts to attract and retain the male consumer market. Within this study, it gives a deeper understanding amongst male consumers in which can help refine its positioning as Chanel's current consumer target is women. This can involve highlighting aspects of Chanel such as its heritage and image that could resonate with this audience. By resonating with their male demographic, this may foster stronger connections with them, encouraging more repeat purchases. By understanding the minds of male consumers, this may give a guide on how Chanel can form partnerships and collaborations with influencers and celebrities that are appealing to the male consumer. Most of the other luxury brands on the market with a similar target group of consumers to Chanel cater to the male consumer in addition to female consumers, giving them a greater competitive advantage.

From the findings of this research, understanding how male consumers perceive and associate with Chanel is crucial. This divulges into comprehending the male consumers association with the brand in relation to its luxury image, quality, and other elements that are eminent to them. As Chanel doesn't fully cater to the male demographic, it can be beneficial to understand and establish an emotional connection with male consumers as this evokes a stronger loyalty level.

By understanding the male consumers perceived quality, this can showcase how consistent Chanel is within meeting their expectations of the products. Delving into their personal experiences with Chanel's services, allows for the brand to tailor its interactions to better engage with the male consumer base and can provide these consumers with a more helpful and comfortable shopping experience. Moreover, if the male consumer has a more positive shopping experience with Chanel, this can create more loyalty and can encourage repeat purchases in the future.

Regarding understanding the male consumers of Chanel's brand association, it gives Chanel the benefit of understanding their thoughts in comparison to other brands within the same luxury market. It can give insight into how they view Chanel's image from their personal perspectives and values.

In conclusion, looking into the findings of this study, it may contribute to a more sustainable growth long term for Chanel by looking into an underexplored market group, which can provide information that will reside in the brands commitment to providing outstanding services, creating loyalty and maintaining its strong position within the luxury brands market. Chanel can take these findings into consideration when implementing its marketing strategies or conducting future research to further understand male consumers brand equity.



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## Appendix

### In-depth interview question guideline

#### Chanel Brand Equity in the Eyes of Male Consumers

##### Section 1: Demographic-based questions

1. Age
2. Occupation
3. Educational background

##### Section 2: General Questions

1. Have you purchased a Chanel brand product from the official store or from a second-hand store?
2. Type of product(s) that they have purchased within the past 12 months.
3. What other luxury brands products do you own other than Chanel?

##### Section 3: Consumer's *brand awareness* towards Chanel.

1. Out of all the luxury brands, can you name the first one that comes to you at the top of your mind?
2. If I say the word 'luxury brand' can you name three that come to your mind?

##### Section 4: Consumer's *brand association* towards Chanel.

Question number	Brand Association dimension
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are some product features that stand out to you, in comparison with other luxury brands?</li> <li>2. Could you share any personal experiences or stories related to our brand that have influenced your perception of it?</li> </ol>	Product Association dimension
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Where would you place Chanel, within the luxury market brands (top tier /middle tier, etc.)</li> <li>4. How do you perceive Chanel's reputation in terms of trust and credibility in the luxury market?</li> </ol>	Intangibles dimension/product class dimension
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Are there any benefits to the Chanel brand to you, whether that's practical or social?</li> </ol>	Consumer Benefits dimension
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. What are your opinions on the prices of Chanel's products, in comparison to items within the same category from other brands?</li> </ol>	Relative Price dimension
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Could you describe how or when you would use your</li> </ol>	Use/application dimension



Chanel product in your everyday life?	
8. Can you describe the type of person that you think would use a Chanel product?	User/customer dimension
9. Are there any Celebrities or famous figures that you can think of that represent Chanel? 10. Are there any celebrity endorsements or partnerships that stand out to you from Chanel?	Celebrity/person dimension
11. How would you describe Chanel's image in comparison to its competitors? 12. In your opinion, who are Chanel's biggest competitors, are what are your thoughts on them?	Competitors dimension
13. Does the French origin of the Chanel brand have an impact on how you perceive its overall image?	Country/geographic dimension
14. In your opinion, what kind of personality or lifestyle would a consumer of Chanel have?	Lifestyles/personality dimension

**Section 5: Consumer's *brand loyalty* towards the Chanel brand.**

1. Is the Chanel brand's name and symbol one of the reasons why you purchase its products?
2. How does using Chanel products make you feel?
3. Is Chanel part of your identity and how you express yourself?
4. Are you up to date on Chanel's new product launches and updates?
5. Are you regularly searching for new Chanel products and items?

**Section 6: Consumer's *perceived quality* of the Chanel brand.**

1. What are your thoughts on Chanel's overall service experience? And can you describe your experiences with its services?
2. In your opinion, can you describe the product's overall quality from your experience in regard to its reliability and durability?
3. Were your expectations of the product's quality met when you purchased your Chanel product?



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