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An investigation of how inclusive campaigns influence LGBTQI + consumer behaviour. Determine the factors why marketers do not engage with Queer consumers

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ABSTRACT

This approach was focused on understanding how inclusive campaigns and advertisements influence the behaviour of LGBTQI+ consumers. Two objectives were established, the first was to understand how queer people reacted to advertisements directed at them as a target market and what points in these campaigns influenced them when purchasing a product or service. In the second place, it was important to discover what were the factors that had a negative connotation on consumers and that were not able to connect with them, that is, what mistakes were being made when creating campaigns where the LGBTQI + community was the main audience.

To carry out the research, a qualitative search methodology was used, which consisted of semi-structured interviews, (open and closed questions). For the interviews, a sample formed by ten people, five gays and five lesbians, from different countries, cultures, backgrounds, ages and races was established. It was decided that the participants were of different nationalities with the aim that they could provide a different perspective on the research.

It was found that the LGBTQI + community is a group of consumers loyal to brands who openly support them and who will choose their products over other brands that do not explicitly do so. On the other hand, it was also discovered that they have become more distrustful consumers, as there have been circumstances in which brands that claim to be supportive do so with ulterior motives, either to increase their income or because they want to cover up some type of controversy regarding the brand. Concerning the factors why marketers fail to connect with the community, they are reduced to a lack of standardization. Various causes were mentioned, such as the concentration of these ads on showing gay, white, upper-middle-class and childless men. It was determined that there is a clear lack of cultural and racial diversity in the advertisements, as well as the non-existence of advertisements aimed at the elderly or adolescents. On the other hand, the non-appearance of all members of the community in these ads, which have been reduced to gay men and a lesser extent to lesbians, but are still missing today. more transsexuals, bisexuals, non-binaries and other members in these ad campaigns.

Submission of Thesis and Dissertation

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

The society in which human beings operate has witnessed great changes throughout its history. One of the changes with the most social impact has been the recognition of the LGBTQ + people´s rights, first with the acceptance of homosexuality and bisexuality as a not disease by the OMS in 1990 and the creation of laws that allow same-sex marriage, in Ireland was ratified in 2015. Then the recognition of transsexuality as a not mental disease in 2018 and now in recent years a greater knowledge by all of society about new terms used to define apart from the collective such as queer, non-binary or pansexual.

Along with these social changes, marketers have also had to adapt and focus on the "*new society*", taking a new approach and including latent diversity. Concerning marketing´s context, in the 1980s, the LGBTQ community went from being stigmatized due to the AIDS crisis during this period, where brands were afraid of being refused by heterosexual consumers if they support the community, to becoming a target segment for marketers called "*dream market*". This circumstance took place due to the recognition of their rights and inclusion in the society, marketers began to create ads where gay men were included and published in general media (Ragusa, 2005). The situation has been evolving and more companies are creating campaigns where people from all gender identity and sexual orientation entities are included, for example, Burger King´s promotions during Pride Month or Coca - Cola. However, it is still difficult to find articles that study the perspective of the community in this type of ads, most of them explain how the use of gay imagery affects to the heterosexual market or the journals were written thirty years ago.

Forbes magazine (Schneider & Auten, 2019) affirmed that the buying power of LGBTQ+ in 2019 was $1 trillion representing the highest buying power of a minority group in the United States. Hornest Data (2016) conducted a study about the LGBTQ+ community and its buying power which affirmed 32 millions of American people identified themselves as LGBTQ+ what represents a 13% of the population. However, in the same study, 66% of participants admitted do not feel identify their lifestyle in advertising and 51% affirmed they would like to see their kind of family in more ads and campaigns.

According to Oakenfull (2005) until the mid-2000s, there were only three published studies which study the effect of gay advertising on consumers´attitudes towards the advertisement.

Despite the increase of brands that were introducing their firms in the gay and lesbian market, those studies were focused basically on how heterosexual consumers react and no how the LGBTQ+ community react and behave as a consumer towards "*gay-friendly*" advertisements and campaigns.

Due to the lack of literature and knowledge about the community´s reactions towards campaigns, this investigation will be concentrated in clarifying the behaviour of LGBTQI+ people towards inclusive ads, if this inclusivity influences their decision making. This research will analyze the relationship that LGBTQI + people have with those brands that are called "*gay-friendly*". This objective will be analyzed through the literature review, the changes that have been originating over time and how the behaviour of this specific consumer has been changing. The second objective will focus on understanding the impact that inclusive campaigns have on LGBTQI + consumer behaviour and what are the mistakes that marketers continue to make when establishing the community as a target. During the development of this research, the qualitative method was used among some members of the LGBTQI + community, since it is quite extensive and it was not feasible to include all the members. The system chosen to carry out this investigation was the semistructured interviews since they were not restrictive, it allowed the answers to be broader and to address new questions that arose throughout the process. With the use of this method, the objectives of the research will be answered and the results will be shown in comparison with the literature that exists concerning this topic.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

2.1 LGBTQ+ community history as a target market.

The abbreviation LGBTQ+ community means Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual/transgender, Queer / Questioning, + Intersexual, + Pansexual, + Agender, + Ally + Gender Queer, + Bigender, + Gender Variant and Pangender community, organizations, and subcultures, united by a common culture and social movements, generally, celebrating pride, diversity, individuality, and sexuality.

The sexual attraction between people of the same sex has existed throughout the history of humanity, but that a person identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual or queer are relatively modern terms (Foucault, 1978; Katz, 1995). According to Beachy (2014), the term homosexual emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, where sexology was established as a science, describing homosexuality and bisexuality as biologically innate. Despite the recognition by this science of the homosexuality, community´s members were aggressively persecuted due to political and religious circumstances along with the history, their rights were not recognized until the late 1970s. Along with bathhouses and brothels, bars were one of the first business focus on gay clients, being Dash in San Francisco considered the first gay bar which opened in 1908 in the US (Higgs, 1999). Between the 1890s to 1940s gay male used to wear a red tie as a way to signalize, they were gay, creating one of the first signs of the gay community. Due to the World War II, there was a huge concentration of men in the big cities like New York and San Francisco and with them came more businesses, mainly bars, for gay and lesbian clients who continued to use subtle signals and codes to target them.

Nevertheless gay market started to be considered as a possible segment in the late 1940s and 1950s with the emergence of gay press allowing companies to use this type of publication as a way to target the gay market through advertising. In 1954 was published what is considered the first advertisement on a gay publication called ONE based in Los Angeles, and it was for men pyjamas and underwear (Streimatter, 1995). In the early 1960s emerged "*gay communities*" around neighbourhoods where most of the gay people lived, as they started to see themselves as a "minority" who needed to take care of each other.

From 1969, after Stonwell´s riots, it started the mainstream phase where the gay market increase its visibility at the same time the gay movement liberation was exploding, for the first time the national media recognized the market as a possible target (Branchick, 2002). By the mid - 1970s mainstream publications began to acknowledge the niche market existed and some main brands like Absolut vodka published an advertisement on the Advocate (gay magazine) becoming "*the first launch of a mainstream national brand to the gay market segment*".

However, it was not until the late ´70s and early '80s when marketers started to consider LGBTQ+ people as a market niche, focusing initially on the gay market (Ragusa, 2005). This

change has confronted three different phases in the way of treatment of the LGBTQ+ population: in the first phase occurred in the 1980s there was a refusal by marketers due to the AIDS situation firms were afraid of boycotts by the consumers, all the developments gained were overshadowed by the Aids crisis. Nevertheless, this situation made ironically the community more visible, what some marketers considered as an opportunity of offered products and services focused on gay men who were affected by the disease, displaying ads mainly on gay magazines (Streimatter, 1995). On the second phase, marketers moved to a curiosity phase in the 1990s, appearing a huge amount of advertising which targeted the gay market, such as the IKEA ad of 1994 consider as "*the first mainstream television commercial starring uncloseted gay consumers*" (Rich 1994) or the advertising or the Powerbook of Apple in the national gay magazines. The last phase consisted in a corporate pursuit in the 2000s, according to Oakenfull (2013) in 2004, 36% of the most remarkable brands advertised directly for LGBTQ consumers and spent around 212 million $ annually in LGTBQ media. These different phases were connected to the demanding of rights recognition and defending of their cause by the members of the community who had been strongly stigmatized especially in the late 80s and early 90s when AIDS reached its highest point.

According to Peñaloza (1996), in the mid-1990s the LGBTQI + community began to consider itself a target audience, naming it as a "dream market". Defining and selecting a target audience facilitates communication between brands and consumers, as companies can better understand consumer messages. When companies want to be perceived by their stakeholders, the company needs to adapt to the wants and needs of its target audience (Kotler, 2012). McCarthy, Greelance & Oakenfull (2008) recognized three strategies marketers used to reach LGBTQ+ consumers in these phases; the first strategy consisted in creating gay/lesbian advertisements for the LGBTQ specific media; the second entailed publish them in mainstream media and last one consisted in leveraging the community subcultural symbolism on mainstream media. According to several authors, extending LGBTQ+ campaigns to mainstream media offers more positive attitudes about the brand and a high increase of the purchase intent over a brand.

The Mondelez company understood the multicultural diversity in which the millennial and Z generations were evolving and how other brands failed to reach LGBTQI + people, so they focused on hearing what their consumer was asking for. They created a campaign for their Oreo product in which a photo of the world's most famous cookie consisted of different

colour creams that formed the LGBTQI + flag, proving that Oreo was an inclusive brand. "*We had our brand positioning, but we wanted to understand them more. We tapped data from agencies, and we tapped it from folks internally who are members of the LGBT community*" (Whiteside, 2018).

2.2 Gay - Friendly Marketing

During the last three decades, the attractiveness of the LGBTQI community has been recognized as a target market, causing a large increase in promotional activities focused on non-heterosexual consumers. Despite the fact LGBTQI community have been considered as a "dream market" and a target segment by advertisers, it was not until the decade of 2000s when the "gay-friendly" concept appeared. Oakenfull (2013) described gay friendly as "*places, policies, people or institutions that are open and welcoming to gay people to create an environment that is supportive of gay people and their relationships, respectful of all people, treat all people equally, and are non-judgmental*". From a marketing perspective, this concept suggests ads, promotions and campaigns are "*proactive in respecting and addressing the needs of LGBT consumers*" (Tuten, 2005).

Consider a brand is gay-friendly it would imply the brand acts proactively to cover all the needs of the LGBTQI consumers, some authors like Kates (2000) determined that the brands which are affiliated to some type of "friendliness" (like environmental-friendly) take a social utility and in this case also a political utility because as the brand supports publicly the community it is also affecting the consumers in the community context and public policies issues. There have been some cases throughout the history where existed the perception of a brand as "gay-friendly" because of the acts carried out by said brand, such as the example of Levi's, which terminated a contract with Boy Scouts of America when the company decided to fire a Scout leader who had openly declared himself gay. Following this incident, Levis came to be seen as a company that supported the community and achieved "gay-friendly" status due to the publicity that originated and word of mouth among members of the community (Kates, 2000). On the other hand, according to Kates (2004), some brands publicly declare themselves gay-friendly through ads that include gay-themed and advertised on mainstream platforms, but other brands are considered "gay friendly" for their financial contribution to the community, such as sponsorship. Sponsorship is financial support and at

the same time, a means of communication and the presence of a brand in events such as the Pride Month remains engraved in the collective memory and demonstrates a deeper commitment to the cause.

Tuten (2005) was one of the first authors who studied the attitude and reaction of consumers to gay-friendly and non-gay-friendly cues, determining which would be the effects on brand satisfaction, brand commitment, and attitude toward the brand with the participation of homosexual and heterosexual people. The results of the study demonstrated gay consumers reacted in a positive way rewarding to those companies who incorporate policies and marketing activities targeting LGTBQI consumers and there was no negative reaction by the heterosexual consumers, even some of them reacted positively. In the same study, eight possible criteria that a brand had to include to be considered gay friendly: offer of domestic partner benefits; advertise in gay media, use of LGBTQ themes in advertising, use of community imaginary or icons in ads, identify as gay-friendly in marketing communications, supporting gay causes and identified by both friends and independent sources as gay-friendly.

On the other hand, Gudelanas (2011) determined, through a study carried out with focus groups of gay and lesbian consumers, that the participants identified companies as gay friendly when they promoted ads in gay media, included gay imagery in mainstream media, the product was presented in considered television shows gay, promotion and sponsorship of events for LGTBQ people and charities and incorporate company policies that will support members of the community in the organization of the brand. The conclusion is drawn from this study is that a brand should include not only promotions focused on LGBTQ consumers, but also company policies for the inclusion and representation of community members, thereby achieving greater effectiveness when considering the LGBTQ community as a target segment.

Despite the visible support from the brands to the group and the fact that more and more companies are openly declaring themselves as "gay-friendliness" organizations, it should not be forgotten that some do so for the simple fact of taking economic and public advantage of the situation. This fact is known as pinkwashing, it is defined as a variety of political and marketing strategies that aim to promote products or entities using the gay-friendly concept so that consumers perceive them as progressive, tolerant and modern. The practice of pinkwashing is most visible during Pride Month, many brands take advantage of the

celebration by putting a rainbow on their products benefiting financially without having put money for the event. An example was the case of Primark (Penneys) that in 2018 launched a line of products during Pride Month in which the benefits would be destined for Stonewall. The problem arose when it was discovered that the product line was made in Turkey, a country in which the LGBTQI community continues to suffer discrimination, for which the company had to apologize and withdraw the products. It is not enough for a company to decide to put a rainbow on its products or paint any symbol related to the group, to be considered "gay-friendly" or LGBTQI friendly, a commitment from the company to the community is necessary, that the community is listened to and feels identified with what the company is promoting.

2.3 Why to target the LGBTQI+ Consumer?

In the last two decades, the support for the LGBTQ community has increased remarkably, implementing laws, strengthening rights, creating opportunities for all members of the community and increasing the interest of marketers over queer consumers as a target market (Ghaziani, Taylor and Stone, 2016). The target market was defined by Kotler (2000) as *"a group of customers to whom a company wants to sell its products and services, and to whom it directs its marketing efforts. Sharing similar characteristics including geography, buying power, demographics, and incomes"*.

To make a brand effective when considering community members as a target, it is important to understand how they behave as consumers, what they purchase and the details that must be taken into account to ensure that they not only test but also become loyal to the brand.

2.3.1 The Spending Power of the Community

The recognition of rights of the members of the LGBTQI + collective and with it the increase in visibility of queer members has led to an appreciation of a possible approach by brands to this type of consumer, with the aim of marketing with them, for its increasing purchasing power. Some studies have determined that the members of the group have been targeted by some brands, due to their high purchasing power and high income. Witeck & Combs (2006) stated that the queer consumer represented an annual income of more than $ 641 billion.

However, in a more recent study by Forbes magazine (2019) the purchasing power of the community is estimated to be $ 1 trillion, is the minority community with the most purchasing power. Some brands have gone further, and not only focused on marketing with the collective, such as establishing unique services for those who represent economic value in the industry, for example, the TD Bank in New York, appointed a "Vice President of Development for Business, LGBTQ2 "(Eilstein, 2018).

The LGBTQI+ consumer can be considered as an indicator of the growth of the economy. According to a study carried out by Florida (2003), it was found that diversity influences the functions of cities and regions. This study emphasized creative capital and specifically determined that gay consumers were better able to predict the concentration of the high-tech industry and its growth. From this study, it can be understood that the LGBTQI+ population acts as an indicator of the economic growth of a region and that therefore they contribute to boost growth through their consumption activity, which encourages brands to attract and market with the communities.

One of the factors that determine the economic growth of the community is the concentration of homes and services in neighbourhoods called "gay neighbourhoods," such as the Castro in San Francisco or the Green Village in New York. According to Sibalis (2004), the appearance of these neighbourhoods not only represented an economic incentive for the city but also sought to create a nucleus where the community could live and control to feel more secure, being pioneers in the gentrification of cities. However, the link that one links to the community and the LGBTQI + community translates into the perception that the "gay neighbourhood" is rich, referring to the money spent by them as the "pink pound or pink dollar". This assumption is due to two factors, on one hand, the attention aroused by famous people who openly declare themselves as non-heterosexual or cisgender (Badgett, 2003). Furthermore, the "heteronormativity" that prevailed, mainly among gay men, gave rise to the belief that gay people were white, middle-class and monogamous (Nash, 2014).

Also widely regarded as a factor in the economic growth of the community is the widespread belief that gay couples do not have children. Having children at home involves a higher cost in the life of an adult, and it is understood that homosexual homes are child-free, allowing these couples to have a greater professional dedication that brings them more economic benefits. Black (2002) stated that since gay couples living together had no expenses related to

children, they were more likely to live in neighbourhoods with high adult services, such as art galleries and concert halls.

2.3.2 Contradictions of Stereotypes

The LGBTQI + community is a desirable market due to the perception that they have of their disposable income, but this perception results in many times that queer consumers are stereotyped as single, childless and white. Witeck (2014) carried out a comparative study of LGBTQI + and heterosexual people and found the following results:

- The LGBTQI community is made up of people of all races, all ethnicities and social backgrounds.
- The average of queer consumers, and particularly gay men, are not richer than other consumers.
- There is a gayby boom among households.

These results suggest that the preconceived idea of a unique gay man is false and that there are families made up of members of the LGBTQI + community and that these, in turn, may have less disposable income than stereotypes suggest.

2.3.3 Positive impacts on LGBTQ consumer attitudes

It is necessary to keep in mind that not all members of the LGBTQI + community are susceptible to reading queer publications when analyzing the impact of diversity on marketing and conventional advertising. Posting an ad in a magazine geared toward the gay audience will only reach 3% of the gay population, hindering the reach necessary to effectively target this market (Oakenfull, 2008). Due to these circumstances, there is a need for brands to reach consumers more broadly, including this medium in their conventional marketing strategy.

This can be a challenge for marketers, as the explicit inclusion of members of the LGBTQI+ community can have a positive effect on queer consumer attitudes towards brands and, on the contrary, a negative effect on heterosexual consumers (Oakenfull, 2008).

Including LGBTQI + people in communications would convey to potential consumers that said brand or organization values diversity (Cunningham & Melton, 2014, p. 44). On the other hand, explicitly targeting a minority group can lead to negative perceptions of exploitation, however, according to Smith (2008), there are indications that LGBTQI + consumers can perceive targeting as indicative and as a way of promoting social acceptance. This explicit marketing is a great step from the "vague homosexual" of ambiguous sexuality in so-called conventional marketing communications where the interpretation will depend on the recipient of the message (Borgerson, et al., 2006). Another point to keep in mind when brands focus on queer consumers is whether their inclusive messages act as a differentiator from their competitors. According to Oakenfull (2008), brand marketing for "homosexuals through the mainstream media may be perceived as a sign of acceptance by this group that competitors who choose not to use the mainstream media to target this do not offer. group". This means that inclusive messaging can be a differentiation between a brand and the offer that competitors offer when queer consumers are the target, or at least part of it, of a campaign, product or service. Cunningham & Melton (2014) concluded that those potential consumers who receive inclusion signals will perceive the brand as more diverse (gender identity diversity, sexual orientation, gender diversity and racial diversity) than the brands from which they do not receive the signals.

2.3.4 Brand Loyalty

One of the main goals of a brand when this one decides to establish a specific target market and create campaigns and ads around it, it is to achieve that consumers who belong to the target to become loyal to the brand. The brand loyalty is defined as the commitment of a consumer to buy a product again or use a product continuously, demonstrating it either through the repeated purchase of a product or service of a certain brand or through positive behaviours such as the word of mouth (Dick & Basu, 1994). For business and companies keep the focus on brand loyalty will determinate when budgeting, the bottom line of a brand, higher sales volumes and brand positioning into the market, because of these aspects and concerning the research proposed the unique characteristic or feature of a brand than any other brand has, may derive in a greater trust over a brand and determinate a consumer is willing to keep purchasing it (Jacoby and Chestnut 1978).

Grace (2016) in conjunction with Community Marketing Inc discovered how LGBTQ people behave concerning inclusive brands. They discovered that the 71% of LGBTQ people would remain loyal to a brand they consider supportive with the community, the 73% are willing to pay a premium price if the brand supports the LGBTQ community, and the 78% of LGBTQ people and their families and friend are willing to switch to brands consider "gay friendly". These claims would mean that queer consumers are loyal consumers, who continue to buy the products or services of those brands that support them openly, and are willing to pay a greater amount of money for it.

Chapter 3 - Research Questions

In the search of articles and journals about the LGBTQI+ and the collective relationship with the marketing and advertisements, most of the literature review found were from the 1990's, or focus in the perception of the heterosexual consumer or analysing campaigns where the main characters were a gay couple, not including the rest of community´s members. Society has hugely changed in the last 30 years, especially in the acceptance of sexual orientation and gender identity diversity, people feel more secure to express how they feel and feel less fear to show what they are.

This research will be carried out taking as a point of reference the perspective of LGBTQI + consumers and how they behave towards those ads called inclusive. The objectives created in line with gaps and areas of interest within the literature are:

- To assess the importance of engagement between LGBTQI+ consumer and inclusive campaigns.

- To assess the impact of LGBTQI+ consumers towards inclusive advertisement and clarify if they feel identified within.

- To assess the impact of LGBTQI+ loyalty over inclusive campaigns.

- To assess the possible mistakes that advertisers continue to make when establishing the LGBTQI+ group as a target market

Chapter 4 - Methodology

This chapter extensively describes the methods that have been used to obtain the results of this research. The research objectives will be included in a generalized way, in this case, the theoretical philosophy, explaining the chosen methods, as well as a general description of the sampling that has been chosen, the possible limitations, the ethical considerations to take into account and the method of analysis that has been used within the investigation.

4.1 Research Philosophy

Some authors like Quinlan (2011) determined that research must be backed by a philosophy that will shape the collective vision of such research. This means that the development of research must be carried out adequately and appropriately with the stated purpose. One of the most common ways of looking at how research philosophy works is the onion research created by Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2007). The research philosophy is made up of four types: positivism, realism, interpretivism and pragmatism (Saunders & Tosey, 2012). Moreover, there are two aspects to consider in research philosophy, ontology and epistemology. Ontology is defined as that knowledge is created to understand society and its context, such understandings can be objective or subjective. While ontology focuses on social understanding, epistemology focuses on knowledge of reality, detailing a perspective more focused on feelings than on concrete facts.

The philosophy of positivism occurs when an investigator is more concerned with observing and predicting the results of observation, involving extensive samples of quantitative data and hypotheses. Realism bears some similarity to positivism and is focused on scientific research. Realism determines that reality will always exist, regardless of the researcher's feelings and previous experiences. There are two types of realism: direct realism and critical realism, which contain both qualitative and quantitative data.

On the other hand, interpretivism is dedicated to the study of social phenomena, that is the study focuses on people and not on objects to understand what their social world is and what meaning they give it. Since interpretive researchers bind research to value, the data analysis

most likely includes qualitative data from small samples investigated in depth. The interpretation process that has been chosen during this research has been interpretive philosophy since the analysis process chosen to understand the behaviour of the participants has been qualitative, semi-structured interviews with consumers who belong to the LGBTQIA+ community. This method was also carried out by Tsinomis and Dimitridis (2013) who carried out interviews contrary to many of their colleagues who chose quantitative methods.

Edmondson and McManus (2007) stated that the approach to determine whether it is qualitative or quantitative will depend directly on the research, the questions that are developed during its course and the objectives that in turn arise, adding that the research will also depend on the study structure and design. The perspective that has been taken in this investigation has been an interpretive investigation since the participants in their natural phenomena have been interviewed, conducting interviews with people who are part of the LGBTQI community.

4. 2 Research Methods

Quilan (2011) stated that all research methodologies arise from fundamental philosophies and, on the other hand, the methods of data collection managers arise from research methodologies. There are two methods of data collection, qualitative and quantitative. The so-called quantitative data are qualified as numbers and can be coded, however, the qualitative data is those that represent feelings, thoughts, understanding and ideas, but that do not constitute numerical signs. Qualitative researchers tend to adopt an inductive approach, they develop a theory based on the collected data and not on predetermined hypotheses. Although quantitative research is based on numbers, quantitative interviews can also be conducted. The main difference between qualitative and quantitative interviews is that qualitative interviews are semi-structured, while quantitative interviews are fully structured. In this study the research method chosen it the qualitative method.

The approach that qualitative researchers use is inductive, this means that the researcher is going to develop a theory based on the data collected during the research. At first, it could be considered that the research could be deductively reviewed, however, due to the type of

questions, the inductive approach was considered more appropriate. During the development of the interviews, the participants will be asked for their points of view concerning the research objective and their responses may be complex and express feelings, which cannot be adequately represented through the quantitative method, therefore the qualitative method is more appropriate for this investigation.

4. 3 Qualitative Research

The study will be accomplished using the qualitative research methodology; this type of research is used to discover and understand from an insider point of view the experiences, thoughts, opinions and trends and go deeper into the issue (Mason, 2002). This research intends to explain which perceptions of the community are and comprehend them completely, express through words and from the consumer's point of view, matching with the affirmation made by Willig (2013), researchers who choose to carry out qualitative research are more concerned with what research means and focused on the people they consider make sense of the world.

To obtain data, an exploratory investigation will be carried out, to obtain a more extensive vision of the main points of the investigation. Exploratory research focuses on understanding the responses of research participants, especially those related to feelings and thoughts that are based on the questions, helping the development of new ideas and research (Oppenheim, 1992). On the other hand, observational research will be used, this type of research aims to provide a broader approach, analyzing the behaviour and responses given by research participants. Denzin & Lincoln (2005) considered that observational research had become a method focused on the differences that existed in each person individually and in turn in each of their constantly changing relationships. Observational research is essential to understand the daily life of an individual.

Bryman & Bell (2011) described the difference between qualitative and quantitative interviews, on one hand, quantitative interviews are structured, while qualitative interviews can be semi-structured or unstructured. The idea of conducting unstructured interviews was discarded because they are carried out using only the interviewer's instructions without any specific question, making the interview more of a conversation. In this case, it was decided

that the interviews should be semi-structured, as these allow participants to respond in an extensive and unrestricted way, following a list of general questions and including new questions that arise throughout the interviews as a consequence of the answers offered by the interviewees.

4. 4 Study Sample

For the proper development of an investigation, sampling must be carried out. Sampling is a process that is used to analyze observations about a part of the population. There are two types of sampling, probability sampling and non-probability sampling (Quinlan, 2011). Probabilistic sampling is used when the chosen population sample represents the population. The researcher who uses this sampling method wants to demonstrate that the results obtained in his studies are generally applicable to all members of the study, this means that each member of the population has the same possibilities of being selected and included in the sample.

Even though non-probable samplings are considered representations of the population, Quinlan (2011) stated that they could not be considered as representatives of the population from the statistical point of view, since this sampling depends on the capacity of a small number of cases to illustrate the objectives of the research.

For the research that is being carried out, it was decided to use non-probability sampling. Among the different types of non-probability sampling, it was considered that critical and convenience sampling was the most appropriate for this research since each of the participants would make valid contributions from their own experience and also due to the impossibility of conducting interviews with all the participants. members of the LGBTQIA population in this case.

To understand how the members of the LGBTQIA community feel when they are considered as a target segment of an advertising campaign and if they feel identified with what they see on them, a semi-structured interview will be conducted since the topic to be discussed has a subjective nature and depends from the opinion of each individual. The interviews will be conducted with the participation of 10 people, 6 gays and 4 lesbians, from different

ethnicities and countries, 3 Irish, 3 Spanish, 1 Mexican, 2 Polish and 1 Brazilian, between 21 and 35 years old, who live in Dublin and are professional workers.

Professional workers were chosen based on their economic independence when buying products or services and a greater probability of searching for a certain brand. The choice of age among the participants, 21 - 35 years, was made based on the greater probability of their personal development and recognition as a person who is part of the LGBTQIA group; according to a study conducted by the Pew Research Center (2013) people who identify as LGBTQI will be more likely to come out of the closet when they are over 20 years old. Different nationalities were chosen because the LGBTQI community is made up of people from different countries and ethnicities, and the nationalities chosen in this case are those that make up Irish society today (Central Statistics Office of Ireland, 2016). Each person with a diverse nationality has a culture, beliefs and values different from the rest that can interfere with their perception of an advertisement, campaign or promotion.

The LGBTQI + community is vast, comprising gay, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual/transgender, Queer / Questioning, + Intersexual, + Pansexual, + Agender, + Ally + Genderqueer, + Bigender, + Gender Variant and Pangender, but due to the number of people chosen for the sample in the interview was chosen to interview gay men and lesbians. This decision was also based on the need for an opinion on the part of both sexes, since the perception of one and the other regarding advertising campaigns is diverse due to a simple gender issue. Oakenfull (2007) found out gay male had a negative attitude towards advertising than lesbians and lesbians had fewer interests in advertisements where gay couple appeared.

4. 5 Interview Structure

According to Silverman (2014), the interviewing method was considered as a useful qualitative research method because it allows researchers to have access to the attitudes and values of the participants that are not usually observable on a questionnaire. In this research, a semi-structured interview has been chosen, because the data can be analyzed in different ways since the semi-structured interviews are intended to collect data that are simultaneously

compatible with various methods of data analysis and can be carried out with a reduced number of participants.

Semi-structured interviews are made up of open-ended questions and semi-structures that help to explore the topic broadly and with the function of obtaining as much information as possible. Oppenheim (1992) described the advantages of using open questions as the answers were free and spontaneous, allowing testing hypotheses through new ideas.

The interview will be conducted with women and men, aged between 21 and 35, of different nationalities, Irish, Spanish, Mexican, Brazilian and Polish. The estimated duration of the interviews will be approximately 30 minutes, which may be extended depending on the vision of each participant and their responses. The interviews will be carried out in different locations where the participants feel more comfortable to carry it out since some questions refer to their personal life, the comfort will allow them to answer the questions freely. The questions that have been included in the questionnaire answer the objective of the research, contain 11 questions, semi-structures and open. The reaction of the participants will be observed throughout each of the interviews, and the researcher must write down all the relevant details that arise throughout the procedure. Given that sometimes the responses of some of the interviewees may be inconsistent with their reactions, observational research will provide relevant perspectives. Using open-ended questions can also lead to new questions from the interviewer, which will help guide the interviewee and give a deeper perspective on their opinion.

4.6 Limitations

Among the limitations found, one of them has been the time limit, since it is a study carried out part-time and to which it has not been possible to dedicate full time, in addition to the social situation that COVID-19 has generated, with the inability to access certain documents.

Another limitation has been the nature of the subject under investigation, particularly the breadth of the LGBTQI + community. The community is made up of a wide variety of people, who due to the time constraint and also to the small extension of the research, it was impossible to study in-depth and interview all the members of the group, for this it would

have been necessary to use qualitative and quantitative that would allow the researcher to reach a broader demographic objective. The interviews were focused on gay and lesbian men, so it would be interesting if in the future they were carried out from the perspective of transsexual, bisexual or non-binary people. Another limitation was the lack of studies referring to this group in particular concerning marketing and its behaviour, which, as mentioned previously, was reduced to a few studies carried out.

Due to the health situation that occurred in recent months, another limitation was the organization of the interviews at times that were convenient for the interviewer and participant since on some occasions they could not be face-to-face but had to be carried out via Skype, which on some occasions could lead to loss of connection by either party.

Chapter 5 - Findings

5.1 Interviews Development

The research was carried out with the participation of 10 people, 5 gay men and 5 lesbians, each interview lasting approximately 30 minutes each.

The interviews were carried out in different places such as the apartment of some of the respondents, the park and via Skype and at different times. The criterion for choosing the location and hours was made based on the comfort of the participants and also due to the health crisis in recent months.

It was important that the participants felt comfortable, calm and convenient for the participants so that they would reflect a positive attitude during the duration of the interviews. The interviewees were open to answer the questions although at first, some thought that they would not know what to answer, they ended up showing more knowledge than they expected. The interviews began with a cordial conversation and the topic of the interview and how it would unfold continued. It was explained to them that they would not be identified in the investigation and the questions were continued at the beginning. After several minutes, the participants felt more relaxed and comfortable with the topic, in some cases, there were contradictory answers but through other questions, they could be explained more clearly.

The people who participated in the interviews come from Ireland (3), Spain (3), Mexico (1), Brazil (1) and Poland (2) and have different ethnicities (White, Black and Hispanic). Even though each of these nationalities has its own culture, different points of view and values, most of the participants agree about the questions regarding the LGBTQI representation, which means that as previously mentioned, the community has its own culture, which has nothing to do with the culture of each nationality (du Pleissis & Chapman, 1997).

There are some points in the research that the literature did not address, such as the point of view of gay and lesbian about the representation of other LGBTQI members on ads or campaigns, their opinion about how they feel respect their representation in the campaigns or if they think the brands are truly supporting the community or it is seasonal support.

5.2 Analysis based on the interviews

When the data interpretation is carried out, the descriptions and explanations can be produced through qualitative research, also in these cases, the accounts may turn out to be marginalized or, on the contrary, they can be discounted (Willig, 2013). For the analysis of data from this search, all the types of verbal and corporal expression of the participants during the interviews were taken into account, applying an interpretative analysis of the intersections made between the interviewer and the interviewees.

All the questions and above all the answers as well as the observations made throughout the interview have been written down and recorded for greater precision, reproduced in an organized way on the computer. Singleton & Straits (2005) determined that editing acted like a quality control process, to ensure that all the information was transferred to the computer and to be able to analyze it.

Analyzing the literature review, it can be affirmed that the members of the LGBTQI + community are grateful to those brands that show their support and that gratitude is transformed into loyalty. Throughout each of the interviews, this statement exposed in the literature review could be appreciated, since the participants acknowledged buying products

or services from brands that openly supported the group, and even stopped buying products from brands that had spoken in against LGBTQI + people.

5. 3 Brand Loyalty

Comparing the responses of the research participants and the analysis of the literature review, it can be stated that LGBTQI + people are a loyal consumer. Participants admitted that they would at least try any product that supported the community and that they would mostly repeat the purchase decision. However, some participants, mainly those who belong to the "Generation Z" admitted that they would not continue to buy it if they do not like the product/service. On the other hand, some of the participating men also admitted that they would not try or buy a product or service that did not interest them even though they supported the community or saw an inclusive campaign for that brand. However, these same interviewees did admit that they would buy products and pay premium prices of the brands if they contained merchandising that includes symbols of the LGBTQI + community, for example, the bottles launched by the Smirnoff brand during Pride month that contained symbols of the community, was one of the most commented examples. In any case, the interviewees unanimously admitted that they would not buy a product or try a service of a brand that had manifested itself against their rights or that there were indications of pinkwashing or circumstances where they felt used by the companies.

" I don't usually try a product just because you see a gay couple in their advertising if Pepsi has an advertisement where you see a gay couple holding hands, I'm not going to buy it because I like Coca-Cola more, but if Coca-Cola takes out a special bottle during Pride I'm going to buy that bottle" (Interviewee 8, Spanish, gay, 35 years old, Quality Analyst).

"If there were signs that a brand could be doing pinkwashing I would stop buying it immediately and recommend it to all my circle of friends" (Interviewee 2, gay, Spanish, 33 years old, Store Manager).

5.4 Seasonal Support

During the interviews, participants were asked how often they used to see ads or ad campaigns targeting LGBTQI + people. Most of the participants only remembered announcements during Pride month, however, they did not mention any announcements outside of that date. Some of the interviewers even dared to mention that the supposed "support" that the brands showed during this month, could be just one more method of selling products taking advantage of the time in which the community celebrates the achievements.

"During Pride month the stores are dressed as if it were Christmas, they are turning it into a commercial party and not the celebration of our rights " (Interviewee 7, gay, Irish, 33 years old, Marketing & Sales)

" I only remember seeing campaigns that supported our cause during Pride month, the rest of the year companies carry out advertising focused on us" (Interviewee 1, Mexican, gay, 32 years old, Commercial Manager).

5. 5 Community Misrepresentation

One of the most highlighted points by each of the participants in the interviews was the lack of visibility of some of the members of the LGBTQI + community, particularly transsexual, intersex, bisexual and non-binary people. All the interviewees agreed that most of the advertising campaigns where members of the group have been included or are oriented to them only show homosexual, gay and lesbian people, mostly gay men, or include symbols representing the group but without showing them from clear shape. If they admit that the latest advertisements have seen a greater diversity of people in the group, such as the inclusion of a transsexual model in the latest campaign of the cosmetic brand Fenty, but that there is still a long way to go for full inclusion, where all people can feel included and represented.

From a gender perspective, women were the participants who provided the most details about the low visibility of lesbian and non-binary women in the advertising sector, since they stated that on those occasions when it is intuited that advertising includes lesbian, they are usually in a stereotyped concept of a woman who seems more masculine and yet the heterosexual woman is always marked by hyper-femininity.

"The clothing brands are very busy creating a stereotype of a super feminine woman that does not correspond to my style." (Interviewee 3, Spanish, lesbian, 25 years old, Staff Manager).

"In the world of cosmetics more gay men or transsexual woman are chosen to announce a new makeup than a lesbian, it seems that lesbians do not put makeup on." (Interviewee 4, Polish, lesbian, 26 years old, Call Centre Assistant).

"When I buy feminine products I do not feel that they are made for me but straight women." (Interviewee 10, Irish, lesbian, 31 years old, Human Resources).

"The community-oriented ads are mostly dominated by gay men, I do not remember seeing an advertisement where there was a lesbian couple or a transsexual, it seems that the LGBTQI group is the cisgender gay man" (Interviewee 1, gay, Mexican, 33 years old, Commercial Manager).

" I admit that in the last two years I have seen a campaign where there were transsexuals and non-binary people, although it is not common" (Interviewee 6, lesbian, Irish, 22 years old, Student).

5.6 Ethnic Misrepresentation

Even though advertising campaigns directed at non-heterosexual and non-cisgender consumers are considered as representatives of society, the participants affirmed that there was no ethnic diversity in campaigns directed at this target. The participants estimated that the displayed ads only included mostly white people and that in recent years black people had been included significantly, with the appearance of famous people like Ru Paul in the ads, however, these ads do not respond to a general pattern. Participants pointed out that the Latin and Asian community is not represented in these ads and campaigns, so some of them commented that they could not feel fully represented in an ad although a gay couple was included since they were mostly always white.

"I remember seeing an AIB advertisement in which a gay couple bought their dream home, looked at them but could not identify with them, they were both white, my husband and I are an interracial couple" (Interviewee 9, Brazilian, gay, 34 years old, Data Analyst).

5. 7 Stereotypes

Reviewing the literature review and comparing it with the questions and answers that emerged throughout the research, it can be admitted that even today there are certain stereotypes when it comes to representing non-heterosexual and non-cisgender people in advertising campaigns. For a long time, LGBTQI people were considered DINKS (childless, upper-middle-class, and white), a consideration that the people interviewed for this research consider to be ongoing.

All of the participants were mostly single or with a partner and only one of them was currently married, but none had children. However, most of the interviewees admitted wanting to have children in the future. In any case, during the interviews, it was commented that families, where the parents were gay, bisexual and even transgender, were more visible every day, so they consider that this "new type of family" would also have to be made visible in advertising campaigns.

On the other hand, gender stereotyping was also mentioned, that is, on many occasions, gay men considered that they were reflected either as hyper feminized or as supermodels, there is no middle ground in the average gay man.

This same perception has lesbian, there is a generalization of masculinizing lesbian concerning when many of them like to dress feminine like any heterosexual woman.

The participants consider that there is a constant stereotyping of the community and that the rest of society is not aware of the true diversity of the community.

"When I see an advertisement where there are lesbians, it seems that we all have to look like Ellen Degeneres, wearing blazers of masculine cut and without makeup, I love to make up and feel feminine" (Interviewee 4, Polish, lesbian, 26 years old, Customer Services)

"I'm gay, I'm 33 years old, I don't like the gym, I'm not mannered and I have a belly, aren't there other men like me?" (Interviewee 2, Spanish, Gay, 33 years old, Floor Manager)

5.8 Young vs Old

Another pattern that has been followed in these types of ads that have been investigated is the non-inclusion of people over 45 in the ads. During the investigation, the lack of visibility of people over 45 years of age was highlighted in the advertisements; none of the participants was able to highlight the visibility of this part of the group, who undoubtedly are part of it. The people who once participated in the Stonewall riots today are over 50 years old and yet they are the least visible people and the one's advertisers and marketers have forgotten about when it was they who laid the foundation for the "dream market". It is not new for advertisers to focus on the youth collective and forget the elderly, even when the products are dedicated to people of a certain age, the actors they use seem younger than the target they are dedicated to.

A possible study could be how ads affect the older LBTQI community and determine the behaviour patterns of this part of the group.

" ads are practically for young people, always about clothing or cosmetics" (Interviewee 5, gay, Polish, 25 years old, Customer Services)

5. 9 Normalization

One of the questions we expected to be able to answer was what the participants are looking for to reflect the ads. Without a doubt, a unanimous response was the normalization of the community.

This answer is given based on some questions developed throughout the investigation. One of the first questions that were asked was about the types of ads they liked, practically most answered the Christmas ones. Following this question, another was added, and it was if they had bought a product because they had seen the ad and they always named the same type of product, food, cleaning products and basic personal care as shampoo or deodorant. From these questions it can be concluded that non-heterosexual consumers have similar purchasing habits as heterosexual consumers, there is no difference between them.

In the second part of the interview, they were asked about the sectors that launched the most inclusive campaigns and those that did not. Among the most inclusive were beauty products,

clothing, alcoholic beverages, and technology. However, among the sectors that they considered were developing less inclusive ads was food and products from a common house. Participants agreed on the need to normalize the creation of inclusive ads, what they want is a normalization of their lives, to be considered as any other consumer and that their sexual or gender orientation does not define the person or consumer that they are.

"in detergent ads, for example, gender roles predominate in which it is the mother, heterosexual, cisgender who does the laundry at home when I also wash my clothes and my mother is not there to do it" (Interviewee 3, Spanish, lesbian, 25 years old, Staff Manager).

"if the ads made gay couples or transgender people more visible, visibility would be normalized and there would not so much need to demand a change, people would not have to hide and could show themselves as they are" (Interviewee, 10, lesbian, 29 years old, Human Resources).

" Consumer goods do not bother to show another reality of society, their perception is that the consumer needs to buy them equally. Food brands are usually traditional, I have never seen a gay couple buying pasta or toilet paper, always luxury items. I think it is necessary to see more inclusive ads for these types of products and less on luxury products because they are aspirational and not real" (Interviewee 7, 33 years old, gay, Irish, Sales & Marketing Consultant).

"One of the things ads need to reflect is normalization and in a meaningful way so that they stay in the heads of people who are not members of the community, and can see that they are part of their life. Help normalize the exposure of homosexual people, make them part of their lives" (Interviewee 9, 34 years old, gay, Brazilian, Data Analyst).

5.10 Conclusion

Once the search is finished, the results obtained from the previous interviews are analyzed. It is necessary to connect these results with the main objectives of the research and how they respond to the initial search. On the one hand, it was intended to identify how inclusive campaigns affected the behaviour of queer consumers. About this aspect, it can be concluded

that LGBTQI + people are a loyal group of consumers for brands that openly show their support and identify themselves as "gay-friendly", but also immediately "punish" those companies which can be used them as consumers to generate more money or carry out practices related to pinkwashing.

On the other hand, the second objective of this research was to find out what were the possible causes why marketers were not able to connect with this audience, and above all the possible mistakes made. The results highlight the lack of representation of all queer people, highlight an excessive use of the image of the cisgender gay man, white and without children, while the appearance of the rest of the members of the community is much smaller, although it has increased in recent years. The same happens with the representation of cultures and races, if it is true that black people have increased their presence in this type of campaign, Hispanic and Asian people are practically non-existent in these ads, as well as people over 55 years of age, or teenagers, are not included in these types of ads.

These statements made by the participants are totally out of the actual society according to statistics. In Ireland for example, the LGBTQI + community is made up of 10.8% of the population (OECD, 2019) describing the different members and not only gay men. Of this part of the population, 3.2% got married only in 2018.

On the other hand, concerning families with children raised by parents of the same sex, for example, it is estimated that there has been a growth of 2% compared to 2009 in the US (US. Census, 2019). In relation to race, a study carried out by the University of UCLA showed that the LGBTQI + community in the US was for 21% of Latinos who knew each other, even more than the African American community that makes up 12% (LGBT Demographic Data Interactive, 2019).

The main limitation with which we are faced with these results is the impossibility of verifying them. The small size of the sample makes it difficult to certify whether the statements made during the search are accurate or only the opinion of a small part of consumers. Not only concerning the possibility of asking every one of the consumers that make up the community, but the result cannot be generalized through a single person surveyed, since as has been said they are a population which at the same time is formed in a very extensive way by different races, ages, genders, backgrounds, cultures and nationalities.

The only certain conclusion that we can draw from this research is that queer people want normalization of their lives and that this normalization is also appreciated through advertising campaigns, which does not make them seem that they live an aspirational life but a common life.

Chapter 6 - Discussion

6.1 Introduction

The next chapter will analyze the results obtained during the investigation, as well as analyze whether the questions and objectives imposed at the beginning of the investigation have been answered. The objective of this research was to understand the behaviour of LGBTQI + people as consumers, whether the ads influence their purchase decision and the mistakes that are made in inclusive campaigns.

This chapter will review the results obtained in the semi-structured interviews that were conducted with the participants and will interpret these results in comparison with the literature that was described in Chapter 2.

6.2 LGBTQI & Brand Loyalty

One of the main objectives of this research was to determine how inclusive advertisements influenced the behaviour of LGBQTI + people, since the studies that had been carried out previously focused only on the reaction of heterosexual consumers to this type of campaign (Oakenfull, 2005).

Through this research, the theory previously published by Grace (2016), people from the LGBTQI collective admitted to maintaining their purchasing habits concerning the brands that openly demonstrated and supported the collective, so they remained loyal to those brands, who would be willing to pay a higher price to these brands and that they would be willing to change the brand of the same product if the other brand declared itself "gay friendly". According to Dick & Basu (1994) brand loyalty is defined as the commitment that

a consumer adopts to buy a product again or use it in continuation and adopt positive behaviours regarding that product. Brand loyalty becomes one of the key aspects to be considered by marketers. One of the purposes of this research was to determine if the consumers that belonged to the LGBTQI + community were loyal consumers towards those brands that openly supported them and created inclusive campaigns or if, on the contrary, after so many years this reason no longer influenced their purchase.

Comparing this statement with the results obtained in the interviews, we can deduce that the behaviour pattern of these consumers has not changed in recent years. LGBTQI people remain loyal to the brands that support them, even admitting that they would try the product at least once if the brand were openly "gay friendly". Also, participants added that they would pay higher prices if brands launched LGBTQI + merchandising products. According to Tuten, (2005) queer consumers tend to reward those brands that openly profess their support for the community and declare themselves "gay-friendly". This claim is also supported by Scheneider & Austen (2018), who describe not only that 73% of queer consumers would reward brands that openly support them, but that they would be willing to pay a higher price for the same product, although different. brand. These same authors determined that 87% would recommend this brand to a family member or friend. However, this can also be negative for the community, in the sense that companies know that they are a group of consumers willing to pay more, so they take advantage of this situation to increase their prices, which leads to a pinkwashing practice. cost of positive consumption of the collective.

Regarding the part where participants were asked about the consumption of products, we find a particular situation, the participants who would form the category called "Generation Z" determined that they would not use a product again if they did not like their first experience, even though this was strong support for the group. The generation Z is the generation of children who were born in the mid - 1990 until 2010, who have grown up with the Internet (William, 2015). This generation may not feel identified with what they see and therefore do not even bother to buy a product that does not represent them, they are a generation that has grown up with a large amount of information and the Internet at their fingertips, for they are probably more aware of the diversity that exists, concerning the older participants. In the future, a study could be carried out that compares the purchasing habits of generation Z with

the habits of the millennial generation and determine the differences when establishing them as a market target.

On the other hand, this part of the investigation concluded with another certain statement by the interviewees, they categorically declared that they would stop using a brand instantly if it declared against the rights of the group or there were clear signs that they were taking advantage of celebrating their achievements to sell more. Here again, we appreciate previous statements about how the community rewards those who strongly support it. This type of action could be considered as a certain type of boycott towards these companies. The purpose of the boycott is to create a difference motivated by attracting society to participate in a change (Friendman, 1995). Other groups that use the figure of the boycott to claim rights or pronounce on situations that have occurred in the world. One of these groups is animal or pet-friendly associations, associations for human rights or in favour of the environment. In the first case, the most famous association PETA produces a monthly list of brands that continue to use animals for laboratory experiments, including brands such as LÓreal or Maybelline. One of the most famous cases was in 2015, PETA called the boycott of the Hermés brand for raising crocodiles and reptiles on farms and then ripping off their skin and creating bags and accessories (Whaba, 2015).

6.3 Pinkwashing

Participants strongly emphasized during the research process the possible appearance of the pinkwashing. The term pinkwashing is used to describe those activities carried out by companies where they show themselves to be supporters of the LGBTQI movement but which are only carried out for financial gain (Schulman, 2011). This term began to be used as a result of the campaign carried out by Israel as a destination for the LGBTQI + community showing itself as a modern democracy, which many authors considered as a simple image washing and use of the movement for criticism against the country about the situation with Palestine (Avraham, 2009).

Chapter 2 mentioned a situation that originated with the Primark company in 2018 when it decided to launch a batch of products to celebrate Pride month. Shortly after the launch, it was discovered that the products were made in Turkey, a country that even today has strong

restrictive measures against the LGBTQI + collective. Consumers called for a boycott of these products and the company had to withdraw them (Dhuna, 2019). There are times when you cannot help wondering if the actions carried out by brands are real and without ulterior motives or on the contrary, they take advantage of "their exit" so that other consumers forget other aspects of the company. Actions such as those carried out by Barclays Bank, which after being declared the bank that received the most complaints in the UK, showed whether full support for the LGBTQI + movement or the advertising of the JCPenneys chain in the US for mothers and fathers of the same sex just after the company I announce large-scale layoffs (Dahl, 2014).

During the investigation, it was concluded that consumers belonging to this community sometimes tend to be suspicious of the true intention of the brands when they use them as a market target. After the analysis of the interviews, it was concluded that, from interviewees point of view, inclusive campaigns are practically seasonal meaning that the launching of advertising campaigns and inclusive ads throughout the year is practically non-existent and that it is concentrated only during Pride month, where Brands use the collective flag or other symbols to launch new products or include celebrities who belong to the community in their ads. However, this does not mean that they do not appreciate the visibility and that Pride month is celebrated and this can help other brands that truly support the community at this time. Taking advantage of a moment of celebration of human rights and struggle for the community, is seen by these people as a negative and "punished" act for brands.

Those brands that manage to connect with the LGBTQI + public without carrying receipts of their participation will continue to be part of a community that has a collective memory of everything that has happened before (Grace, 2016). The association of companies with the message of equality that the queer movement transmits can be translated as a desire to distance themselves from possible controversies and transmit a message of inclusiveness. The problem is when they allow some pinkwashing practice to soften the damage. It is no longer enough for brands to represent a gay or transgender couple, or to adorn their products with representative symbols of the community, such as the rainbow flag, especially when facing consumers who are increasingly more informed and are more reticent.

6.4 Missing the Target Market Characteristics

Among the general objectives of this research was the search for possible errors that marketers were making regarding campaigns and ads that included non-heterosexual and non-cisgender people, that is, the LGBTQI + community and the reason why they could not connect with this possible target market. The target market is defined by Kotler (2000) as a group of consumers with similar characteristics and needs, such as age, location or lifestyle, who are considered as probable consumers of the market offers of a specific company or who may be the most profitable segments for that company.

After a detailed reading of the literature, some conclusions were extrapolated about the visibility of this group of consumers that we have been discussing, within the world of marketing and ads. Witeck & Combs (2006) discovered that the impression that cisgender heterosexual society received from ads targeting the non-heterosexual community was that of young men, male gays, white, childless and with high purchasing power. Witeck (2014) conducted a survey for people from the LGBTQI community and obtains the same result as previously, the perception generated in this type of advertisement is always that of a gay man, mostly childless and from the upper-middle class. There is no need to delve into who the people that make up the LGBTQI community are, but when comparing what was found in the literature review and the results obtained in the interviews with the participants, it is clear that even today there is some lack of knowledge.

During the interviews it was admitted that the inclusion of more members of the group in advertising has increased, nevertheless, they consider that those products where they have had more visibility are considered "aspirational products" and not those that are used every day. It was emphasized that the community was still delimited to an idealized world and not to normalization. Marketers must begin to expand the idea of who the members of the collective are, what these people are like and what their needs are, instead of creating a false reality of who they are and what their aspirations are.

According to Witeck (2014), the queer community is made up of people of all ethnicities, ages, races, genders, social classes and backgrounds, so this target cannot be limited to just one type of person. However, this statement does not seem to correspond to the reality reflected in the advertising campaigns, since these are limited to one or two members of the

community. The participants showed their dissatisfaction, mainly women, at the lack of more members of the group in the advertisements, especially from a gender point of view, in which women, transsexuals and non-binary people have been denied a second place and they are shown practically in advertisements reduced to clothing and makeup. Concerning gender, women have been relegated to the role of the sexy lesbian that men aspire to achieve or hypermasculine woman, for example, the role that women used to play in advertisements dedicated to family products has been relegated to formed families for gay couples, lesbian couples are not even shown in these types of ads. The problem is that when marketers try to represent transsexual or non-binary lesbians, they do so from their terms, reaffirming stereotypes and showing ideal expectations of what their world should be like and not real.

In addition to the point mentioned above, two other points were also emphasized, the lack of different races and the concentration of advertisements on young people.

We are facing a community formed by diversity, which means that there is a difference in populations, whether by race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, gender expression, disability, nationality, language, religion and socioeconomic status (Grace, 2016). Once the results of the research were analyzed, it became clear that this diversity is not being made visible through the "inclusive" campaigns, especially on the subject of races, where some have begun to emerge but to a lesser extent and the age where 95 % of the ads are focused on a target audience of young workers, not including people over 50 and teenagers.

As mentioned in previous chapters, queer consumers are most loyal to brands that show their support openly and without second thoughts, so according to Oakenfull (2008), the explicit inclusion of LGBQI + people in marketing has positive effects among their members that are translated as consumer attitudes towards brands.

Chapter 7 - Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to determine if consumers in the LGBTQI + community were loyal to brands and how these brands need to improve to influence the buying behaviour

of queer people. The study of inclusive ads from a point of view of the target market itself and the mistakes of advertisers when establishing this target market. This study tries to fill those spaces within knowledge.

The first step was the analysis and the available literature on this topic. Although the literature review was divided into different headlines, first the LGBTQI community and its history within marketing, this chapter helps to understand the different processes that the community has gone through to establish itself as a market target.

Secondly, the so-called "gay-friendly" marketing, where how brands carry out marketing according to the needs of queer people are exposed. In the words of Tuten (2005) from a marketing point of view, the consideration of a brand as "gay friendly" derives from the use of ads and campaigns as proactive engines in meeting the needs of queer consumers. Within this chapter mention is also made of the other side of the coin, the pinkwashing, activities carried out by companies where they show themselves to be supporters of the LGBTQI movement but which are only carried out for financial gain (Schulman, 2011).

The third headline corresponds to the reasons why queer people should be established as a target market, including among them the consumption power of the community, with the establishment of these in communities that strengthen and help to grow the economy of the place where have been established (Sibalis, 2004); the contradictory stereotypes that have been established around them reflected in the campaigns; the positive impacts they generate within the community that translate into positive attitudes on the part of the community and a desire to buy (Oakenfull, 2008); and brand loyalty that queer consumers establish around those brands that they openly consider supporters of the cause. However, during the analysis of the literature, it was found that this was small and limited to a series of articles, being proportionally scarce concerning other topics that have been addressed. Despite this circumstance, it could be shown that the course of the so-called "dream market" (Ragusa 2005) has changed significantly in the last 15 years, but there are still certain points in which marketers continue to make mistakes.

Once the literature on which the research was to be carried out was developed, we proceeded to detail how the study methods would be carried out. For this research, it was decided that the most suitable method is the qualitative method since it would respond better to the research objectives. Due to the extension of the community and the lack of access and time to

the entire population, a non-probability sample was chosen as the best option to respond to the research. 5 gay men and 5 lesbians between the ages of 22 and 35 were chosen, so the sample included the Millennial and Z generations. Participants came from different backgrounds, lifestyles and cultures, including Irish, Spanish, Polish, Mexican and Brazilian, all residing in Ireland. The interviews were recorded using an application and in the cases, they were face to face recorded with a video camera. The results found in the course of the investigation were compiled and discussed during the interviews, mentioning in the key points.

The research was limited, on the one hand, by the lack of specific studies on the objectives of the search, mainly because there is a limited number of investigations referring to the perspective of LGBTQI + consumers on the influence that campaigns have on them as consumers. On the other hand, the research was also limited in the size of the sample used because it could only be done part-time and the characteristics required for the research. This sample was reduced to gay and lesbian men, because they make up a higher percentage of people, although in the future a study should be carried out that includes the other people who make up the population and make a comparison of their answers with those given in this study. Although there have been limitations, the research is reinforced by the results obtained, understanding that perceptions change for generations, they are a much more informed group than in previous studies and the mistakes that marketers make with them and the reasons why they cannot connect with this audience.

This research found that community buying habits have not changed dramatically in recent years, highlighting the claim that queer consumers are loyal to brands that openly support them and adopt positive attitudes towards them, such as paying a higher price. high for this brand. If it is true that the younger generation stressed that their buying habits were not guided by this support, probably because they have been raised in a society that has been more open to the issue of community rights than those born in the decade of the This research also portrayed the lack of study by marketers when establishing the community as a target market since the same shortcomings that were mentioned years ago have been maintained over time, the concentration of ads for men, gay, young, white and childless. Participants in the research demand a normalization of the community, that all members are included, in continuous campaigns, not only during the month of the Pride, but periodically, and that in turn these announcements are not only dedicated to products aspirational or luxuries, such as

travel or fashion, but advertisements for common products that we use every day such as butter or detergent, since their way of life does not vary much from that of a common house where heterosexuals live.

The implications that can be drawn from the results obtained can be summarized in the following points. The knowledge of understanding how queer people behave as consumers have been deepened, which is what influences them when obtaining a product and why they continue to acquire it. From this deepening it has been taken, on the one hand, to reaffirm that they are loyal consumers to the brands who support the movement and on the other that they have become more cynical when it comes to establishing whether a brand is clearly "friendly" to the cause or whether for the On the contrary, he tries to cover possible negative actions with his support. Also mentioned as an implication of this research, marketers make mistakes when establishing the group as a target market. It has been shown that marketers do not stop to think about what the true needs of the group are, because who they are and how to connect with them. If they began to listen, it could come to normalize the community in the eyes of consumers, the collective not needing to ask for greater visibility.

A market like this with great growth potential should be taken into account more. Marketers should pay more attention to what the true needs of these consumers are and be able to adapt their products and services to them. Consumer satisfaction is one of the main goals of any company, but getting consumers satisfied only happens when the company has studied its consumer and knows it well. There are still many gaps in knowledge about the LGBTQI + community, including in the academic environment where there is a small sample of studies related to marketing and queer consumers. A future search that could not be carried out in this research due to population size could be a study of inclusive ads from the point of view of transsexual and non-binary consumers. This lack of attention to the LGBTQI + community should change, allowing this sector to continue to grow and more consumers to feel identified, which could translate into more open public behaviour by other consumers.

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Appendix 1 – Interview Sample

1) Where are you from?

2) How old are you?

- 21 - 25

- 26 - 30

- 31 - 35

3) Which sexual orientation/gender do you identify with?

4) Do you usually pay attention to advertisements or advertising campaigns? If you do, Have you ever bought/tried a product/service because you saw the ad?

5) Would you take into consideration purchasing a particular brand because it includes campaigns focused on the LGBTQ community?

6) Do you remember some ad, commercial, promotion or campaign where members of the LGTBQ community were included? If you do, Have you ever bought a product/service because you knew the brand was LGBTQ friendly?

7) You are (gender/sexual orientation mentioned), have you ever seen an ad or campaign where you and your group have been represented? Did you feel identified?

8) Do you think all members of the LGBTQ community are equally represented in ads and marketing campaigns? If you do not, who does not?

9) Would you rather buy a product that you know the brand is LTBQ supported but you don't like, or a product you like but the brand has never pronounced about the community?

10) Which sectors do you think are not representing and including members of the community in their campaigns?

11) How do you think it would help the LGBTQI+ to be a target market?