

LUXURY BUYING OF CONSUMERS AND PROMOTION MIX

¹Dr. Ratinder Kaur ²Ms. Bhavna Sharma

¹Assistant Professor, School of management studies, Punjabi University, Patiala,

²Research Scholar, School of management studies, Punjabi University, Patiala, Punjab,

ABSTRACT

Consumers choose only that brand which portrays their self-image in general. Different promotional strategies are used by companies to a position in such a way so that they can meet the lifestyle of the consumer which they are trying to acquire. They have an opportunity to redefine their market which would restrict competition due to a reduced number of consumers who would be paying attention to their specific brands as of the way they might identify their lifestyles. Most of the customers are starting their decision-making journey by evaluating promotional offers. The Internet also allowed people to check and compare different products and share their preferences. The present research tries to understand the influence of promotional offers on the frequency of buying luxury products and the intention to purchase. The research highlights the various aspects of the value chain and different promotional tactics like a discount, coupons, buy one get one, freebies, etc. used by the companies to attract customers. Data has been collected from 400 respondents of different gender, age group, profession, and religion. Results show that promotional offers attract more to the young generations as compared to the age group of 25-45 years. The research also provides useful insights for marketers to target customers effectively.

Keywords: Age, Buying behavior, Luxury, Promotional offers, Brands.

Introduction

Buying behavior is related to the buying of goods. It is interconnected with the habits, preferences, and needs of consumers. It shows that people react differently what, when, where and how much to buy. The concept of buying behavior is interdisciplinary in nature. It comes from various fields like sociology, psychology, anthropology, etc. Buying behavior also tries to find out the solution for Product or brand choice decision, Problem identification and evaluate alternatives. Moreover buying decisions helps companies in value creation towards customers.

Luxury Brand is a brand that employs values, desires, interests, feelings, or attitudes of a group or builds a way of life for marketing. Luxury brands try to encourage, direct, and induce people, with the objective of their products explaining consumer's lifestyles. As they are directly linked with the advertising and other endorsements which influence them further. They often promote an ideology, wishing to magnetize a comparatively high number of people and finally become a social identity.

A lifestyle brand is a philosophy created by a particular organization's brand (Schmitt, 2012). An organization achieves a luxury brand by focusing on establishing an emotional association with its customers, making a desire for a consumer to be associated with a particular group or brand. Moreover, the consumer will consider that their identity will be reinforced if they publicly correlate themselves with a specific lifestyle brand.

As individuals have diverse identities depend on their personal choices, experiences, or surroundings (including social class, traditions or culture, subculture, nationality) an organization must recognize to whom it correlates its brand. Luxury brands focus on inducing emotional connections between a consumer and that consumer's wish to connect him or herself with a group. Some researchers have defined luxury brands as one of the possible ways of consumer self-expression of emotions.

Influence of promotion mix on buying of luxury brands- Promotional offers always attracts buyers. It is one of the major variables that impact on the buying behaviour of luxury brands. Promotional offers are one of the strategic moves in the retails business to increase footfall and sales. Promotional offers are active as well as passive. The promotional mix always influences consumers for brand switching, purchase in advance, accumulation and spending more. Promotional offers are subjective to a particular target group and depend upon the company's objectives and market

situation (Mittal, Sethi, 2011). Consumer prefers luxury brands due to certain value attached with it like social and status value, financial value and functional value. Consumers choose only that brand which portrays their self-image. This has to reinforce companies to position in such a way so that they can meet the lifestyle of the consumer which they are trying to acquire.

Literature review

Luxury can be characterized by a strong element of human involvement, scarcity or limited supply and value recognition by others. It elaborates that luxury goods are those which show superiority, brand identity, brand awareness and outstanding (Cornell, 2002). Webster (2002) luxury brands can be characterized as those which are unique and provide high societal and expressive value and are of superior quality defines it simply as non-essential items. Luxury is complex and subjective and its meaning is dependent on various personal and interpersonal motives. Luxury brands (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004) are depicted as the finest or high priced brands that consumers purchase to satisfy their psychological motives that include materialistic motive, hedonic motive and gratification motive. Seringhaus, F. H. Rolf (2005) identifies four factors that influence the consumers' buying decision. The first factor is the economic factor which points out consumers have sound knowledge about market competition and they perceived positive and negative views about products & services. From the perception, they made the purchase. The second factor passive view that is different from the previous one as this view explains that consumers do impulsive purchases being influenced by the sellers' promotion offerings. The third emotional factor which describes that the buyer makes a decision based on the emotion-related to the brand. The last factor is cognitive that states that consumers seek information about the product and opt for maximum benefits. Ching-Yaw Chen et al. (2012) explored the differences in Taiwanese women's purchasing decisions towards two different categories: luxury goods and general products. The study analyzed different factors like age, income, education, and lifestyle that play a major role in purchase decisions. The age group of 21-40 years women shops more luxury goods than the age group of 45-60 years. They consider product origin, functionality, prices, reputation, brand awareness, appearance and design rather than TV shopping, escaping bad mood, celebrity endorser's influence. Shallu, Gupta (2013) argued that different types of promotional offers have a different level of impact on the consumer's buying decision. There are different forms of promotions, but difficulty occurs while measuring the level of impact of the different promotional offers on consumers. Schiffman & Kanuk (2014) highlights four main elements that affect the consumer's buying decision. Firstly economic views indicate consumer's perfect knowledge about the market and consider being rational customers. The second element is the passive view explains that consumers do impulsive purchases being influenced by the seller's promotion offerings. The third element is the emotional view which describes that buyers make a decision based on the emotions related to the brand. The last element is the cognitive view that states that consumers seek information about the product and choose for maximum benefits. Marwa and Razvan (2016) analyzed the relationships between cultural values and motivations of purchase and consumption of luxury brands. The study was based on the Conceptual model of research and the sample size of 100 respondents taken from Tunisia and Romania's markets. That assisted empirical research comparing the purchasing behavior of luxury brands consumers in the two markets. The study identified five categories: status, uniqueness, conformism, quality and hedonism, and added ostentation. Concerning cultural values, the author worked on the framework provided by Hofstede and taken into account the values for individualism-collectivism, power distance, masculinity-femininity, uncertainty avoidance. The author also elaborated that players on the luxury market were faced with a strategic dilemma, they can either standardize their marketing activities or they can adapt them according to the differences identified in the markets on which they are active. In many cases, they had to adapt, partially or completely, their marketing activities, integrated marketing communication, advertising campaigns, creative strategies, distribution, purchase, and consumption. Kaylene C. Williams, Robert A. Page (2016) analyzed that each generation had unique expectations, experiences, generational history, lifestyles, values, and demographics. Accordingly, many companies were reaching out to multi-generational consumers and trying to recognize and increase the attention of these different buyers. Multi-generational marketing was the practice of appealing to the unique needs and behaviors of individuals within more than one specific generational group. This means that marketers need to understand various generations like Pre-Depression Generation, Depression Generation, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z. In this paper, the author also elaborated on the strategies to target different behaviors of the generations, so that to build relationships, gain trust, and close business. The rationale of this paper was to describe briefly the U.S. generations in terms of the times in which they grew up as well as the characteristics, lifestyles, and attitudes of the group. However, the primary focus of the paper was to describe various marketing understandings and strategies appropriate to each generation's characteristics and behaviors, particularly in terms of segmentation, products and services, and communication. Kotler, Keller (2017) explained that the promotion mix is a short-term program to attract customers. Promotional offers were effective where products are homogenous. Sales promotion influences consumers for stockpiling because offers encourage customers to buy in large quantities. Thus consumers buying decision is

influenced by an outside motivation. Marketing researchers try to find out these external factors that have a direct impact on sales and related to the consumer's buying process.

Shrestha, (2017) analyzed various promotion tools in the study are:- Buy-one-get-one: it is a type of promotional offer where consumers get an additional product at the price for one. There is no extra price for the product, therefore, consumers are easily convinced (Mughal, Mehmood, *et al.* 2014).

Coupons: It is a certificate that avails customers saving on the purchase of a particular product and this certificate is distributed either online or in printed form (Kotler, Keller, 2017). Coupons are counted under the active promotional offers whereas buy one get one is considered as passive promotional offers (Schneider and Currim, 1991). Active shoppers will be attracted to coupon offers but buy one get one or price discount triggers to impulse purchase; researchers described it as display prone purchase (Blattberg and Nelson, 1990). But there is a very low significant relationship between coupons and consumer buying. As coupons sometimes allow the buyer to make a purchase, which he does not desire.

Price discount: Price discount offers monetary benefits to the customers during the purchase. The price discount has two types of effects on consumers' behavior. When a brand promotes the offer, it is perceived as low in quality and on the other hand, the brand offers fewer discounts is assumed high in quality. It is also perceived by the customer that high-quality brands offer less promotional offers (Raghubir, Corfman, 1995).

Direct marketing- According to Brassington & Pettit (2000) explained that direct marketing is an interactive system of marketing, using one or more advertising media to achieve a measurable response. It outlines a basis for creating and further developing an on-going direct relationship between an organization and its customers. Therefore an organization needs to have as much information as possible about each customer and needs to be able to access, manipulate and analyze that information, thus the database is essential to the process of building the relationship.

Digital marketing- Moles (2000) highlighted that Internet technology makes it possible to follow individual customer usage. Through search engine optimization it is possible to improve your Internet site's ranking in the Internet searching and increase traffic to your web site. It is a remunerating tool for increasing online-visibility as it is practically free of charge.

Social Media, Blogs, websites- In the fast-growing economy usage of social media, blogs, and websites is very common. It is very easy for companies to tap the market and share any product or information with consumers (Abdolvand and Reihani, 2013). Social media also offers advertising space for companies and step-by-step- help in creating an online presence.

Gap analysis

Vigneron & Johnson (2004)	Analyzed that consumers purchase to satisfy their psychological motives that include materialistic motive, hedonic motive and gratification motive. But the impact of the promotion mix on the purchase of luxury brands has not been studied.
Seringhaus, F. H. Rolf (2005)	Identifies four main factors that influence the consumer's buying decision towards luxury goods those factors were an economic view, passive view, emotional view, and cognitive view, but the impact of promotion tools has not been studied.
Ching-Yaw Chen et al. (2012)	Explored the differences in Taiwanese women's purchasing decisions towards two different categories: luxury goods and general products, but other variables like an advertisement, sales promotion has not been considered.
Marine Aghekyan Simonian (2012)	Shows that product brand image influences consumer's online purchase intentions both directly and indirectly by reducing various risk perceptions. Online store image impacts purchase intentions indirectly by decreasing risk perceptions but the impact of promotion variables like gifts, coupons, advertisement on the purchase of luxury brands has not been studied.
Shallu, Gupta (2013)	Argued that different types of promotional offers have a different level of impact on the consumer's buying decision. There are different forms of promotions, but difficulty occurs while measuring the level of impact of the different promotional offers on consumers.
Schiffman & Kanuk (2014)	It Highlights economic factors and cognitive factors that affect the consumer's buying decision. But other dimensions like quality, functional value, and promotion mix have not been studied.
Marwa and Razvan. (2016)	analyzed the relationships between cultural values and motivations of purchase and consumption of luxury brands that assisted empirical research comparing purchasing behavior of luxury brands consumers on the two markets, but the impact of promotional

	tools on the purchase of luxury brands has not been considered.
Kaylene C. Williams, Robert A. Page (2016)	Considers the psychographic profile of consumers but the impact of promotional tools on the purchase of luxury brands has not been considered.
Kotler, Keller (2017)	Considers that sales promotion influences consumers for stockpiling because offers encourage customers to buy in large quantities. Thus consumers buying decision is influenced by an outside motivation. But the impact of demographic and psychographic variables on purchase of luxury brands. Impact of age on purchase behavior of luxury brands.
Fionda and Moore (2009)	Shows that product brand influences and purchase intentions both directly and indirectly by reducing various risk factors. Online store image impacts purchase intentions indirectly by decreasing risk factors but the impact of promotion variables like sales promotion and advertisement on the purchase of luxury brands has not been studied.
Berthon et al. (2009),	Presents a philosophical analysis of luxury brands, focusing on their aesthetics. The gap in the study is that the purchase of luxury brands concerning promotional variables has not been considered.
Atwal & Williams (2009)	Analyzed that luxury products no longer provide functional values, but also, on emotional values and social values, but the impact of promotion variables like sales promotion and advertisement on the purchase of luxury brands has not been studied.
Han, Young Jee et al. (2010)	Analyzed that buying decision of luxury goods depends on income and lifestyle but other factors like price, promotional offers and value concept have not been considered
Lasaleta et al. (2010)	Demonstrated the effect of brand identity, premium pricing on the purchase of luxury brands but other variables have not been considered.
Shrestha, (2017)	Emphasized on high-quality value for luxury brands, and elaborate various promotional tools but their impact on luxury brands has not been studied.

Statement of the problem

India has a very large and fast-growing retail market. Day by day increasing endorsement campaigns and collaborative advertising technology have led to a variety of new options for young consumers. With the expansion of different promotional medium, choosing the right type of promotion mix for potential customers is not a simple job. The study tries to understand the influence of promotional offers on different aspects of the buying behaviour of luxury brands like coupons, discounts, rebates, freebies, buy one get one free packages deals, etc. With the expansion of domestic retail and international retail, the purchasing power of Indian urban consumers is increasing and branded merchandise like Apparel, Cosmetics, Shoes, Watches, Beverages, Food, and even Jewellery, are emerging as lifestyle products that are widely accepted by the urban Indian consumer. Therefore Companies need to identify the various types of consumer segments present digitally and in traditional mediums.

Research methodology

The current study discusses the buying behaviour of consumers of luxury brands therefore; the target population is from the middle class and upper-middle-class segment. Convenient sampling (Non-random Technique) is selected for conducting research. A sample size of 400 respondents of the age group of 25-45 years has been selected for the study. The proposed study makes use of both secondary and primary data. The primary data collected from 400 respondents with the help of a widely used and well-known survey method utilizing a non-disguised and structured questionnaire. The data was analyzed with the help of the Chi-square test, Factor analysis, and Kruskal-Wallis H test.

Objectives of the study

The following objectives for the study are:-

- To understand the consumer intention to purchase luxury brand.
- A conceptual model has been made to show the influence of promotion mix on the buying behaviour of luxury brands.

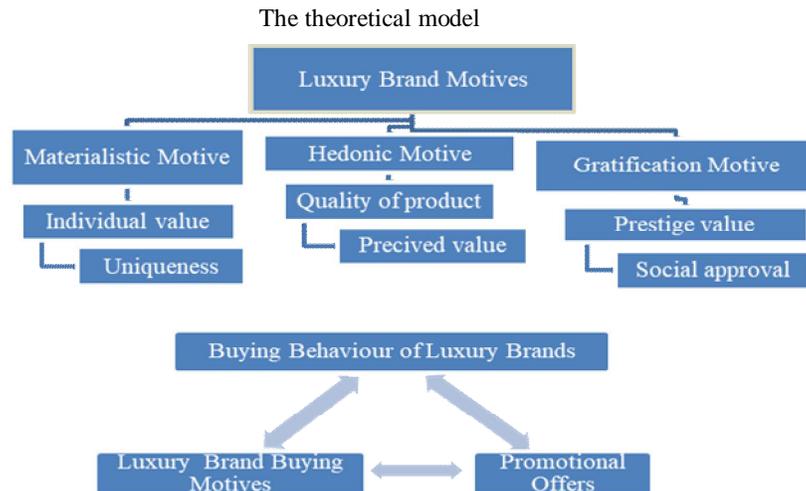
Hypothetical construct

Based on the review of the literature, the following variables have been identified. The **dependent variable** is the buying behaviour of luxury brands.

The **independent variables** are

1. Different luxury brand motives namely
 - (a) Materialistic motive
 - (b) Hedonic motive

- (c) Gratification motive
- 2. Promotion mix



Modified from Wiedmann’s model, Academy of Marketing Science Review, 2007

The reliability of the scales is measured by computing the Cronbach alpha. Cronbach alpha is considered to evaluate the internal uniformity and reliability of the tool as in **Table-1.1**. The Cronbach alpha has come as 0.746, thus this part of the instrument was considered reliable for the study.

TABLE 1.1

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.746	12

TABLE 1.2
Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Individual value	.957					
Perceived value	.781					
Prestige value	.708					
Social approval	.679					
Direct marketing		.795				
Discount		.725				
Coupons and price			.677			
Uniqueness				.825		
Buy one get one free					.889	
Digital marketing						.838
Eigen Value	5.693	4.353	2.338	1.237	1.224	1.119
% Variance	40.666	9.667	9.558	9.423	7.423	6.423
Cumulative % Variance	40.666	50.333	59.332	68.345	75.345	82.345
Scale reliability alpha	.858	.755	.677	.825	.889	.838

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

According to Table 1.2 Factor analysis loadings, a twelve-factor solution describes that 82.34 % of the total variance in 12 items was obtained. Factors with high loading and have Eigenvalues more than 1 were taken. The factor loading ranges from .705 to .801. The inter-item correlation ranges from .677 to .957 and the item to total correlation ranges from .530 to .583. It covers 5.693 of the Eigenvalues. The twelve factors identified are individual value, uniqueness, quality of the product, perceived value, prestige value, social approval, social media marketing, digital marketing, digital marketing, direct marketing, buy one get one free, coupons and price discount.

TABLE 1.3

Hypothesis testing	Test used	Significance Value	Status of hypothesis	Comment
There is a significant difference in perception of Individual value towards the buying of luxury brands.	Kruskal-Wallis H test	0.007	Accepted	There is a significant difference in perception of Individual value.
There is a significant difference in perception of uniqueness towards the buying of luxury brands.	Kruskal-Wallis H test	0.456	Rejected	There is no significant difference in perception of uniqueness towards buying of luxury brands
There is a significant difference in perception of the quality of product towards buying of luxury brands	Kruskal-Wallis H test	0.356	Rejected	There is no significant difference in perception of the quality of product towards buying of luxury brands
There is a significant difference in perception of perceived value towards buying of luxury brands	Kruskal-Wallis H test	0.019	Accepted	There is significant difference in perception of perceived value towards buying of luxury brands
There is a significant difference in perception of prestige value towards buying of luxury brands	Kruskal-Wallis H test	0.015	Accepted	There is a significant difference in perception of prestige value towards buying of luxury brands
There is a significant difference in perception of social approval towards buying of luxury brands	Kruskal-Wallis H test	0.005	Accepted	There is a significant difference in perception of social approval towards buying of luxury brands
There is a relation between Social media marketing and the kind of luxury brand a consumer intends to buy	Chi-square test	0.000	Accepted	There is a relation between Social media marketing and the kind of luxury brand a consumer intends to buy
There is a relation between digital marketing and the kind of luxury brand a consumer intends to buy	Chi-square test	0.000	Accepted	There is a relation between digital marketing and the kind of luxury brand a consumer intends to buy
There is a relationship between direct marketing and the kind of luxury brand a consumer intends to buy	Chi-square test	0.000	Accepted	There is a relationship between direct marketing and the kind of luxury brand a consumer intends to buy
There is a relation between coupons and the kind of luxury brand a consumer intends to buy	Chi-square test	0.000	Accepted	There is a relation between coupons and the kind of luxury brand a consumer

				intends to buy
There is a relation between buy one get one and the kind of luxury brand a consumer intends to buy	Chi-square test	0.000	Accepted	There is a relation between buy one get one and the kind of luxury brand a consumer intends to buy

In **Table 1.3** the **Kruskal-Wallis H test** was used to prove the significant difference in buying luxury brands. The six factors are individual value, uniqueness, quality of the product, perceived value, prestige value, and social approval verify from the Kruskal-Wallis H test and results indicates that consumer buy luxury brands due to self-expression and individual needs attach with the brand. In terms of uniqueness, the hypothesis rejects, as individuals believe that brand name is associated with assured quality. Perceived value is considered as the hedonic motive for buying luxury goods. Moreover, respondents believe that social recognition is also an important aspect of buying luxury brands.

Chi-square test: It shows the impact of the promotion mix on buying luxury brands. The following results were indicating that social media like Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp have a direct impact on consumer intention to buy luxury products. The age group of 40 years prefers to buy electronic goods and mobile phones through social media advertisements while people more than less than 30 years wish to buy apparel and watches. Moreover promotional tools like buy one get one, coupons, discounts and mobile applications have a significant impact on the buying of luxury goods. People are easily attracted to new promotion tools and offers.

Managerial implications

The results show practical implications for marketers. The results suggest that marketing communication as a necessary step for further development. Interactive marketing tools such as social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter can help build good relationships between luxury brands and their customers. In an increasingly competitive global marketplace, it is vital to effectively respond to the needs and wants of consumers. Targeting, Positioning, and segmentation strategies have to be made on a global level. Companies should notify consumers about the quality products and crafting of luxury products and emphasize exclusivity, quality product. Consumer awareness can become apparent in the form of advertising that stresses quality, packaging, and additional facts that offer complete information on authentic luxury products. Managers of luxury goods should emphasize the positive, purposeful, aesthetic and emotional experience of owning and using a luxury product. Knowledge of these variations and similarities can help in designing suitable marketing campaigns. From a market positioning viewpoint, evaluating the buying behavior of consumers can help marketers to identify and focus on the specific luxury value dimensions, with special reference to awareness.

Limitations and scope for further research

Firstly, a particular limitation of this study was that all respondents were from the Chandigarh region and represented only one specific demographic group. Thus, we can say that results might be different in different cities or areas of India. Secondly, we have considered the influence of promotion mix and value dimensions on the purchase behaviour of luxury brands. Other variables like age, occupation, income group, gender, ethnicity, and marital status can be considered to study their influence on the purchase behaviour of luxury brands. Thirdly, only the overall perceptions about luxury brands have been tested. We can apply a similar analysis for a specified luxury product or service. In terms of further research, therefore, researchers should consider expanding the study focused on different areas and different populations.

Conclusion

According to perceived values in luxury brands, different sets of luxury products and different types of promotional tools applied for people of different age groups. Even if consumers buy the same luxury goods, their perceptions about luxury values can differ, so the luxury market is heterogeneous and the role of product characteristics plays an important role. The research has practical propositions for marketers working in the luxury industry. A marketer needs to identify the needs, wants and values of purchasers, especially in an increasingly competitive global marketplace. From a market positioning viewpoint, checking the evaluative criteria of consumers can help marketers to recognize and focus on the specific luxury dimensions, with special reference to awareness. Luxury brand companies can understand people of different educational levels respond to the different luxury value dimensions and how luxury products can serve the requirements of each target group.

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About the authors

*Dr. Ratinder Kaur is the Faculty of School of Management Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala. Along with Ph.D., She holds three masters in the area of Commerce and Business Administration. Her area of research is Banking, Change Management, and Process Reengineering. She is also a regular trainer of Soft Skills in the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India, Institute of Cost Accountants, Tata consultancy and other institutes of repute of the region. She is a lifetime member of the Indian Commerce Association and Patiala Management Association.

**Ms. Bhavna Sharma is a management graduate and pursuing a Ph.D. from Punjabi University, Patiala. His research and teaching interests are focused on consumer behavior and sub-cultural differences in patterns of consumption and lifestyles. She has written several articles on these subjects.