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## **Analyzing Brand Impact and Public Sentiment at the MET Gala 2023. (1321)**

### **1. Introduction**

The MET Gala, an epitome of haute couture and a canvas for fashion statements, sets the tone for emerging trends. The 2023 theme, "Karl Lagerfeld: A Line of Beauty" honored the late designer's legacy, becoming a global spectacle on social media. Studies like Kim & Ko (2012) on luxury brand marketing and Park & Lin (2020) on social media influence at fashion events have shown that events like the MET Gala significantly impact brand engagement and celebrity influence. The event acts as a fertile junction of fashion, celebrity influence, and public participation, making it an ideal setting for investigating social media's impact in affecting brand perception. Luxury businesses thrive on exclusivity and workmanship, frequently setting the standard for fashion trends. They use thorough trend monitoring to stay ahead, ensuring that each collection connects with their audience's changing tastes. Public relations (PR) play an important part in building a company's image by generating narratives that are consistent with its corporate identity and appeal to customer desires. Public opinion, enhanced by social media and newspaper coverage, may have a substantial impact on brand perception, prompting luxury businesses to be proactive in connecting with their audience and controlling their reputations. This paper builds on such studies to understand the digital aftermath of brand representation at the MET Gala 2023.

### **2. Research Question**

What is the influence of brand representation on social media engagement and public sentiment during the MET Gala 2023 with the theme Karl Lagerfeld: A Line of Beauty”?

### **3. Method**

#### **3.1. Data**

Data was manually curated from Instagram, focusing on metrics of engagement (likes, comments) tied to celebrities and brands at the MET Gala 2023. The dataset spanned prominent fashion brands and diverse celebrity professions, captured during the gala and the immediate week following, ensuring real-time public reaction. Included are raw comments that offer a direct line into public opinion, serving as the corpus for sentiment analysis.

#### **3.2. Analysis**

The study looked at how people feel about things they write on social media. The study examined the emotions behind social media comments using advanced computer tools called TextBlob and HuggingFace's Transformers. These tools helped determine whether comments were positive, negative, or neutral. Data analysis was conducted through sentiment analysis using a pre-defined codebook sourced from relevant literature, categorizing comments into positive, negative, and neutral sentiments, exemplified by phrases such as "absolutely love this" for positive, "not a fan" for negative, and "quite ordinary" for neutral.

The computer program showed good precision in identifying sentiments, accurately classifying emotions with a degree of confidence. While there is always room for growth and it didn't capture every nuance, the F1 score—which reflects a careful balance between the program's precision and thoroughness—was quite respectable, indicating a solid performance overall. This information can be very useful for those who

create content on social media. It can guide them to create posts that better connect with their audience, potentially making their followers more engaged.

Sentiment analysis was performed in such a way that each comment was given a score ranging between the numbers -1 and 1. A few possible examples are:

Here are some insights based on the sentiment scores:

- Anne Hathaway's related comment "How does she never age" received a neutral score of 0.0, indicating that it is neither positive nor negative.
- Billie Eilish's comment had a slightly negative sentiment with a score of -0.1625, possibly due to the mention of drug use.
- Kendall Jenner's comment "Its just uncomfortable to even look at it." received a notably negative score of -0.5, reflecting discomfort or disapproval from the commenter.
- Kylie Jenner's outfit was complimented as "so pretty," which received a positive sentiment score of 0.3750.
- Kim Kardashian's related comment "Lady go away we are tired of seeing you!" also received a negative sentiment score of -0.5, showing strong negativity or annoyance from the commenter.

Furthermore, the study explored the dynamics of online engagement by examining the correlation between the number of likes and comments a post received and the associated sentiment scores. The analysis suggested variability in user engagement, with certain posts garnering significant attention, as evidenced by the number of likes and comments. The data indicated that the volume of engagement could be influenced by the sentiment expressed in the comments, implying a potential feedback loop between public sentiment and the level of interaction a post attracts.

Lastly, the study provided an initial foray into the relationship between a celebrity's follower count and the sentiment of reactions to their posts. While the dataset indicated a wide range of followers, from 31.8 million to 400 million, the impact of this audience size on the sentiment of comments was less clear, suggesting the need for a more granular analysis.

#### **4. Results**

The analysis of social media engagement and sentiment at the MET Gala presents intriguing findings on brand and celebrity impact. Versace outshone others with high positive sentiment, while Balmain, despite being the most catered brand, faced significant public criticism, suggesting that brand exposure does not always equate to positive reception (as shown in the "Brand Engagement at the MET Gala" graph). Conversely, Tom Ford's presence did not translate into favorable sentiment, indicating a gap between brand visibility and public perception.

Celebrity influence also displayed varied patterns, with actors and socialites receiving overwhelmingly positive feedback, aligning with their expected public personas. Entrepreneurs, however, garnered a more subdued response, possibly due to different audience expectations, as depicted in the "Average Sentiment by Celebrity Occupation" graph. This highlights the role of a celebrity's occupation in shaping public sentiment.

Further investigation into brand-related discussions revealed a spectrum of audience reactions, with some less represented brands like Prabal Gurung receiving moderate negativity compared to the scrutiny faced by prominent names such as Miu Miu and Stella McCartney. This complex sentiment landscape is captured in the "Brands with the Worst Comments at the MET Gala" graph and the "Sentiment Analysis

of MET Gala Comments" histogram, underscoring the intricate relationship between brand representation, celebrity endorsement, and audience perception.

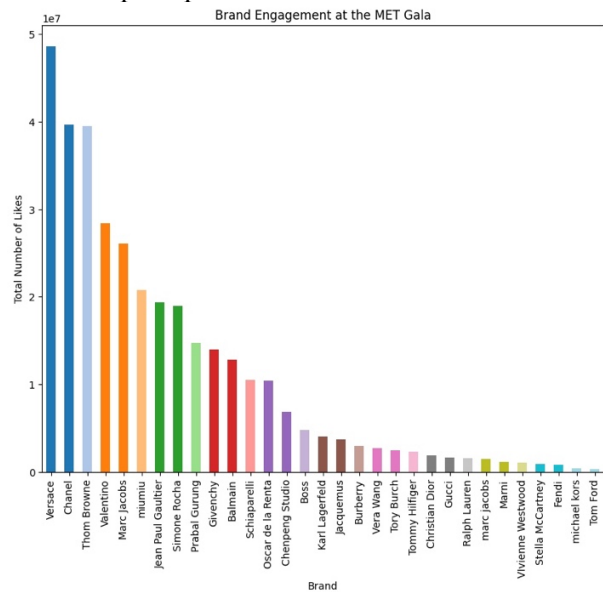


Fig.1. Brand Engagement vs. Total Number of Likes at the MET Gala

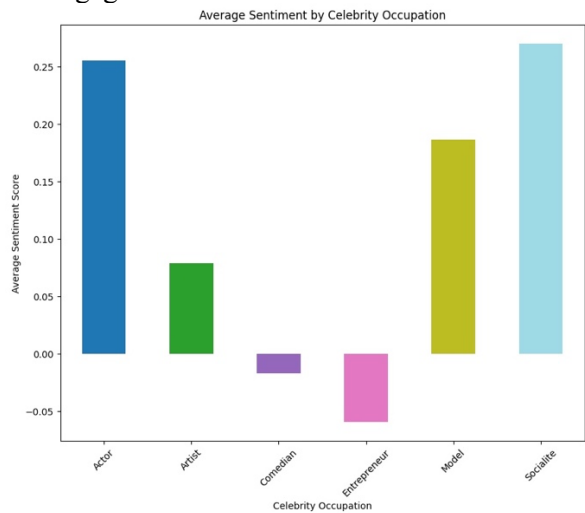


Fig.2. Average Sentiment Scores by Celebrity Occupation

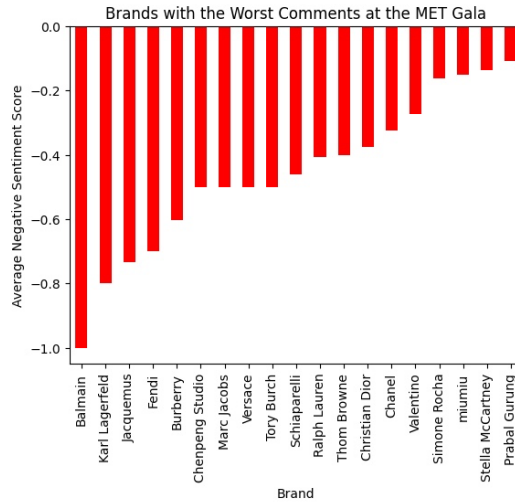


Fig.3. Brands with the Most Negative Comments at the MET Gala

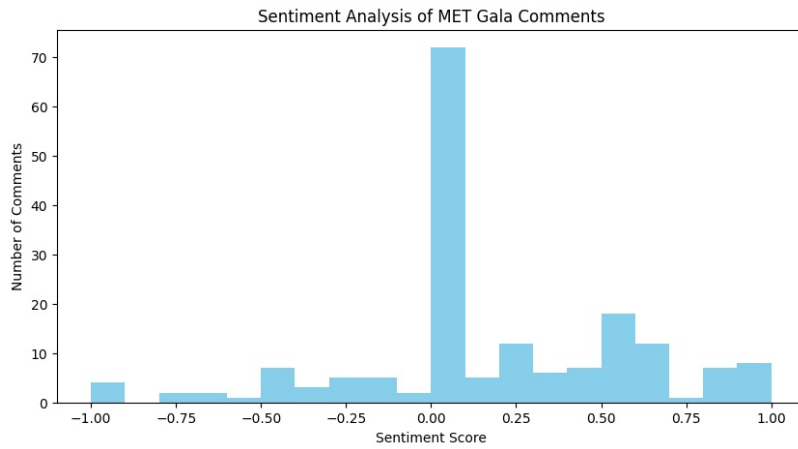


Fig.4.Distribution of Sentiment Scores for MET Gala Comments

Rank	Brand	Sentiment Score	Number of Celebrities Catered
1	Versace	0.612500	2
2	Givenchy	0.450000	1
3	Tom Ford	0.437500	1
4	Vera Wang	0.377474	1
5	Marc Jacobs	0.305556	2

Table.1. Top Positive Sentiment Scores Among Brands at the MET Gala

Rank	Celebrity Name	Sentiment Score	Number of followers on Instagram
1	Anne Hathaway	0.710000	31.8M
2	Dua Lipa	0.612500	88.6M
3	Gigi Hadid	0.450000	78.5M
4	Hugh Jackman	0.440625	31.9M
5	Jeremy Pope	0.437500	1M

Table.2. Celebrity Influence: Sentiment Scores vs. Instagram Followers

## 5. Conclusion and Limitations

The comprehensive analysis conducted in this study underscored the significant impact of the MET Gala as a high-profile event that serves as a catalyst for brand visibility and engagement, particularly through the strategic pairing with celebrities. The extracted sentiment scores offered valuable insights into the depth of the public's emotional responses and the narratives surrounding each brand, allowing for a nuanced understanding of consumer-brand relationships in the context of high fashion events. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that the research has certain constraints. The dataset was sourced exclusively from one social media platform, which may not fully represent the vast spectrum of public opinion. Furthermore, sentiment analysis, while a powerful tool, is not without its challenges; the subjective nature of language and the subtleties of human emotion can introduce a level of imprecision. Future studies may benefit from incorporating a broader array of data sources and employing more sophisticated sentiment analysis techniques to capture a more holistic view of public sentiment.

## 6. References

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