

Fans as Prosumers: Labour of Love

Maud Derbaix, Michaël Korchia, Matis Padiou

Introduction

Fandom is a well-established phenomenon in our postmodern society. Since the seminal work on fandom, such as Hills' (2002) work on fan cultures and Jenkins' (2006) work on convergence culture, fans have been seen as valuable prosumers who can support and promote their idols or other media products as well as, or better than, conventional communication media. Concretely, fans have a certain value in the creative and entertainment industries ecosystem for various reasons: they are committed participants in these industries, play the role of influencers or opinion leaders and are very active in terms of disseminating information or making personal 'creations' to support the object of their fascination. In other words, fans have become essential partners for the many players operating in these industries. They invest a lot of time (and even money) in the object of their passion and make their creative work available to the fan community without demanding or asking for any compensation. Most often, fan activities are perceived as freely chosen and enjoyable, and therefore rarely associated with work (Stanfill and Condis 2014).

According to Stanfill (2019), fan participation and production do not signal greater fan power, but rather greater fan utility. In this regard, Bourdaa (2016) even talks about the reappropriation of the fans' work by the producers. Ultimately, the creative and entertainment industries seek to cultivate a fan base that is both more useful and more controllable. For Hesmondhalgh (2010) and Bourdaa (2016), fan creativity and

fan 'labour' raise relevant questions about the relationship (or tension) between production and consumption in the digital age however, some questions about how fans perceive their own work for their favourite brands or idols, and for the creative and entertainment industries as a whole, remain under-explored.

The aim of this research is twofold by better exploring and understanding (1) whether there is a relationship between the fans' passion/worship and their engagement in terms of time spent creating content and variety of creations, and (2) to what extent these relationships may be altered depending on the fans' perception of their work (real 'labour' or leisure) in the context of the music industry.

In the following, we will first describe our theoretical framework, the hypotheses that follow from it and our conceptual model. Then, we will test the relationships of our model using structural equations and Smart PLS software. Finally, we conclude this paper with theoretical and managerial implications.



Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

We build our theoretical framework primarily from the literature that focuses on prosumers, their creative creations/works, and the co-creation of value in the context of convergence culture. We then relate these theories to fans, their passion, and their worship. Secondly, we review the work that has put forward the concept of fan labour as opposed to

Maud Derbaix is Associate Professor of Marketing at KEDGE Business School, France, and Head of the Expertise Centre Creative Industries and Culture. Her research interests have focused on consumer behaviour within the context of arts and cultural activities, including live performances, music, and heritage.

Michaël Korchia is Senior Professor of Marketing at KEDGE Business School, France. He has published articles in several international journals. His main interests are consumer behaviour and its relationship with brands (in areas as varied as sales and music). He is also a photographer and musician.

Matis Padiou is a graduate of KEDGE Business School, France. He has been working in social media for some years in several companies (Sony Music, Skyrock, KR Wavemaker). As a fan of Rihanna and a content creator on social networks, his research has focused on fan behaviour within online communities in the popular music field.

the notion of leisure. Using this theoretical framework we are able to derive hypotheses and propose our conceptual model presenting these hypotheses with (1) direct effects between key variables (effect of passion/cult on time spent creating content and on variety of content created), and (2) moderating effects related to the perception of creative work as 'labour' (deserving reward or even remuneration) or leisure (for one's own pleasure, without monetary compensation).

Prosumers, Fans, and Creations

The term 'prosumer' was proposed by Toffler in the early 1980s, who anticipated that consumers would become actors in the design and production processes for their consumption. More specifically, in the marketing literature, prosumption is defined as "a process consisting in value creation activities undertaken by the consumer that result in the production of products they eventually consume and that become their consumption experiences." Prosumers participate in this process by contributing their time, effort, and skills (Xie, Bagozzi, and Troye 2008). In the context of fandom, fans as prosumers perform key roles in production, creation, promotion, and diffusion through interactions among fan groups and communities (Bourdaa 2016; Wang 2020), all these being facilitated and enhanced by the widespread adoption of new technologies and the proliferation of social media (Beer and Burrows 2010; Ritzer and Jurgenson 2010) or, more specifically, by what Jenkins (2006) calls "media convergence." This "media convergence" context involves "a flow of content across multiple media platforms; the cooperation between multiple media industries, and migratory behaviour of media

audiences who will go almost everywhere in search of the kinds of entertainment experiences they want."

Media convergence is occurring not only at the corporate level, from the top down, but also at the grassroots level, from the bottom up, as consumers and especially fans are embracing digital technologies to create and drive content flows, share them and disseminate them to communities (Moisander, Könkkölä, and Laine 2013). Fans are indeed important creators and producers of content: they can be engaged in a variety of practices, ranging from simply giving an opinion or interpretation of their favourite cultural product (e.g. a work of art, a song or a TV series), to feeding information into web applications (e.g. Wikipedia) or blogs, to creating more sophisticated content. According to Bourdaa (2016), fans represent a real example of engagement and creativity, this creativity being the essence of some content creation practices such as writing fanzines and fanfictions, editing fan videos and fanart or setting up Tumblr. In short, fan practices promote and diversify consumption within communities while creating value for both consumers and marketers (Schau, Muñiz, and Arnould 2009).

Based on this literature and more specifically on the link between the fan prosumer's passion and his/her engagement and creativity, we argue that the level of fan passion has an impact on fan practices and more specifically on the time spent creating content and the variety of content created. Albert, Merunka, and Valette-Florence (2013) define passion as "a strong positive feeling that consumers can develop towards brands," with the concept of brand including celebrity brands. Passion is clearly at the heart of fandom and can

ABSTRACT

It has been recognized both in academic circles and in fans' communities that fans can be considered as prosumers. However, little is known about how fans perceive their own contribution or how they reconcile certain tensions between a sense of exploitation by the industry and the affirmation of their passion. The aim of this research is twofold: to better understand (1) whether there is a relationship between the fans' passion/worship and their engagement in terms of time spent creating content and variety of creations, and (2) to what extent these relationships may be modified depending on the fans' perception of their work ('labour' vs. leisure). A conceptual model testing these relationships in the context of the music industry with a PLS-SEM analysis allowed us to explore them and gain a better understanding. The most relevant result that emerges from our study is that fans perceive themselves as prosumers/co-creators of value for their idol and the music industry. Also, fans do not perceive exploitation of their work by the entertainment industry: fans value the dissemination of their creations to other fans and the building of relationships with others in their online and offline communities more than any other reward.

KEYWORDS

Fandom, Passion, Worship, Creations, Time Invested, Fandom as Labour/Leisure

lead to very specific behaviours and activities, like those of prosumption. We point out that the time spent creating content and the variety of content created represent some form of engagement - its more behavioural dimension (Dessart, Veloutsou, and Morgan-Thomas 2016) - and creativity on the part of the fan and are therefore - in this research - considered appropriate indicators of this engagement and creativity. We thus formulate a first hypothesis relating the level of fan passion towards their idol to the time spent on content creation and the variety of content created:

H1: Fans' passion has a positive influence on (1) the time spent creating content for their idol; (2) the variety of content created.

The fan's passion can become excessive and researchers in psychology have been interested in the concept of the 'celebrity worship' by trying to define and operationalise it through a model and a measurement scale. Thus, McCutcheon, Lange, and Houran (2002) defined it as "*a multidimensional concept reflecting an obsessive and unilateral emotional attachment to a celebrity.*" Taking their research further, these authors propose a three-stage model based on a form of psychological absorption and dependence of the fan on the idol. In the first stage, the fan is strongly attached to his/her idol, seeking information about him/her because it allows him/her to be entertained but also to have good moments with other fans by sharing their knowledge about their idol. In a second stage, the fan become more absorbed in the 'relationship' with the idol and want to be more intimately involved in this relationship by feeling, for example, that they are experiencing the same events or feelings as the idol. Finally, in the last stage of the model, the fan become obsessive about the idol and commit irrational acts. This theory by McCutcheon, Lange, and Houran (2002) can be related to the psychological property theory of a target proposed by Pierce, Kostova, and Dirks (2003) according to which the feeling that an object is 'mine' or 'ours' develops as a result of perceived control over the object, intimate knowledge of the object or self-investment in the target object. The target can be a physical object, a place, a person, or a brand. On self-investment, Jussila et al. (2015) - drawing on a consumption-oriented approach - suggest that through the consumer's investment of energy (labour) in the products they create, these products - or the people for whom these products are specifically created such as idols - can become projections or representations of self.

It should be noted that most of the research that has mobilised the concept of celebrity

worship has focused on the associations between this concept and various psychosocial characteristics (for a review of the literature on this subject, see Brooks 2021). Further research is needed about the relationships between celebrity worship and fan behaviours and attitudes. A first step in this direction leads us to the following hypothesis:

H2: Celebrity worship has a positive influence on (1) the time spent creating content for one's idol; (2) the variety of content created.

It should be added here that being a fan (demonstrating some level of passion) and being a celebrity worshipper are not the same thing, as Stever (2011) has shown: a passionate fan may well belong to a fan club or write to their idol, but this does not presume that they will necessarily go through the various stages of absorption and dependency of the 'celebrity worship' model. Many hardcore fans are not necessarily celebrity worshipers. They may love the artist deeply, but do not consider him or her a god and are not prepared to engage in extreme behaviour such as harassment, or pathological behaviour (Derbaix and Korchia 2019).

Fandom as Labour vs. Leisure

Fan-made (and, in particular, digital) creations or fan 'labour' are a growing trend in our society, with millions of consumers able to offer their creations online to millions more who can then enjoy the fruits of their creativity. User-generated content has now moved from being a hobby to rivalling established media and entertainment companies. In this respect, some authors prefer the terminology of 'working consumers' to that of prosumers (Cova and Dalli 2009; Cova, Dalli, and Zwick 2011). One of the major criticisms that has been levelled at the entertainment industry - which is notably based on a large amount of user-generated content and its diffusion through various digital media - is that it involves labour on the part of fans that is unpaid or 'free' (Hesmondhalgh 2010). The work of fans does create value, but it is ultimately extracted and exploited by this industry (Stanfill and Condis 2014). Fans' creations require time and personal investment, sometimes even money, and yet there is often no monetary reward or recognition. In a way, fans' labour helps entertainment companies to achieve three inseparable objectives: (1) to increase the network of fans through local networking, (2) to create or strengthen a community, and (3) to develop and retain the artist's fanbase. All of these objectives have one goal: to maximise the artist's income. Entertainment companies therefore benefit from this voluntary,

free, and enthusiastic workforce (Hein 2011). However, it is utopian to think that fans' work is motivated only by their pleasure. Even if fans are not necessarily looking for monetary compensation, they may be looking for some recognition or symbolic reward for their work and investment from the entertainment and music industries. Fans are sometimes rewarded for their work with free tickets, free albums, etc., the greatest reward for fans being to succeed in building a status within the community (or even the industry) and especially in building a relationship with their idol (Baym and Burnett 2009).

We therefore assume that the fan may perceive or feel a sense of exploitation of his or her 'work' by the industry and therefore make the following hypothesis:

H3: Fans' perception of their creations/productions as "exploited" labour negatively moderates the relationship between passion and (1) the time spent creating content for their idol; (2) the variety of content created.

H4: Fans' perception of their creations/productions as "exploited" labour negatively moderates the relationship between celebrity worship and (1) the time spent creating content for their idol; (2) the variety of content created.

Any investment by the fan, whether in time spent creating content or in the variety of content created, is thus considered labour. However, some fans will perceive it as "exploited" labour on the part of the industry (extrinsic benefit) while others will perceive it as a leisure activity done for intrinsic benefit. This second perspective focuses on the value generated by the fans for the fans, on the pleasure of sharing one's creations and on this creative work experienced as a leisure activity. According to Terranova (2000), 'free' labour is not always considered as exploited labour by the industry. Thus, the fan who invests in the construction and cohesion of a virtual community can do so quite voluntarily for the pleasure of being able to communicate and exchange with this community. This activity is pleasant for the fan, he/she does it 'for free' for his/her own pleasure and he/she will not seek to be financially rewarded. Fans freely engage in content creation practices and enjoy doing them just for connection or social networking or for self-expression or 'impression management' (Bourdaa 2016; Fiske 1992; Schau, Muñiz, and Arnould 2009). This is entirely consistent with the work of Stanfill and Condis (2014) who argue that "*fandom runs on fan labour, and this work produces enjoyment, collectivity, and various material and immaterial goods that give fandom shape as a practice, community, or culture*" or with authors who consider fandom as a gift economy

(Hellekson 2009; Turk 2014) based on giving, receiving, and reciprocating. Within this economy, fan-made creations – fan fictions, fans videos or fan art – are typically the most obvious and appreciated gifts (Turk 2014).

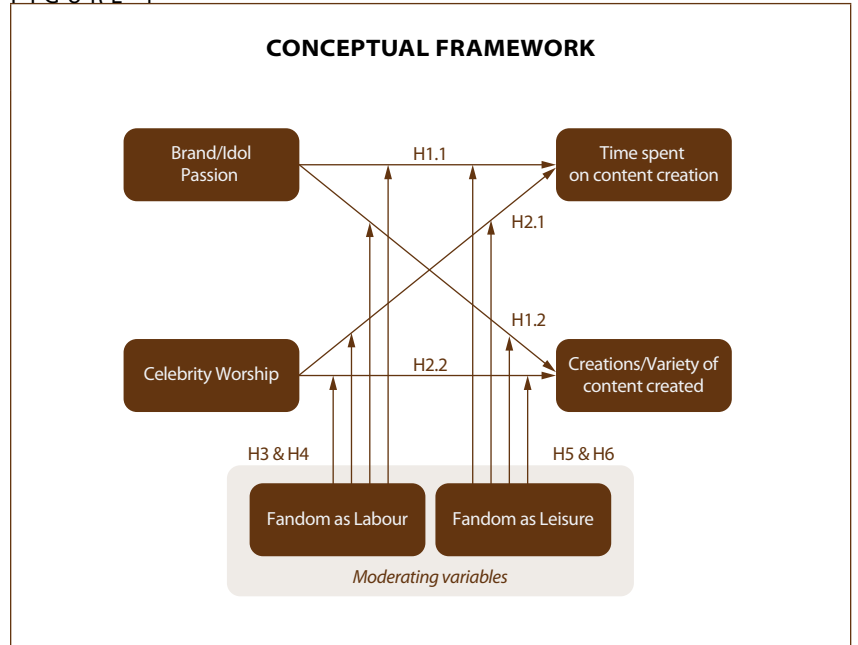
Considering this separation of leisure/pleasure from labour/exploitation (Meehan 2000) leads us to formulate the following hypotheses:

H5: Fans' perception of their creations/productions as leisure positively moderates the relationship between passion and (1) the time spent creating content for their idol; (2) the variety of content created.

H6: Fans' perception of their creations/productions as leisure positively moderates the relationship between celebrity worship and (1) the time spent creating content for their idol; (2) the variety of content created.

Figure 1 summarises our conceptual framework

FIGURE 1



Methodology

To achieve our research objectives and in order to test our conceptual model, the field of study chosen is that of the music industry and more particularly the fan community of the RnB and hip-hop star Rihanna. Rihanna is a Barbadian singer, songwriter, actress, fashion designer, and businesswoman. She is one of the world's best-selling solo artists, having sold hundreds of millions of albums and singles since her career began in 2005. She is also the first artist in the world to reach 100 million digital

sales in the US. She now has several hundred million fans and followers on social networks (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or YouTube). Her fans are called ‘The Rihanna Navy’ as Rihanna sees her fans as soldiers who form a fighting force together.

Data collection procedure

One of the authors has created and managed a community around Rihanna on social networks for almost 10 years, which has given us access to an active fanbase. Today, this community consists of thousands of fans and followers on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Tumblr, and TikTok. From the beginning of the creation with Twitter, the choice was made to post content mainly in English, in order to reach a maximum number of people around the world. This strategy has resulted in a large community of all ages and nationalities. Our questionnaire was submitted mainly to followers of the Twitter account @TeamOfRihanna. It contained the different measures of the different constructs of our conceptual model as well as the measure of some socio-demographic variables. We finally collected 131 complete and valid questionnaires. Our sample of Rihanna fans is 52% female and 48% male. The average age is 22 years.

Measures

Fans were asked to indicate their agreement on a 7-point Likert scale (from “totally disagree” to “totally agree”) with the different constructs identified previously.

For our independent variables, we used scales derived from and validated in the existing literature:

- For the notion of ‘passion,’ we relied on Merz, Zarantonello, and Grappi’ scale (2018) formulated and implemented by the authors in a context of value co-creation (4 items).
- To measure the concept of ‘celebrity worship,’ we relied on the Celebrity Attitude Scale or CAS (Maltby et al. 2001), the most widely used measure of celebrity worship. This scale is composed of three dimensions of increasing commitment. The lowest level of worship, the “entertainment-social” level, suggests fans are attracted to a celebrity due to their entertainment value and being a source of social interaction with others (10 items). The second and intermediate level, the “intense-personal” dimension of the CAS, reflects more intense feelings towards the favoured celebrity and increasing absorption in their personal life (9 items). The most extreme level of the CAS is the “borderline-pathological” level, typified

by over-identification with the celebrity and willingness to do almost anything to satisfy them (3 items). There thus appears to be a hierarchy whereby entertainment-social celebrity worship tends to be most common, followed by intense-personal and then borderline-pathological. The detailed CAS is presented in the appendix.

To measure our dependent variables:

- We used a unidimensional scale to estimate the time spent creating content for the idol. More specifically, we asked respondents how much time they spent weekly creating Rihanna-related content.
- For the creations/variety of content created, we built on previous research in which we explored fan practices and the varieties of fan-generated content (Derbaix and Korchia 2019). From this, a 5-item scale was developed (“I initiate posts related to Rihanna on blogs,” “I initiate posts related to Rihanna on social network sites,” “I post pictures/graphics related to Rihanna,” “I post videos that show Rihanna,” “I write posts related to Rihanna on forums”). We have therefore focused in this study on online creative practices facilitated and enhanced by the emergence of new technologies and social networks in line with the culture of convergence and current fan practices (Jenkins 2006).

Finally, moderating variables - ‘Fandom as Labour’ and ‘Fandom as Leisure’ – were developed mainly based on the work of Stanfill and Condis (2014). This resulted in 3 items to measure “Fandom as Labour” (“I create value for the music industry and the economy in general,” “I expect some reward or monetary compensation,” “I feel like I work for the music industry”), and 3 items to measure “Fandom as Leisure” (“I do it for my sole pleasure,” “I only do it out of passion and love, as a gift,” “It is a pure hobby for me”).



Analyses and Results

In order to validate the selected measurement scales, we used SPSS and Smart PLS3. The structural model was then tested via Smart PLS3. The PLS method seems appropriate given the small size of our sample and the lack of normality of the variables (Hair et al. 2019).

The majority of our respondents exhibit a high level of passion with a mean of 6.54 ($\sigma = 0.59$). Also, the average scores obtained on the different CAS dimensions are as follows: for the first dimension (“entertainment-social”),

5.63 ($\sigma=0.95$); for the second dimension (“intense-personal”), 4.43 ($\sigma=1.63$); for the last dimension (“borderline-pathological”), the mean is 4.04 ($\sigma=1.71$). For the time spent creating content, the mean is 10.5 hours a week ($\sigma=16.8$). For the creations/variety of content created, it is 4.50 ($\sigma=1.74$). Finally, for our moderator variables and the perception of their investment as an exploited labour or a leisure activity, we obtain mean scores of 3.06 ($\sigma=1.32$) and 5.79 ($\sigma=1.11$) respectively, which already shows that the fans do not have this perception of labour/exploitation but rather that of a leisure/hobby.

As a preliminary step, in order to examine internal validity, we performed exploratory factorial analyses with Varimax rotation on the scales with SPSS. We dropped several items due to low loadings or significant cross-loading on two factors or more. This first step led to the decision to keep only the entertainment-social dimension of the CAS. On the one hand, the “intense-personal” dimension presented problems of collinearity with the construct measuring passion and, on the other hand, the “borderline-pathological” dimension did not result in a stable structure (probably due to the formulation of the items). Maintaining this dimension focused on interactions with other fans seems to us to be consistent with our theoretical framework which also presents the creations and productions of the fan within the framework of a community of fans and the objective of interacting/sharing with this community. It should also be noted that the factor analysis conducted on the ‘Fandom as Labour’ construct led to the retention of only one item, that reflecting the creation of value for the music industry and the economy in general.

Evaluation of the measurement model

To present the results of our model, we followed the procedure advocated by Hair et al. (2019). The first step in evaluating PLS-SEM results involves assessing the measurement model. This step consists in examining the indicator loadings (our preliminary analyses on SPSS have already allowed us to ensure good values > 0.7 for all our indicators), assessing internal consistency reliability (using composite reliability, Cronbach’s alpha and rho A) and evaluating convergent validity with average variance extracted (AVE). For our conceptual model, the measurement scales with the selected indicators provide good values of reliability and convergent validity for our constructs with at least three indicators (Table 1).

The next step is to assess discriminant validity, which is the extent to which a construct is empirically distinct from other constructs in the structural model. The Fornell-Larcker criterion is the most widely used method for this purpose: the square root of AVE in every latent variable should be more than other correlation values among the latent variables. Values of the diagonal in the following table (Table 2) represent the square root of AVE for each construct.

From this table, we can conclude that the Fornell-Larcker criterion is met, and the discriminant validity is established.

Evaluation of the structural model and validation of hypotheses

As our measurement model is satisfactory, we can move on to the next step, which is to assess the structural model. Standard assessment criteria include the coefficient of determination (R^2), the blindfolding-based cross-validated redundancy measure Q^2 , and the statistical significance and relevance of the path coefficients. Before assessing the structural relationships, collinearity must be examined through the variance inflation factors (VIF). Ideally, the VIF should be close to 3 and less than 3, which is the case here (all $VIF < 2.3$).

The values of R^2 are respectively 0.580 and 0.264 for the variety of content created and for the time spent. Our model is therefore fairly successful in explaining the variance in the variety of content created, but only moderately successful in explaining the time spent creating content.

The value enabling us to assess the model’s predictive accuracy is the Q^2 . As a rule of thumb, Q^2 values higher than 0, 0.25 and 0.50 depict small, medium, and large predictive relevance. The Q^2 values are 0.202 for time spent and 0.426 for variety of content created, i.e. a low prediction for time spent and a rather high prediction for variety of content created.

TABLE 1

| RELIABILITY AND CONVERGENT VALIDITY | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------|----------|-------|
| | Composite Reliability | Cronbach’s α | ρ_A | AVE |
| Passion | 0.872 | 0.790 | 0.863 | 0.696 |
| Consumer Worship (“entertainment-social” dimension) | 0.891 | 0.838 | 0.841 | 0.673 |
| Creations/Variety of content created | 0.927 | 0.894 | 0.895 | 0.762 |
| Fandom as Leisure | 0.893 | 0.821 | 0.823 | 0.737 |

Once explanatory and predictive powers are demonstrated, the final step is to assess the statistical significance and relevance of the path coefficients. We used the SmartPLS bootstrap (n=5000) process to assess these coefficients and test our hypotheses. Table 3 summarises our main results.

From the structural model, it appears that fan passion and celebrity worship (through the social-entertainment dimension) have a positive influence on the variety of content created ($p < .05$). However, while passion has an influence on the time spent creating content ($p < .01$), the relationship between worship and time spent is not significant. This non-significant result indicates that fans with high scores on this social (interacting with others) and entertainment

(keeping up to date with celebrity news) dimension do not necessarily spend more time creating content than those with lower scores. They may create more diverse content (and interact about it with other fans) but do not necessarily spend more time on it.

With regard to moderation (H3 to H6), three of the four effects involving passion as an explanatory variable (H3.1, H3.2 and H5.1) are significant ($p < .05$). Concerning the moderator variable 'Fandom as Labour,' this means that the more the fan perceives his or her fandom as labour, the stronger the relationship between passion and time spent creating content on the one hand and the variety of content created on the other. In this respect, it should be recalled that the item finally retained to measure 'fandom as labour'

TABLE 2

| DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---------------------|----------------------|---------|---------------|
| | Consumer Worship ("entertainment- social" dimension) | Creations/ Variety of content created | Fandom as Labour | Fandom as Leisure | Passion | Time Spent |
| Consumer Worship ("entertainment- social" dimension) | 0.820 | | | | | |
| Creations/Variety of content created | 0.580 | 0.873 | | | | |
| Fandom as Labour | 0.223 | 0.453 | 1.000 | | | |
| Fandom as Leisure | 0.559 | 0.634 | 0.266 | 0.858 | | |
| Passion | 0.539 | 0.480 | 0.236 | 0.422 | 0.834 | |
| Time Spent | 0.296 | 0.433 | 0.385 | 0.281 | 0.266 | 1.000 |

TABLE 3

| PATH COEFFICIENTS | | | | |
|-------------------|--|----------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Hypotheses | Relationships | Path Coefficients | T Statistics | P Values |
| H1.1 | Passion → Time Spent | 0.275 | 2.991 | 0.003 |
| H1.2 | Passion → Variety of content created | 0.245 | 2.177 | 0.029 |
| H2.1 | CAS → Time Spent | 0.093 | 1.050 | 0.294 |
| H2.2 | CAS → Variety of content created | 0.194 | 2.388 | 0.017 |
| H3.1 | Passion*Labour → Time Spent | 0.252 | 2.487 | 0.013 |
| H3.2 | Passion*Labour → Variety of content created | 0.222 | 2.010 | 0.045 |
| H4.1 | CAS*Labour → Time Spent | 0.038 | 0.413 | 0.679 |
| H4.2 | CAS*Labour → Variety of content created | -0.087 | 0.817 | 0.414 |
| H5.1 | Passion*Leisure → Time Spent | 0.157 | 2.403 | 0.016 |
| H5.2 | Passion*Leisure → Variety of content created | 0.049 | 0.566 | 0.571 |
| H6.1 | CAS* Leisure → Time Spent | -0.001 | 0.021 | 0.984 |
| H6.2 | CAS* Leisure → Variety of content created | 0.021 | 0.250 | 0.803 |

focuses on the economic value created by the fan and not on any exploitation by the music industry. Thus, the fan feels that he or she is creating value, contributing in some way to the music industry, but not really being exploited by it. This result is quite consistent with the definition of the prosumer as a co-creator of value. The moderating effect of 'Fandom as Leisure' has a positive impact on the relationship between passion and time spent creating (supporting H5.1), but not on the variety of content created (H5.2 not supported). This would mean that the biggest fans who create out of love for their idol do not try to create content everywhere, but if they do spend time creating, they tend to do so in a limited number of mediums, focusing on just a few (be it videos, photo montages or any other creative content). This may be because there is a learning curve involved, but also because they focus on what they enjoy most, driven by pleasure.

Figures 2, 3 and 4 help to visualise and better understand the significant moderating effects by presenting the different simple slopes from the Smart PLS software.

Finally, as can be seen in Table 3, none of the hypotheses (H4 and H6) involving the CAS as an explanatory variable (whether the moderator is labour or leisure) is supported by our data.

Hypotheses and main results are summarised in the following table (Table 4).



Theoretical and Managerial Implications

As far as theoretical implications are concerned, in this paper, we continue and draw on the recent discussions on prosumption and co-creation of value to empirically explore consumers' perception of their own contribution in these processes. In the context of fandom, and the creative and productive practices that flow from it, we ultimately know little about how fans perceive their own contributions or how they reconcile certain tensions between a sense of exploitation and empowerment or affirmation of their passion. Our research, through the testing of a model essentially based on fans as prosumers and their creations on the one hand, and a 'Fandom as Labour' perspective on the other hand proposes a first step towards a better understanding of how fans feel about their engagement in the creative and entertainment industries. In particular, this model sheds light on the conditions under which leisure/pleasure and, on the other hand, labour/exploitation have an impact on the time spent and the variety of content that the fans produce.

FIGURE 2

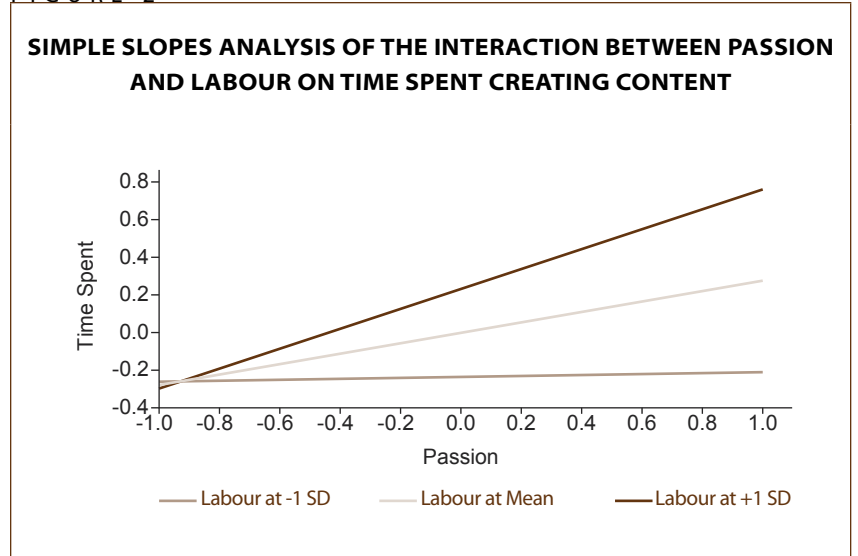


FIGURE 3

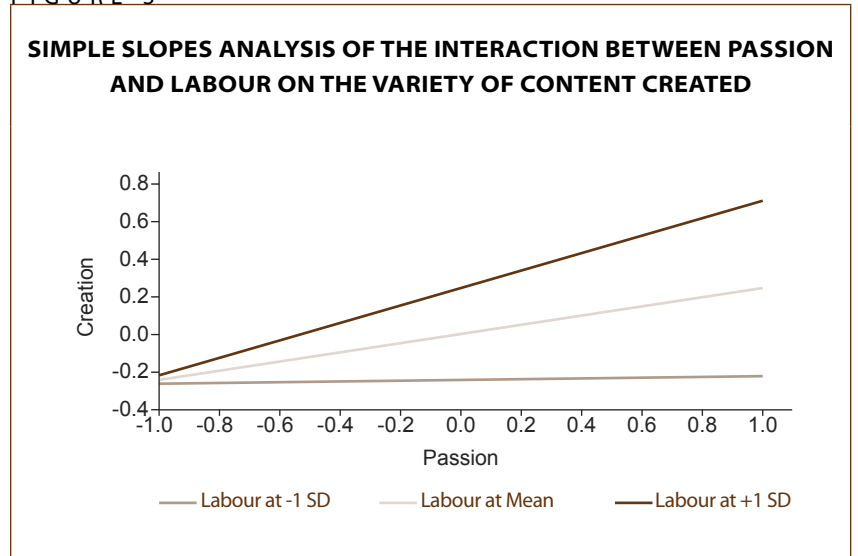


FIGURE 4

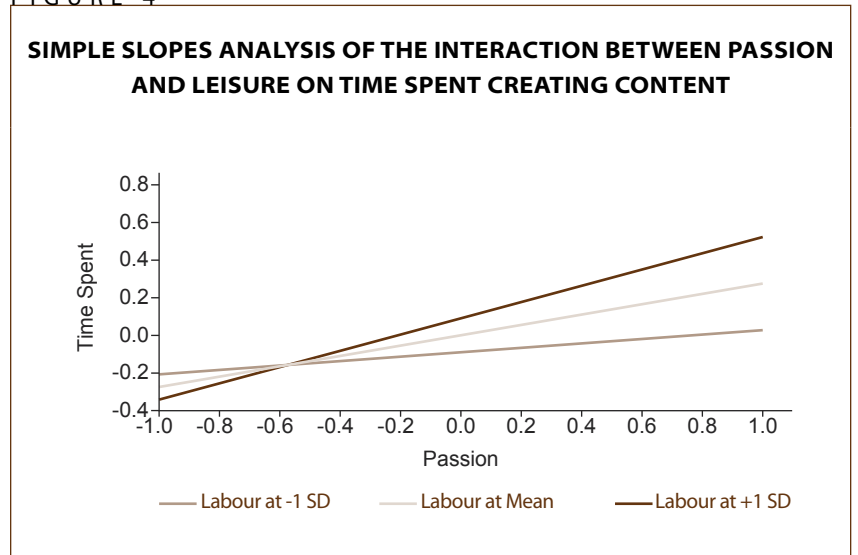


TABLE 4

| SUMMARY OF THE HYPOTHESES TESTED | |
|--|---|
| Hypotheses | Results |
| H1: Passion has a positive influence on (1) the time spent creating content for one's idol (2) the variety of content created. | Supported |
| H2: Celebrity worship has a positive influence on (1) the time spent creating content for one's idol (2) the variety of content created. | Partially supported Celebrity worship only influences the variety of content created (through its social-entertainment dimension) |
| H3: Fans' perception of their creations/productions as "exploited" labour negatively moderates the relationship between passion and (1) the time spent creating content for their idol (2) the variety of content created. | Not supported But reverse effect due to the "economic value creation" item retained by the analyses |
| H4: Fans' perception of their creations/productions as "exploited" labour negatively moderates the relationship between celebrity worship and: (1) the time spent creating content for their idol (2) the variety of content created. | Not supported |
| H5: Fans' perception of their creations/productions as leisure positively moderates the relationship between passion and: (1) the time spent creating content for their idol (2) the variety of content created. | Partially supported Significant moderating effect only on the time spent |
| H6: Fans' perception of their creations/productions as leisure positively moderates the relationship between celebrity worship and: (1) the time spent creating content for their idol (2) the variety of content created. | Not supported |

The most relevant result that emerges from our study is ultimately that fans perceive themselves as prosumers/co-creators of value for their idol and the music industry more generally. This perception of the prosumer seems to motivate them to spend time creating and diversifying their fan creations. Also, they ultimately do not have a perception that their work is being exploited by the entertainment industry: fans value the dissemination of their creations to other fans and the building of relationships with others in their online and offline communities more than any other reward. Another result is that passion is a more relevant concept than the first dimension of celebrity worship, as it implies a connection that goes beyond the social and fun aspect. This probably explains why the direct links and also the moderating effects are higher for this construct.

Regarding managerial implications, as fans are prosumers, creators of value and perceive themselves as such, it is important that brands, idols, and industries consider them as real actors in their ecosystems, even as real partners. The time spent by the fans, the energy they deploy and the money they spend to enhance the object of their attachment make them a co-producer of the first rank, since it is their prescriptive and promotional activity that transforms the fan into a partner in the cultural production ecosystem.

The creative and entertainment industries must re-examine the role of fans and certainly value their work more highly. It seems that fans are more active and likely to spend more time creating various content related to a celebrity when they feel they are creating value for the music industry or when they perceive it as a leisure, for their own pleasure. Artists or record

companies should probably emphasise the pleasure aspect when trying to stimulate engagement and content creation, but also reward and officially recognize them as ‘value creators,’ giving them special status and recognition. More concretely, messages on Twitter or Facebook, special thanks in album credits or videos can be used. The important thing for the fan is also to create a special relationship with their idol and small “signs” from the idol (in terms of recognition or rewards) are already a first step. In conclusion, fans may be small (in terms of size in the industry) but they are key players in the music ecosystem and have a considerable importance in terms of promoting their idols and they should therefore be better included and valued.

Finally, it should be mentioned that passion and celebrity worship have their downside and can lead to some potential negatives: for example, what about the dissemination of fan content that sends an awkward or unwanted message? What if the passion or cult of celebrity is excessive and leads fans to punish their idol in certain situations? These types of questions on the dark side of passion and worship can certainly feed future research.

Our research is not without its limitations. Indeed, the application of the celebrity attitude scale did not allow us to consider all the dimensions and we therefore focused on the “entertainment-social” dimension. This scale should be reviewed for its application and reformulated with greater clarity. Also, in order to better measure fans’ perception of their investment and labour for their idol and the music industry, it might be relevant to propose a continuum between labour/exploitation and leisure/pleasure on which fans could position themselves. We also believe that conducting a qualitative study to complement this study would have allowed us to better understand fans real motivations when they spend time and create content for their idol, a clear explanation of the perceptions of their labour as well as their relationship with the music industry.

To continue this research project, it could be relevant to integrate the concept of resistance. (Lee et al. 2011; Roux 2007) Indeed, given the power of certain companies and brands in the entertainment field, it seems relevant to consider the resistance of fans to these industries. Other avenues for future research could be to study other individual variables that contribute most to prosumer behaviours; to consider the impact of the idol’s very own connectivity and interactivity on fans’ creations (does this type of behaviour encourage fans to produce more content?), or to replicate our study on another celebrity.



References

- Albert, Noel, Dwight Merunka, and Pierre Valette-Florence. 2013. “Brand Passion: Antecedents and Consequences.” *Journal of Business Research* 66(7): 904-909.
- Baym, Nancy K., and Robert Burnett. 2009. “Amateur Experts: International Fan Labour in Swedish Independent Music.” *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 12(5): 433-449.
- Beer, David, and Roger Burrows. 2010. “Consumption, Prosumption and Participatory Web Cultures: An Introduction.” *Journal of Consumer Culture* 10: 3-12.
- Bourdaa, Mélanie. 2016. “La promotion par les créations des fans - Une réappropriation du travail des fans par les producteurs.” *Revue Raisons Politiques* 2(62): 101-113.
- Brooks, Samantha K. 2021. “FANatics: Systematic Literature Review of Factors Associated with Celebrity Worship, and Suggested Directions for Future Research.” *Current Psychology* 40: 864-886.
- Cova, Bernard, and Daniele Dalli. 2009. “Working Consumers: The Next Step in Marketing Theory?” *Marketing Theory* 9(3): 315-39.
- Cova, Bernard, Daniele Dalli, and Detlev Zwick. 2011. “Critical Perspectives on Consumers’ Role as ‘Producers’: Broadening the Debate on Value Co-creation in Marketing Processes.” *Marketing Theory* 11(3): 231-241.
- Derbaix, Maud, and Michaël Korchia. 2019. “Individual Celebration of Pop Music Icons: A Study of Music Fans Relationships with their Object of Fandom and Associated Practices.” *Journal of Consumer Behaviour* 18(2): 109-119.
- Dessart, Laurence, Cleopatra Veloutsou, and Anna Morgan-Thomas. 2016. “Capturing Consumer Engagement: Duality, Dimensionality and Measurement.” *Journal of Marketing Management* 32(5-6): 399-426.
- Fiske, John. 1992. “The cultural economy of fandom.” In *Adoring audience: Fan culture and popular media*, edited by Lisa A. Lewis, 30-49. London (UK): Routledge.
- Hair, Joseph F., Jeffrey J. Risher, Marko Sarstedt, and Christian M. Ringle. 2019. “When to Use and How to Report the Results of PLS-SEM.” *European Business Review* 31(1): 2-24.
- Hein, Fabien. 2011. “Le fan comme travailleur : Les activités méconnues d’un coproducteur dévoué.” *Sociologie du Travail* 3(1): 37-51.
- Hellekson, Karen. 2009. “A Fannish Field of Value: Online Fan Gift Culture.” *Cinema Journal* 48(4): 113-118.
- Hesmondhalgh, David. 2010. “User-Generated Content, Free Labour, and the Cultural Industries.” *Ephemera: Theory and Politics in Organization* 10(3-4): 267-284.

- Hills, Matthew. 2002. *Fan Cultures*. New York: Routledge.
- Jenkins, Henry. 2006. *Convergence culture: Where old and new media collide*. New York: New York University Press.
- Jussila, Iiro, Anssi Tarkiainen, Marko Sarstedt, and Joseph F. Hair. 2015. "Individual Psychological Ownership: Concepts, Evidence, and Implications for Research in Marketing." *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice* 23(2): 121-139.
- Lee, Mike, Dominique Roux, Helene Cherrier, and Bernard Cova. 2011. "Anti-Consumption and Consumer Resistance: Concepts, Concerns, Conflicts, and Convergence." *European Journal of Marketing* 45(11-12).
- Maltby, John, Lynn E. McCutcheon, Diane D. Ashe, and James Houran. 2001. "The Self-Reported Psychological Well-Being of Celebrity Worshipers." *North American Journal of Psychology* 3(3): 441-452.
- McCutcheon, Lynn E., Rense Lange, and James Houran. 2002. "Conceptualization and Measurement of Celebrity Worship." *British Journal of Psychology* 93(1): 67-87.
- Meehan, Eileen R. 2000. "Leisure or Labour? Fan Ethnography and Political Economy." In *Consuming Audiences? Production and Reception in Media Research*, edited by Ingunn Hagen and Janet Wasko, 72-92. New Jersey: Hampton Press.
- Merz, Michael A., Lia Zarantonello, and Silvia Grappi. 2018. "How Valuable Are Your Customers in the Brand Value Co-creation Process? The Development of a Customer Co-Creation Value (CCCV) Scale." *Journal of Business Research* 82(January): 79-89.
- Moisander Johanna, Saara Könkkölä, and Pikka-Maaria Laine. 2013. "Consumer Workers as Immaterial Labour in the Converging Media Markets: Three Value-Creation Practices." *International Journal of Consumer Studies* 37(2): 222-227.
- Pierce, Jon L., Tatiana Kostova, and Kurt T. Dirks. 2003. "The State of Psychological Ownership: Integrating and Extending a Century of Research." *Review of General Psychology* 7(1): 84-107.
- Ritzer, George, and Nathan Jurgenson. 2010. "Production, Consumption, Prosumption: The Nature of Capitalism in the Age of the Digital 'Prosumer.'" *Journal of Consumer Culture* 10(1): 13-36.
- Roux, Dominique. 2007. "La résistance du consommateur: Proposition d'un cadre d'analyse." *Recherche et Applications en Marketing* 22(4): 59-80.
- Schau, Hope Jensen, Albert M. Muñiz, and Eric J. Arnould. 2009. "How brand communities practices create value." *Journal of Marketing* 73(5): 30-51.
- Stanfill, Mell. 2019. *Exploiting fandom: How the media industry seeks to manipulate fans*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press.
- Stanfill, M., and M. Condis. 2014. "Editorial of the Special Issue on Fandom and/as Labour." *Transformative Works and Cultures* 15(March).
- Stever, Gayle S. 2011. "Celebrity Worship: Critiquing a Construct." *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 41(6): 1356-1370.
- Terranova, Tiziana. (2000). "Free Labour: Producing Culture for the Digital Economy." *Social Text* 18, no.2 (Summer): 33-58.
- Toffler, Alvin. 1980. *The Third Wave*. London: Pan Books.
- Turk, Tisha. 2014. "Fan Work: Labour, Worth, and Participation in Fandom's Gift Economy." In *Fandom and/as Labour*, edited by Mel Stanfill and Megan Condis, Special Issue. *Transformative Works and Cultures*, no. 15.
- Wang, Chen Lu, ed. 2020. "Contemporary perspectives on research: An introduction." In *Handbook of research on the impact of fandom in society and consumerism*. Hershey: IGI Global Inc.
- Xie Chunyan, Richard P. Bagozzi, and Sigud V. Troyes. 2008. "Trying to Prosume: Toward a Theory of Consumers as Co-Creators of Value." *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 36: 109-122.

CELEBRITY WORSHIP SCALE (MCCUTCHEON, LANGE, AND HOURAN 2002)

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Entertainment–Social | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My friends and I like to discuss what my favorite celebrity has done. 2. One of the main reasons I maintain an interest in my favorite celebrity is that doing so gives me a temporary escape from life's problems. 3. I enjoy watching, reading, or listening to my favorite celebrity because it means a good time. 4. I love to talk with others who admire my favorite celebrity. 5. When something bad happens to my favorite celebrity I feel like it happened to me. 6. Learning the life story of my favorite celebrity is a lot of fun. 7. It is enjoyable just to be with others who like my favorite celebrity. 8. When my favorite celebrity fails or loses at something I feel like a failure myself. 9. I like watching and hearing about my favorite celebrity when I am in a large group of people. 10. Keeping up with news about my favorite celebrity is an entertaining pastime. |
| Intense–Personal | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If I were to meet my favorite celebrity in person, he/she would already somehow know that I am his/her biggest fan. 2. I share with my favorite celebrity a special bond that cannot be described in words. 3. I am obsessed by details of my favorite celebrity's life. 4. When something good happens to my favorite celebrity I feel like it happened to me. 5. I have pictures and/or souvenirs of my favorite celebrity, which I always keep, in exactly the same place. 6. The successes of my favorite celebrity are my successes also. 7. I consider my favorite celebrity to be my soul mate. 8. I have frequent thoughts about my favorite celebrity, even when I don't want to. 9. When my favorite celebrity dies (or died) I will feel (or I felt) like dying too. |
| Borderline–Pathological | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I often feel compelled to learn the personal habits of my favorite celebrity. 2. If I was lucky enough to meet my favorite celebrity, and he/she asked me to do something illegal as a favor, I would probably do it. 3. If someone gave me several thousand dollars to do with as I please, I would consider spending it on a personal possession (like a napkin or paper plate) once used by my favorite celebrity. |