

FAN RESEARCH FROM THE CONSUMPTION PERSPECTIVE: A SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS OF THE INTERNATIONAL MARKETING PRODUCTION

Investigação do Fã sob a Perspectiva do Consumo: Uma análise sistemática da produção internacional de marketing

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Abstract

Purpose: To analyze how fans are investigated in international scientific production in the Marketing field.

Resumo

Objetivo: Analisar como fãs é investigado na produção científica internacional da área de Marketing.

Methods: Bibliographic research was carried out. The data were collected from the main Marketing journals ranked in the Scimago Journal & Country Rank. The qualitative strategy of Interpretive Content Analysis was adopted for the investigation of the corpus through codification and categorization of the meanings of the data and subsequent identification of the conceptual relations between the established categories.

Findings: The research analyzed how the academic production of Marketing reverberates, conceptualizes, approaches, and relates meanings about fans. Results point to four dimensions of meanings about this consumer, which is being perceived as: Productive, when they produce content and social interactions; Communal, when they act from a collective perspective; sentimental, by revealing an entertainment consumer's identity in which several factors influence their behavior, including at an emotional level; and Critical, when they evaluate what they consume.

Originality: The study allowed a better understanding of the fan in the scientific panorama of the Marketing field, elucidating the existence of identity relations portrayed in the literature and contributing to the endorsement of new research that uses or transcends the presented concepts.

Keywords: Fan; Fandom; Marketing; Consumption; Consumer Culture.

Método: Desenvolveu-se uma pesquisa bibliográfica cujos dados coletados partiram dos principais periódicos de Marketing ranqueados no Scimago Journal & Country Rank. Adotou-se a estratégia qualitativa da Análise de Conteúdo Interpretativa para o estudo do corpus, realizando-se codificações dos significados encontrados e uma posterior identificação das relações conceituais entre as categorias estabelecidas.

Resultados: A pesquisa analisou como a produção acadêmica de Marketing reverbera, conceitua, aborda e relaciona significados sobre o fã. Os resultados do trabalho apontam para quatro dimensões de significados acerca desse consumidor, sendo percebidos como: Produtivos, quando produzem conteúdos e interações sociais; Comuns, quando atuam sob a ótica coletiva; Sentimentais, ao revelar uma identidade do consumidor de entretenimento em que diversos fatores influenciam seus comportamentos, inclusive, a um nível sentimental; e Críticos, quando avaliam tudo aquilo que consomem.

Originalidade: O estudo possibilitou um melhor entendimento acerca do fã no panorama científico da área de Marketing, elucidando a existência de relações identitárias retratadas nas práticas literárias e contribuindo para o endosso de pesquisas que utilizem os conceitos apresentados ou que os transpassem.

Palavras-chave: Fã; Fandom; Marketing; Consumo; Cultura de consumo.

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INTRODUCTION

The entertainment industry moves more than US\$ 2 trillion per year (Statista, 2021) and is one that best uses the potential of media convergence (Jenkins, 2009; O'Sullivan & Fortunati, 2021) and the active participation of consumers (Cova & Cova, 2012; González Reyes, 2021; Ritzer, 2019). The current interconnection present in the social world allows the integration of media platforms and generates new modes of sociability (Jenkins, 2009; Maciaszczyk & Kocot, 2021), making it necessary to consider that consumers see the importance in their contributions and create degrees of social connection from them (Cova & Cova, 2012; Fiske, 1992).

The consumer of media products who has a higher level of involvement and emotional bonding is characterized as a fan (Duffett, 2013; Fuschillo, 2020), understood as a singular consumer: they manifest intellectual and emotional involvement with the products and re-signify them (Guschwan, 2012; Kozinets, 2001). Therefore, they are commonly defined by the activities through which they establish links with the products of their fandom (Duffett, 2013; Kozinets, 2001).

Generally, texts produced by the press and ordinary interactions treat consumers of transmedia franchises as fans (Duffett, 2013; Feiereisen et al., 2020), although a more peculiar notion is essential here. The appropriation of the term fan refers to a particular type of consumer who has an intimate and engaged relationship with an object, mainly pop culture, be it a personality, a product, or media content, adopting a productive posture, and dedicating a particular time to think, interact and produce something from it (Botorić, 2021; Fuschillo, 2020; Guschwan, 2012).

The fan is a peculiar type of consumer that stands out for their involvement and engagement around consumer objects, re-signifying them to materialize and legitimize their values (Hills, 2002). Generally, their action takes place through fan communities, known as fandom (Fiske, 1992; Fuschillo, 2020; Kang et al., 2021), where the sharing of experiences, assumptions of the object of common interest, and the performance of fan practices that feedback the engagement around the object of consumption (Hills, 2002, 2007).

Fan practices contribute to maintaining relationships within the fandom and keeping the fan community engaged, in addition to involving feelings of belonging that establish forms of socialization and the constitution of subjectivities (Chen, 2021; Duffett, 2013). Accordingly, technological advances made it possible for fans to produce and share their fandom practices without restrictions of a physical, geographic, or temporal nature (Jenkins, 2009; Kozinets, 2001), spread since the advent and proliferation of Web 2.0 and social networks (Chun et al., 2021; Freund, 2016). This profusion of fandom practices has been mainly observed in fan engagement around media product brands (Annamalai et al., 2021; Bodet et al., 2018).

Although it is a relatively recent object of study (Fiske, 1992; Jenkins, 1992, 2012), the relevance of the fan in the socioeconomic scenario has strengthened its academic investigation in recent years (Booth, 2018; Garzaro et al., 2019), especially in the area of Marketing from the perspective of Consumer Culture Theory (CCT), a discipline of consumer research from a culturalist and postmodern perspective (Arnould & Thompson, 2005; Gaião et al., 2012; Rokka, 2021), including several studies in Brazil (de Souza-Leão et al., 2019, 2020a, 2020b). It is necessary to consider that studies on fans have an inter and multidisciplinary aspect (Jacobs, 2020; Turk, 2018). Therefore, many concepts and definitions refer to the fan from different perspectives. Thus, it is understood that an in-depth understanding of the dimensions from which the fan is investigated in the Marketing area is essential to broaden the perception of the forms of appropriation and resignification carried out by theorists of this peculiar group.

To better understand these different perspectives, we will carry out bibliographic research of scientific articles that focus on the entertainment consumer, a concept that encompasses and amplifies the definition of the fan, to be assertive about data collection. Next, we will use a qualitative methodology based on Interpretive Content Analysis to arrive at a theoretical framework that combines the connections of the meanings attributed to the fan made by the selected works. The research results in a systematic review of the Marketing literature and a mapping of feasible relations on what the authors reverberate, conceptualize, approach, and relate to this topic. Finally, the research presents a perspective of the studies carried out on the fan, contributing to a better understanding of the panorama of the area, the missing conceptual relations, and the gaps in the definitions of the fan, enabling the contribution to academic, social, economic and social aspects, and to further research needed in the area.

The present study adopts an inductive approach (de Souza-Leão et al., 2009), in which the bibliographic analysis was established as the very foundation of the analysis. Thus, the article's structure, whose literature review takes place concomitantly with the analysis of the results, is justified. Thus, the next session will discuss the methodological procedure adopted, followed by the results and discussion.

METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

The current work is characterized as bibliographic research, which consists of the use of published studies on a given topic to allow the researcher to arrive at inferences from the analysis of problems already defined or still little explored (Manzo, 1971; Marconi & Lakatos, 2002), using the desk

research method, which has an exploratory-descriptive characteristic (Gaião *et al.*, 2012; Malhotra, 2001).

In this perspective, scientific articles were collected from the most relevant journals in the Marketing area, indicated by the ranking of the Scimago Journal & Country Rank index, which has a wide-open database that analyzes the productivity and prestige of scientific journals with an entire field for works produced in the field of Marketing.

The objective of the collection was to identify the texts that dealt with the fan in a generic or specific way. The search started with identifying keywords on the studied topic, as it is a technique already used in electronic content filtering (de Souza-Leão *et al.*, 2019, 2020a, 2020b). Then, the various articles contained in the journals were located based on their titles and abstracts more broadly and comprehensively and, later, using the strategy of excluding productions that were not aligned with the scope of the researched topic (Gaião *et al.*, 2012; Heinonen & Medberg, 2018). In a complementary way, the references of the articles already found were examined to expand and focus the research on the construction of the researched topic (Gaião *et al.*, 2012). Thus, we reached a total of 268 articles, whose saturation was guaranteed to maintain the representativeness of the *corpus* (Bauer & Aarts, 2000).

Interpretive Content Analysis (Drisko & Maschi, 2016; Nakao & Mussi, 2018) was adopted in three main stages. The first step started with reading and searching for meanings about the fan, the object of research of the study, generating codes for each of these understandings as a result. Coding, in this context, becomes crucial for research because it is from it that the categories and relations that will be carried out later are shaped, directing researchers to find meanings on the topic (Cavalcanti *et al.*, 2021; Peruta & Shields, 2018). In this way, 20 codes were found, resulting from the analysis of 68 validated articles dating from 1987 to 2018, and found in Table 1. The number of articles in the *corpus* is justified by the more detailed analysis of the publications to avoid articles that did not address the specific topic or a meaning directly related to the object of study was not found in them.

The second stage consisted of identifying relations in which the codes found established each other, separating all potential connections between them, and investigating which potentialities were transfigured into connections that made sense from a semantic point of view. This procedure is necessary for the subsequent analysis of patterns of categories (de Souza-Leão *et al.*, 2019, 2020a, 2020b). Some authors approached codes in isolation, while others combined multiple codes. Therefore, these relations were analyzed to identify the semantic similarities in the observed codes (Cavalcanti *et al.*, 2021).

The third stage was configured to validate identity groups to observe the dimensions that permeate the definition of the fan. In this way, the codes and their relations helped guide the identification of categories essential for content analysis, as they serve as results for the research (Heinonen & Medberg, 2018; Kassarian, 1977). In this sense, the central discursive ideals of the *corpus* were analyzed and associated with the codes that, based on relations, make sense from a logical point of view. Finally, four identity groups were found and named, which will be presented and discussed in the next section.

It is worth noting that a more experienced researcher validated all the steps in order to ensure more excellent reliability and quality of the work (Drisko & Maschi, 2016), as well as the construction of an extensive and representative *corpus*, resulting from the triangulation of researchers, the reflexivity of qualitative research, and the rich and detailed description of the methodological processes adopted (Denzin, 2017; Hayashi *et al.*, 2019).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The current section will be presented according to the dimensions representing the fan's identity forcefulness in the Marketing literature. The identity codes (which vary from C1 to C20), the relations (indicated by the connecting lines), and the identity groups (signaled by the colored spheres) are shown in the conceptual map (Figure 1). The four identity groups found were: Productive (in blue), Communal (in red), Sentimental (in yellow), and Critical (in green).

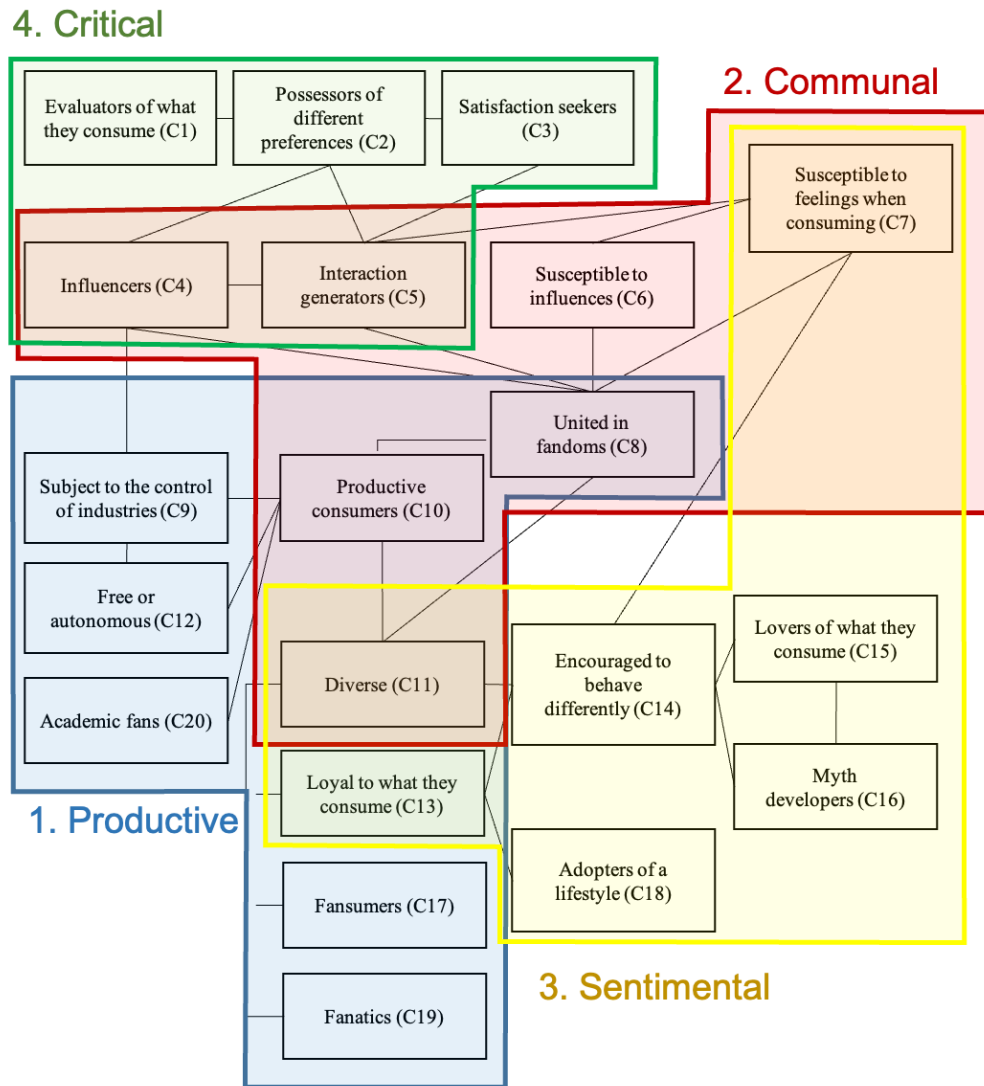


Figure 1. Conceptual Map: Codes, Relations, and Identity Groups about the Fan

Productive

The Productive category, represented in the conceptual map in blue (Figure 1), indicates that fans are productive consumers (C10) in the sense that they are responsible for both consumption and production based on the resignification they make of the media products they consume. It is a group that is primarily interconnected with the understanding that if, on the one hand, the fans have freedom of production (C12), on the other hand, they are subject to the control of the industries (C9). Still, it is understood that production can come from the most diverse types of consumers (C11), who, in addition to joining fandoms (C8), can be loyal to what they consume (C13), fansumers (C17) or fanatics (C19). And then, there is a type of production that originates from the intellectual academy itself (C20).

Entertainment consumers and fans can be considered prosumers once they are active and produce content, and social practices, while consuming simultaneously (C10). Such prosumers are complex, varied, and part of the logic of prosumerism (Andrews & Ritzer, 2018). Prosuming practices are revealed by fans who engage in sports events (Andrews & Ritzer, 2018), listening to music (Magaudda, 2011), movies, series, and television shows (Tulloch & Jenkins, 1995). Inserted in this logic, there are also consumers of electronic sports that exemplify the consumption and performances of simultaneous social practices (Seo & Jung, 2016). Digital platforms, in this sense, underpin the existence

of a community of fans that have freedom of creation, which allows individuals to build and reconstruct multiple "digital selves" through lived experiences (Chen, 2016).

In this way, people internalize the changes brought about by technology, affecting social processes and entertainment consumption, intensifying the phenomenon of the productive consumer (Ruckenstein, 2015). Prosumers' amateur behavior can produce content in the digital era that corporate media can use (Morreale, 2014) and generate financial gains from selling their work (Planells, 2017; Scott, 2009).

These productions, however, far beyond being an individual phenomenon, have a collective character because consumers tend to unite in fandoms (C8). According to Porat (2012), politics plays a role in the behavior of fandoms, whose fans have different behaviors and habits. In this sense, fans can rely on fandoms to display their productions (Fillis & Mackay, 2013) and to produce meanings (Guschwan, 2012; Jenkins, 2012). The sharing of interests among fans can occur in virtual communities through personal investment, commitment, interpersonal cohesion, and coherence between the community and the environment in which it is inserted (Guitton, 2012; Kozinets, 2001).

Jenkins (1992) believes fandoms represent modern communities formed by new consumer relations and can help create identities. In addition, fandoms serve to promote leisure and belonging (Fillis & Mackay, 2013; Hewer et al., 2015). It is understood that fans are united in distinct social groups, active in media construction, and possess performative behavior (Jenkins, 1992; Radford & Bloch, 2012).

In fandoms, from this scenario, it can be understood that there is a diversity among consumers (C11), who can engage in an intensely different way (Porat, 2012; Shrum et al., 2005). This engagement is observed, for example, among fans of blockbuster films – productions that are prominent among the public (Brown et al., 2013), as well as in the context of football, in which fans are organized at a hierarchical level and participate in regular activities (Dionisio et al., 2008).

Thus, when it comes to fans of media products, they are loyal to what they consume (C13). Fans' loyalty to the products, brands, or subjects they consume can be associated with, for example, a political and ideological inclination, a family tradition, geographic proximity (Porat, 2012), or the use of clothing (Kelly, 2018). Loyalty and commitment are the components used to differentiate the types of existing consumers and cannot be dissociated since consumer behavior varies depending on the degree of these components (Dionisio et al., 2008; Fillis & Mackay, 2013).

This way of looking at consumption means that fans can be treated as fansumers (C17), a concept that treats the fan as a consumer. The term should be seen as part of the concept of fans since it is understood that they use social processes to make connections, even if their level of commitment is not high, thus gaining relevance (Fillis & Mackay, 2013).

However, when loyalty becomes exaggerated and intense, and consumption becomes obsessive, consumers can be seen as fanatics (C19). The term linked to fanaticism defines a behavior that ranges from frenetic (Brown et al., 2013; Fillis & Mackay, 2013) to dysfunctional, obsessive, and compulsive concerning the fan's intensity level towards the consumed object (Fillis & Mackay, 2013).

In addition to having a sense of consumption and production, this production elucidates a specific type of fan, which underpins a scientific production, called an academic fan (C20), a concept that refers to scholars who are also fans. The expression "aca-fans" or "scholar-fans" has become popularly known to be used as a reference to scholars who are also fans, a topic that represents a growing interest for researchers of consumer culture and which has brought discussions about the scientific legitimacy of the works produced by them (Cristofari & Guitton, 2017).

In this way, it can be understood that, when producing, on the one hand, fans and fandoms have freedom and autonomy (C12), but on the other hand, they suffer attempts to be controlled by the industry (C9). Regarding freedom, fans acquire their autonomy and contribute to solidifying the group to which they belong (Scott, 2009). As for control, for example, in the music sector, industries try to control consumers who love and who are fans of music who download files online (Giesler, 2007), generating what Guschwan (2012) called brandom, a community of fans managed by brands without having genuine autonomy. Companies, in this sense, take risks to control fan communities rather than recognizing that they are courting such communities, which can result in the massive failure of monetizing fan activities (Scott, 2009).

Finally, it is understood that the identities: subject to the control of industries (C9) and free or autonomous (C12) form the first grouping, indicating that, because they have freedom, consumers suffer attempts to control by the industry. Additionally, codes loyal to what they consume (C13), fansumers (C17), fanatics (C19), and diverse (C11), which are linked to united in fandoms (C8), form a second group indicating the diversity of consumers and its activities, actions, and commitment. Furthermore, the groupings of these codes, together with academic fans (C20), are linked through productive consumers (C10). This set of codes and relations gives rise to what is called Productive: fans with the most varied individual characteristics, which produce material content and social interactions, have loyalty to what they consume and are affected by their behavioral attitudes.

Communal

The second group identified was the so-called Communal, indicated by red (Figure 1). This group identifies the entertainment consumer as a collective agent who unites in fandoms (C8). Furthermore, it is observed that, in these communities, there is a diversity of fans (C11) who adopt a productive behavior (C10). This social interaction can culminate in the formation of influencers (C4) since fans are interaction generators (C5), susceptible to influences (C6) and feelings when they consume (C7) based on the relationship they create with brands.

It is valid to point out consumers' power of influence, especially when living in a community, contributing to the success or failure of industries, and influencing these companies or other individuals (C4). This influence can be seen, for example, in the context of football (Porat, 2012) and also in the field of the computer games industry (Kim *et al.*, 2016; Nair, 2007), in which the organization of fans can promote brands, at times even to obtain monetary gains, as well as threatening authorities responsible for the management of products that are the object of fan consumption (Guschwan, 2012). Moreover, consumers' influence can be projected when fans oppose a brand decision and make, for example, protests in front of public entities about acquisitions and sales of brands to others (Oppenhuisen & van Zoonen, 2006). Finally, brand fans can increase the perception of value by other consumers, but they can also contribute to dissipation (Commuri, 2009; Grégoire & Fisher, 2006, 2008; Parmentier & Fischer, 2014; Sood & Drèze, 2006).

Thus, because they feel like authentic social influencers and due to their relationship with the object consumed, fans and entertainment consumers interact with the fandom and with each other, becoming, in addition to influencers, interaction generators (C5). According to Porat (2010), and Sandlin and Maudlin (2012), such relationships help to create an identity for consumers. Thus, it is understood that fans are distinguished from other consumers by the interaction they seek to establish with brands and with other consumers, even if in different ways (Bodet *et al.*, 2018; Porat, 2012). This phenomenon becomes evident when we observe the bonds of fans through the fandom where they are inserted and in which differences are faded and moments of intensity, bonds, and feelings of community are produced (Brown *et al.*, 2008), which can result in the emergence consumption patterns (Fillis & Mackay, 2013). An example is the downloading and sharing of music by fans, which allows fans to get closer to artists (Giesler, 2007) or even the interaction between online game players (Kleijnen *et al.*, 2004).

In addition, entertainment consumers can also be classified as reference seekers since several factors support and precede consumption (C6). This fact can be perceived by the entertainment provided by games from the demand of players who necessarily need to buy hardware to engage in the gaming universe (Derdenger, 2014). This phenomenon is also observed in music consumption, in which consumers maintain a relationship with the musicians they accompany to consume what is produced by them (Doane, 2009). The same happens in the sports and entertainment industries, in which the endorsement of celebrities and athletes supports the existence of an association between the products endorsed by these influencers and the attitudes and purchase intentions of consumers (Forehand & Perkins, 2005; Giulianotti & Numerato, 2018; Khondker & Robertson, 2018; Tripp *et al.*, 1994). In parallel, fans can base themselves and seek references on insights, stored items, activated memories, and relationships with others to consume (Woodward & Greasley, 2017).

This search for references becomes quite clear when it is understood that entertainment consumption generates different consumer feelings, influencing their attitudes and predicting a

relationship with the products (C7). First, it is noted that the emotions provoked by television programs influence the viewers' tastes (Murry & Dacin, 1996). This particularity can be used to induce diverse behaviors in consumers (Pavelchak *et al.*, 1988). Likewise, when celebrities die, fans go through a grieving process based on introjection and incorporation due to generated processes of intimacy and belonging, which can also occur after the end of their favorite shows (Cohen, 2004; Eyal & Cohen, 2006; Radford & Bloch, 2012; Russell & Schau, 2013). For example, TV show viewers' feelings are considered when watching a show, while assessment varies by viewing experience (Murry *et al.*, 1992) and empathy level (Argo *et al.*, 2008). This feeling of belonging is also usually externalized by purchasing nostalgic products (Loveland *et al.*, 2010).

Thus, it is understood that the codes productive consumers (C10) and diverse (C11) form a grouping indicating the diversity of the collective production sources of the consumers. The grouping of those susceptible to feelings when consuming (C7), susceptible to influences (C6), and interaction generators (C5), which connect to influencers (C4), evidence the interactions and influences of entertainment consumers and the behavioral consequences of these interactions. All these codes connect with those united in fandoms (C8), indicating that behavior is rooted in the collective. In this way, the codes of this group, called Communal, represent the entertainment consumer from a collective perspective, sharing common interests, interacting with each other, influencing one another, producing content, and experiencing feelings from their consumption.

Sentimental

The third identified group was Sentimental, indicated by yellow (Figure 1). The group's focus is to validate the understanding that entertainment consumers are encouraged to behave in specific ways (C14). First, the stimuli can be at the sentimental level (C7), generating consumers who love what they consume (C15) and who develop myths from the meaning they attribute to what they are consuming (C16). In addition, due to the existing diversity of fans (C11), which in turn translates into the variety of fans' loyalty (C13), the stimuli contribute to the generation of a lifestyle for the consumers (C18).

Initially, it is noted that consumers behave differently to the stimuli of the products they consume (C14). An example of this is the production of paintings where, in the modern era, they were painted more vaguely, allowing viewers to project themselves into the portrayed situation and receive behavioral instructions at certain moments (Brown *et al.*, 2013).

From another perspective, it is observed that the breakdown of a consumer's relationship with the brand can generate emotional reactions that motivate hostile behavior, generating retaliation on the part of consumers from actions contrary to the interests of the brands, such as complaints, negative comments, threats and vandalism (Johnson *et al.*, 2011; Numerato, 2015).

In this way, consumers establish a relationship with what they consume, establishing a solid passion or true love for the object of consumption (C15). Such feelings can determine the behavior of individuals since the link between the consumed product and the consumer originates behaviors, which can be seen even as tribal (Dionisio *et al.*, 2008).

In this sense, with the intensification of feelings in relation to the products consumed, fans create myths and may even treat the products consumed religiously or canonically (C16). Fans start to consume products, attributing meanings from the created myths, establishing deep relationships with the object of consumption, and sometimes treating these items in a sacred way (Belk *et al.*, 1989; Fillis & Mackay, 2013; Hirschman, 1988; Kozinets, 2001), even distancing themselves from the existing commercial aspects (Kozinets, 2001).

In addition, stimulating the behavior of entertainment consumers, promoted by their loyalty, helps the adoption of different lifestyles (C18). These individuals adopt a lifestyle that allows them to be integrated and included in communities, being able to change their ways of living depending on the consumption pattern disseminated in them (Fillis & Mackay, 2013). Thus, fans' devotion to a particular product helps define their way of life, being part of the identity profile of these individuals (Porat, 2010).

In this way, it is concluded that the codes regarding lovers of what they consume (C15) and myth developers (C16) form a grouping, suggesting that the fans' love leads them to enshrine the objects of consumption, developing surrealist stories for them. Diverse (C11) and loyal to what they consume

(C13), adopters of a lifestyle (C18), along with susceptible to feelings when consuming (C7) are interconnected with encouraged to behave differently (C14). Thus, the group treated as Sentimental reveals an entertainment consumer identity in which several factors influence their behavior, including at a sentimental level, affecting the way they treat the products consumed and the behavior of each one of them.

Critical

The Critical group, represented by green (Figure 1), transcribes a dimension centered on the understanding that entertainment consumers have different preferences (C2). From this, fans begin to evaluate media objects (C1) and become influencers (C4), leading them to interact with other consumers (C5) and seek to satisfy themselves (C3).

Consumers of different products have the most diverse preferences in relation to what they consume (C2). Regarding television, according to Barwise and Ehrenberg (1987), consumers tend to watch programs that are generally less objectionable despite having little variety. To Scarborough and McCoy (2016), some consumers prefer the quality of the program, others the genre. Also, the indeterminacy of live programs makes viewers prefer such content, culminating in more positive impressions of this type of program than recorded ones (Vosgerau et al., 2006).

In online games, consumers like games less when help is promoted by anthropomorphization (Kim et al., 2016), with children and young people being a notorious audience that consumes this type of entertainment (Grimes, 2015). In the cinematic universe, specific film consumers prefer better quality or wider cinema screens, while others prefer a wider variety of films (Rao & Hartmann, 2015). In addition, it is observed that parental entertainment consumption generates different relationships between youth and elders (Meuleman et al., 2018).

Regarding football, it is understood that consumers are more interested in discussing sporting values, such as wins and losses on the field, rather than commercial strategies (Oppenhuisen & van Zoonen, 2006). Additionally, they tend to appreciate games that are closely contested and finished with a narrow scoreline (Oppenhuisen & van Zoonen, 2006; Wood et al., 2011). Television football viewers tend to watch them when they take place in their hometown (Stephens-Davidowitz et al., 2017).

Based on this understanding, entertainment consumers evaluate products or services positively or negatively (C1). According to Barwise and Ehrenberg (1987), viewers rate better the series they watch more frequently. In the same perspective, cinematographic productions can even be evaluated through the titles chosen and the opinions received from the word of mouth of other consumers (Dellarocas et al., 2007). Still, sequential movies can be better evaluated if produced differently from the initial films, with experiential attributes, such as plot and genre (Sood & Drèze, 2006). Furthermore, criticisms generated by ordinary movie consumers tend to differ from criticisms made by specialized critics, as they are based on different aspects of analysis (Holbrook, 1999).

If, at first, consumers' preferences are intertwined with the fact that they positively or negatively evaluate what they consume (C1), secondly, they are satisfaction seekers (C3), whether for pleasure or pure leisure. This behavior helps to explain why football consumers grouped in fandom engage in activities that do not bring apparent financial reward and that, even so, perform it for leisure (Jones, 2000). From this perspective, Oppenhuisen and van Zoonen (2006) argue that football consumers differ in the values they associate with the clubs they support, so some take more into account values associated with the relationship and leisure with the teams and the time spent in the activity. The same is observed among listeners and music fans who find pleasure in different practices, such as, for example, accumulating knowledge, experiencing live experiences, or collecting artifacts (Leguina et al., 2017).

In this perspective, the codes referring to satisfaction seekers (C3) and possessors of different preferences (C2) underpin the potential of fans to generate influence from their actions (C5), to become influencers (C4), and evaluators of what they consume (C1). Finally, all these concepts are connected to the code with different preferences (C2). The group called Critics represents a dimension wherein entertainment consumers strive to fulfill themselves through the interaction and impact they have on

the content they consume. This is because they critically evaluate everything they consume based on personal preferences.

CONCLUSION

The investigation of the fans of media products is considered relevant to the Marketing area from a social and economic point of view since, in addition to being treated more broadly as a type of entertainment consumer, they are diverse in the form in which they are investigated in the academic literature. Thus, this research analyzed the various points of view about the fan from the collection of the main scientific works presented in the most relevant journals in the area according to the ranking of the Scimago Journal & Country Rank.

It was possible to detect four conceptual dimensions of how fans are represented in literature.

The first dimension treats the fans as productive consumers, who produce content and generate social interactions, are loyal to what they consume, and affected by their social practices. The second dimension seeks to locate fans as community agents who, by living in fandoms, interact with each other, influence others, produce content, and experience feelings. The third dimension is related to the representation of the fan as a sentimental being, in which several factors influence their behavior and affect how the object consumed is treated. Finally, the fourth dimension approaches the fan as critical, indicating that they seek to satisfy themselves from the interaction and influence they exert, culminating in evaluating everything consumed.

This study contributes to the academy by making it possible to deepen studies on fans in Culture Consumer Theory (CCT), a relatively recent field of research within the Marketing area that aims to understand consumer behavior through optics that consider sociocultural variables. Still, the study aims to contribute to the increase of the research corpus on fans and to create a systematic literature review on the studies of this topic, which have intensified in recent years, within the Marketing area, and which have a multi and interdisciplinary aspect, receiving different perspectives and theoretical approaches. Thus, an adequate understanding was facilitated concerning the conceptual aspects in the context of the entertainment consumption culture.

Because it is qualitative research from an interpretive perspective, it is emphasized that the study has limitations since the researcher can make the research partial, as he is a subject and object of study. However, to overcome this limit, we sought to develop the research with all the methodological rigor necessary to conduct robust analysis and validate the content. In addition, another limitation verified is that the data collection took place only through international works written in English about the entertainment consumer. Although they are the most relevant, they do not necessarily represent a sample at a global geographic level.

In this sense, as an unfolding of this research, new bibliographic analyses about the study of fans in Brazil are indicated to obtain a Brazilian panorama and a comparative study of the different narratives of the theme at a national and global level. In addition, it is worth emphasizing the importance of developing new research on the subject relating to different social perspectives on the fan, using concepts already studied to create new definitions and relations on these themes. All of this would generate the diffusion and enhancement of this field of study.

Research Ethic Statement

The article is original and published exclusively for CBR.

Author Contribution Statement

The first author was responsible for the conceptualization, investigation, data collection, data curation, formal data analysis, results visualization, writing the original draft, and reviewing and editing the research's final text. The second author was responsible for the conceptualization, investigation, methodology, data curation, analysis validation, funding acquisition, project administration, resources, and supervision of the research. The third author was responsible for writing the original draft and reviewing and editing the research's final text. The fourth author was responsible for the review and editing the research's final text.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

There were no conflicts of interest in this study.

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APPENDICES

Table. 1 - Information on the collected articles

Article	Authors, Year, Journal, Volume, Issue	Journal
Sport and prosumption	Andrews & Ritzer (2018)_JCC-18(2)	JCC
Fact or Fiction: An Investigation of Empathy Differences in Response to Emotional Melodramatic Entertainment	Argo et al. (2008)_JCR-34(5)	JCR
The Liking and Viewing of Regular TV Series	Barwise (1987)_JCR-14(1)	JCR

Material Values in the Comics: A Content Analysis of Comic Books Featuring Themes of Wealth	Belk (1987)_JCR-14(1)	JCR
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