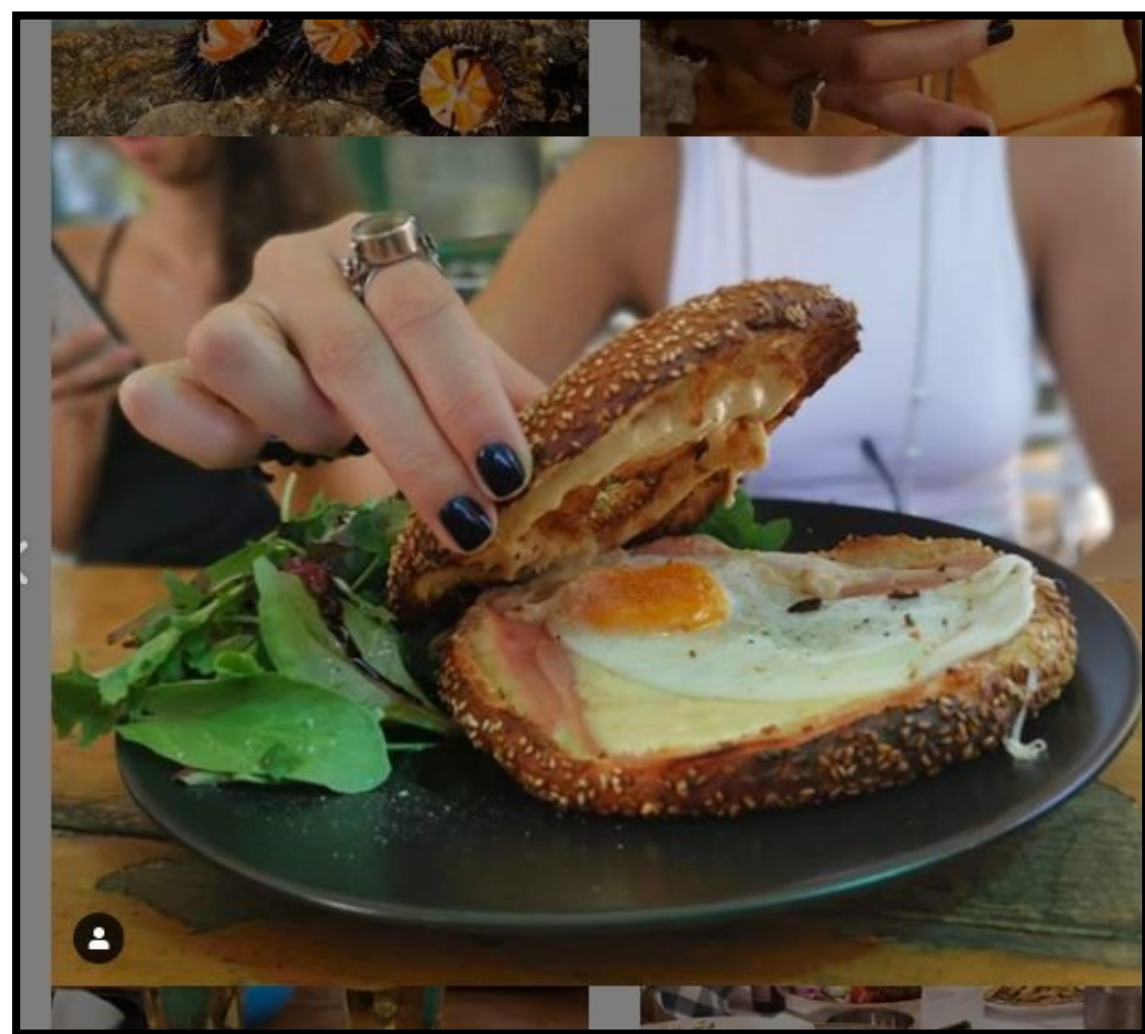


The act of sharing knowledge & experience across social media channels: A comparative analysis on different virtual communities in sharing “dining out experiences”

Elise Chaoul, 3rd year PhD Student,
Institut d'Administration d'Entreprises- Poitiers, Laboratoire Cerege
Under the supervision of Dr. Thomas Stenger

Abstract

The aim of this communication is to contribute knowledge about the act of sharing on virtual communities and to compare the behavior of these online members that share the same interest concerning their “culinary passion” although they express themselves and participate differently.



Research Objective

The objective of my thesis project is to observe critically the main themes of the act of sharing culinary experiences and knowledge by online users on different social media channels. To understand profoundly this form of a leisure activity and to comprehend the self- presentation and emotions of these members across these channels while studying the impact of these communities on the users too.

Also, and most importantly to tackle the basic elements on:

“The act of sharing knowledge & experience across social media channels: A comparative analysis on different virtual communities in sharing “dining-out experiences”

To achieve this aim, the following objectives should be treated while analyzing each virtual community by itself:

- To understand the style of expression and communication of these users in the online world
- To identify the fundamental elements behind the online activities and continuous participation of these foodies on different platforms.
- To cross-compare the results from each identification while relating to the theatrical assembly in order to assess better the knowledge & information obtained about the behavior of these users, in relation to their personal attribution and in relation to the interest they are evolving around.
- To understand the science behind the participation and the consumption behavior of online foodies across their online channels.



Figure 1. A foodie showing her “feel good” salad bowl.

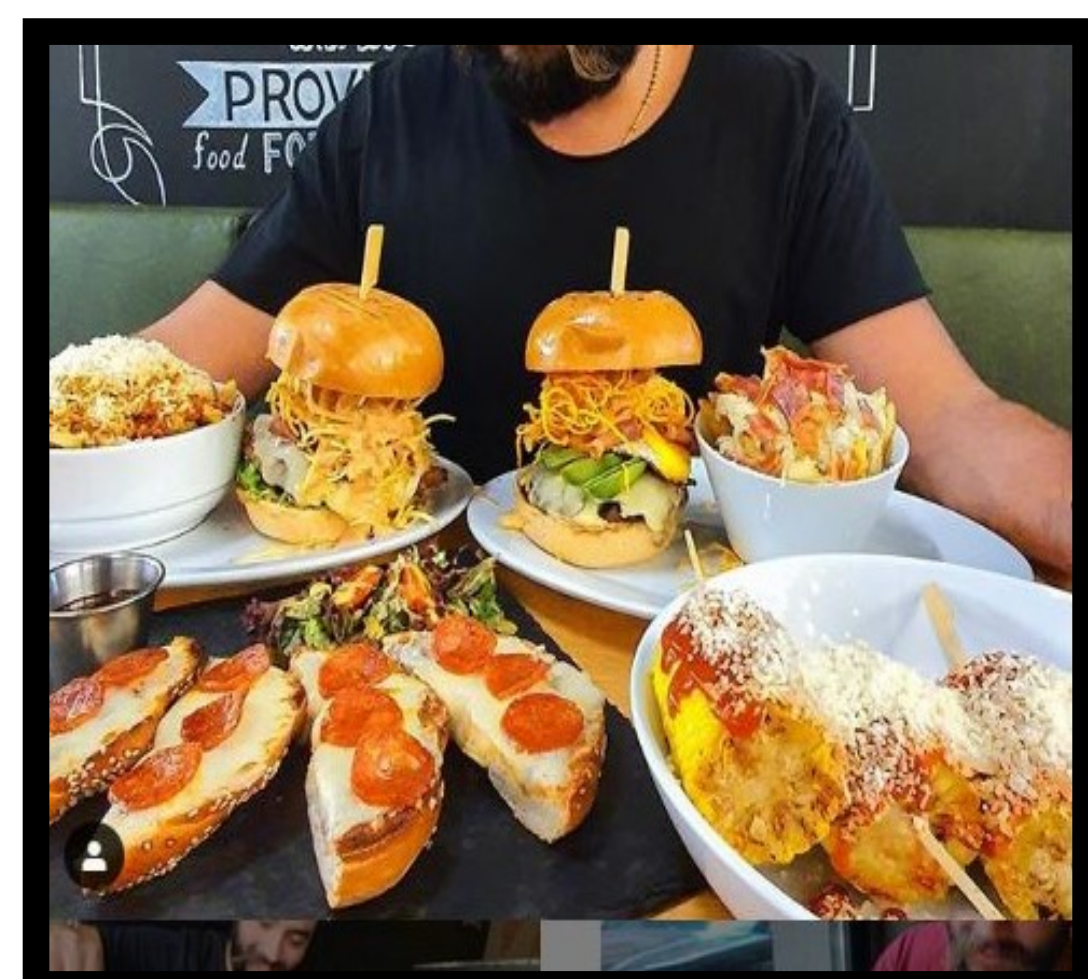


Figure 2. A foodie enjoying some delicious “junk” food.



Figure 3. A foodie enjoying some fruits at the beach

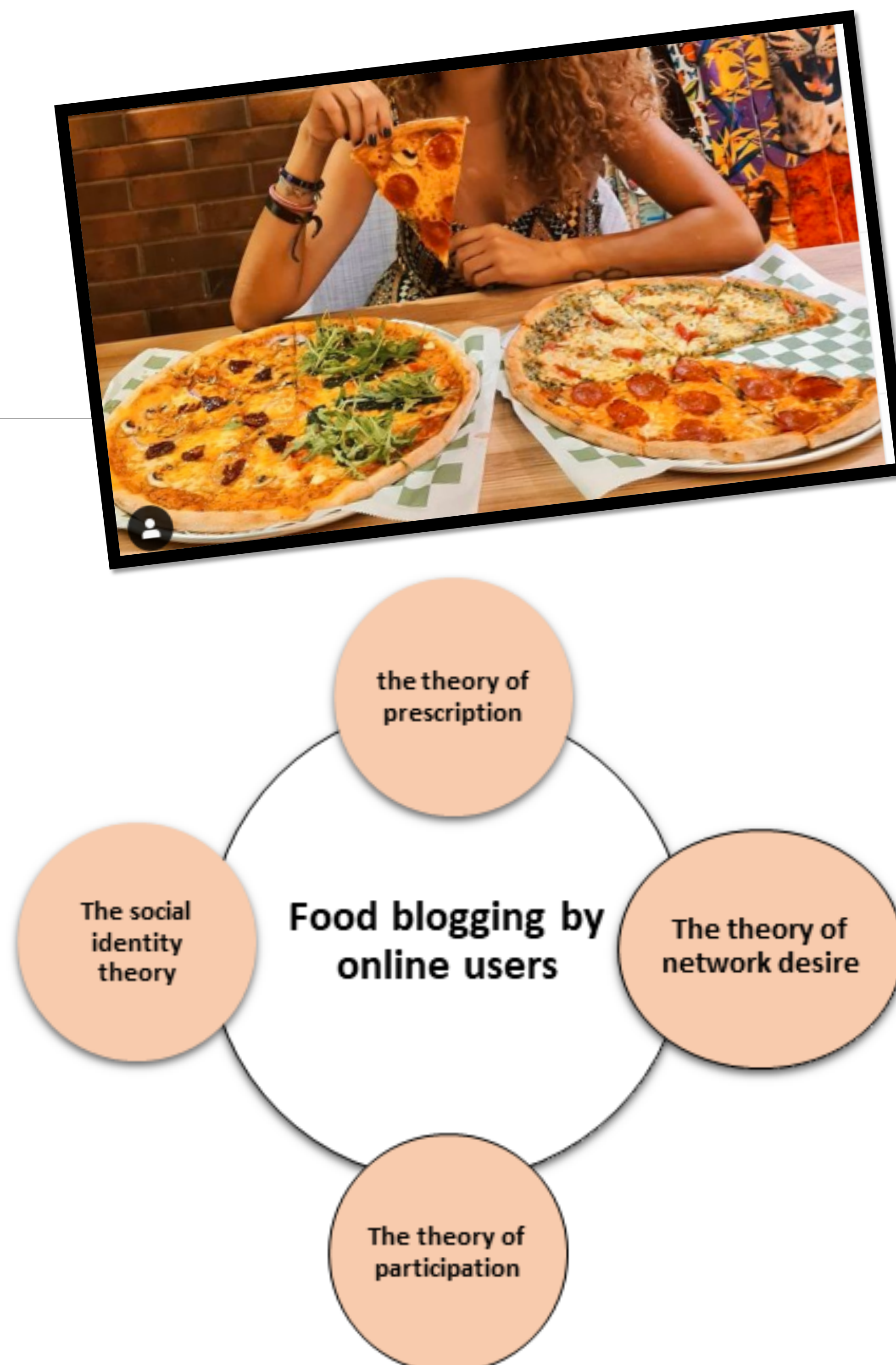


Chart 1. Conceptual Framework used in this comparative analysis

Methods and Materials

Qualitative Method

The essential activities of the qualitative method are data analysis and interpretation while making use of the qualitative data.

Netnography

Netnography can be defined as a qualitative, interpretative research methodology which studies online cultures and communities formed through computer/mobile-mediated communications (Kozinets, 2006a)

Semi Structured Interviews:

Interviews were conducted with concerned individuals

Offline Observation

The author decided to become a part of the experience that a foodie usually has in an offline environment in a restaurant.

Data Collection:

The sample used includes 20 foodies, the choice of these members was based on their continuous engagement on Zomato and on their social media accounts such as Instagram.

- **Territory: Zomato Channel & Instagram Channel**
- **Target: Foodies active on both channels**

**Triangulation Method for more accurate results

Research Postulates

#FoodPorn

This is an interesting paradox, whereby it can be given a positive connotation in a way that it can make a certain dish seem utterly delicious and very appealing to the extent of craving and desiring it and at the same time, given the possibly somehow “negative” connotations it can introduce, which can possibly lead to promoting an unhealthy relationship with food, especially because real pornography would contribute to an unrealistic view of sexuality (Rousseau 2014) so it has the ability to contribute to an unrealistic view of food.

#FoodIsBusiness

Also, some respondents had business perspectives, whereby one foodie” insisted on how his online participation on Instagram is helping him in establishing a food advertising agency that helps clients’ in promoting their menus, platters in an appealing way while getting the most audience. This outcome is somehow related some of the outcomes from conducting interviews on Zomato users, because many users discussed that they would like to turn food blogging into their full time job whereby they will be able to make a career out of it, that it not just a passion, yet soon to be a profession.

#FoodIsMedicine

And some respondents’ purpose of food blogging is not only linked to creating friendships, belonging to an online community, getting pleasure from sharing beautiful appealing shots with others, increasing her followers, or maybe getting a financial advantage, her pure motive from her online participation on Instagram was quite clear and it is helping others in combatting food anxiety and sending the message that food heals and nurtures, that food is beautiful and it’s the essence of life.

Elise Chaoul- 3rd year PhD Student
Account Manager- BLU Loyalty

Emails:
elise.chaoul1@live.com
Elise.chaoul@bluloyalty.com
Elise.Chaoul@univ-poitiers.fr

Phone:
+966-50 306 47 69 (Saudi Line/ Calls)
+961 70 228 314 (Lebanese Line/ Whats app + Calls)

References

1. Ambrozias, D. (2003). Serious feast: Vancouver foodies in globalized consumer society (Doctoral dissertation, School of Communication-Simon Fraser University).
2. Barr, A., & Levy, P. (1984). official Foodie handbook. Timbre Books.
3. Bowden, J. L. H. (2009). The process of customer engagement: A conceptual framework. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 17(1), 63-74.
4. Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2016). (Mis) conceptualising themes, thematic analysis, and other problems with Fugard and Potts (2015) sample-size tool for thematic analysis. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 19(8), 739-743.
5. Brewer, M. B., & Gardner, W. (1996). Who is this “We”? Levels of collective identity and self-representations. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 71(1), 83.
6. R. J. Ilic, A. Juric, B. & Hollebeek, L. (2013). Consumer engagement in a virtual brand community: An exploratory analysis. *Journal of business research*, 66(1), 20-38.
7. Coutant, A., & Stenger, T. (2012). Les médias sociaux: une histoire de participation. *Le Temps des médias*, 1(1), 75-86.
8. Hannum, K., & Center for Creative, L. (2007). Social Identity: Knowing Yourself, Leading Others. Greensboro, N.C.: CCL Press.
9. Hennig-Thurau, T., Gwinner, K. P., Walsh, G., & Gremler, D. D. (2004). Electronic word-of-mouth via consumer-opinion platforms: what motivates consumers to articulate themselves on the internet? *Journal of interactive marketing*, 18(1), 38-52.
10. Hogg, M. A., Abrams, D., Otten, S., & Hinkle, S. (2004). The social identity perspective: Intergroup relations, self-conception, and small groups. *Small group research*, 35(3), 246-276.
11. Holbrook, M. B., & Hirschman, E. C. (1982). The experiential aspects of consumption: 12. Consumer fantasies, feelings, and fun. *Journal of consumer research*, 9(2), 132-140.
13. Khanna, R., & Sang, A. (2015). Zomato using SERVQUAL Applications to Provide Services to the User to Discover Restaurants. *Global Journal of Enterprise Information System*, 7(4).
14. Kozinets, R. V. (2002). Can consumers escape the market? Emancipatory illuminations from burning man. *Journal of Consumer research*, 29(1), 20-38.
15. Kozinets, R. V. (1997). “I want to believe”: A netnography of the X-Files’ subculture of consumption. *ADVANCES IN CONSUMER RESEARCH*, VOL XXIV, 24, 470-475.
16. Kozinets, R. V. (2002). The field behind the screen: Using netnography for marketing research in online communities. *Journal of marketing research*, 39(1), 61-72.
17. Kozinets, R. V. (2015). *Netnography: redefined*. Sage.
18. Stenger, T., & Coutant, A. (2013). Médias sociaux: clarification et cartographie Pour une approche sociotechnique. *Décisions marketing*, 107-117.
19. Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. *The social psychology of intergroup relations*, 33(47), 74.