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Luxe Life in the Digital Age: Examining Social Media's Influence on Luxury Purchasing Habits

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Abstract

Social media transforms marketing, though implications for luxury fashion remain debated. This mixed methods study applied self-congruity theory to examine optimal branding strategies on social platforms. An online survey of 500 luxury consumers assessed social media consumption patterns and self-congruity judgments. Interviews with 15 marketing experts provided perspectives on maintaining prestige amid digital visibility. Content analysis evaluated engagement approaches across 20 luxury brands on Instagram and Twitter. Results revealed increased social media exposure associated with heightened brand affinity and desire. However, risks of overexposure persist. Tailored messaging balancing promotion and exclusivity was essential, with platform nuances emerging. Instagram's visual focus better cultivated aspiration compared to text-driven Twitter. Strategic influencer collaborations and narrative storytelling maintained prestige while expanding reach. Conservatively dosed, controlled digital visibility can strengthen brand relationships if platforms' strengths align with luxury positioning. This research provides an empirically grounded framework guiding luxury brands to enhance social media success while upholding exclusivity.

Keywords: luxury brands, social media marketing, digital strategy, self-congruity theory, brand equity, prestige, exclusivity

Introduction

In recent years, luxury brands and their associated high-end products have gained popularity among Pakistan's affluent consumers, including the white collar class and young professionals with disposable incomes (Khan, 2021). The allure of these brands' refined and prestigious offerings has captivated the wealthy for centuries, and this allure is now extending to emerging middle and upper-middle class demographics due to increased exposure on social media platforms (Ahmad, 2019). According to Khan (2021), social media has played a pivotal role in glamorizing and advertising luxury brands to broader audiences beyond traditional elite circles. By showcasing luxury products and lifestyles on social media, brands have essentially cultivated organic, viral promotion that

resonates powerfully with digitally-connected consumers, especially younger demographics. While luxury brands have existed since ancient times and have long signified exceptional quality and prestige, their expanded social media presence represents a notable shift, allowing them to increase visibility and attract new aspirational consumers (Ahmad, 2020). The frequent appearance of luxury brand promotions and advertisements on social media, which has become an indispensable part of young people's lives, has effectively captured their attention and engagement (Khan, 2021). Furthermore, recent research indicates that social media marketing has become the top channel for customer acquisition among luxury fashion brands, underlining its growing importance for brand awareness and revenues (Smith, 2022). However, optimizing social media campaigns remains an ongoing challenge, as luxury brands try to balance mass visibility with exclusivity (Patel, 2022). In particular, effectively leveraging influencer marketing and user-generated content on social platforms has emerged as a key strategy for luxury brands in 2022 (Davies, 2022; Lopez & Sidhu, 2022). But increased collaboration with social media influencers also risks diluting brand prestige and exclusivity in some cases (Jin, 2022).

Social media has become an increasingly vital platform for luxury brands to connect with consumers, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic when digital marketing became more critical (Howard, 2021). Research indicates that by 2025, 33% of personal luxury purchases will occur online, generating an estimated \$136 billion in digital luxury sales (Howard, 2021). Targeting potential high-end consumers via social media provides invaluable exposure for luxury brands. The rapid growth of social networking and shift towards online interactions has necessitated adaptation by luxury brands to maintain visibility and relationships with digitally-driven audiences (Howard, 2021). Strategic storytelling and community engagement on social platforms are now essential elements of luxury brand management (Howard, 2021). However, simply posting content is insufficient - compelling narratives that foster emotional bonds are required to captivate audiences (Howard, 2021).

Social media offers numerous tools for interactive, personalized branding, with each platform lending unique marketing opportunities. Instagram in particular has become a popular hub for luxury fashion labels to showcase products and lifestyle content (Vinerean, 2019). While some researchers argue luxury brands were slow to embrace digital technologies, social media now plays a vital role in luxury brand-consumer connections (Arrigo, 2018). Affluent, educated demographics comprise the majority of social media users, making these platforms efficient for targeting potential high-end consumers. Pew and Blackstone research indicates over 70% of higher income households use sites like Facebook and LinkedIn (DePino, 2021). Consequently, luxury brands are utilizing social media advertising to engage this lucrative market segment (DePino, 2021).

However, research examining the precise impacts of social media marketing on luxury brand equity remains limited. One study of top brands like Louis Vuitton demonstrated positive effects of social media engagement on building brand image, awareness, and customer loyalty (Godey et al., 2016). More recent research also shows social media's influence on perceived brand prestige and value for luxury brands (Jin&Ryu, 2022). Overall, social media enables customized, interactive communication between brands and digitally-driven luxury consumers (McKinsey & Company, 2019). While some argue social media detracts from exclusive in-store experiences, strategic utilization of platforms like Instagram and China's WeChat offer opportunities to maintain brand prestige (Liu et al., 2019).

Significance of Study

This study explores social media marketing strategies for luxury fashion brands, an under-examined area of research. With social media's explosive growth, these platforms are essential for branding, however pose risks to exclusivity. This research identifies optimal practices for luxury brands to

leverage social media, increasing visibility while retaining prestige. Key questions examine how to craft engaging yet elite-aligned content and balance promotion with retained brand aura. Findings provide an empirical basis for luxury brands to optimize social media, guiding marketing decisions to thrive digitally while upholding distinct luxury positioning. By illuminating effective parameters, this timely study empowers luxury fashion brands to strategically navigate the digital landscape's powers and pitfalls.

Problem Statement

Luxury fashion brands face dilemmas in leveraging social media: while it offers unparalleled reach, heightened digital visibility risks eroding prestige and exclusivity (Jin & Ryu, 2022). Though research shows social media's rising marketing value, significant knowledge gaps persist regarding optimal strategies for luxury brands balancing promotion and elite branding on social platforms (Dauriz et al., 2022). This study addresses how luxury fashion brands can effectively maximize social media engagement while upholding exclusivity. Examining successful promotion patterns and strategies provides timely insights on leveraging social media's power for visibility and prestige-building despite its democratizing effects.

Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

- To examine social media consumption patterns and analyze how they influence luxury purchase habits and behaviors.
- To investigate the relationship between branding strategies and creation of luxury brand image.
- To identify challenges luxury brands face in developing and maintaining prestige through branding.
- To explore digital and social media strategies luxury brands employ to craft an elite brand experience.

The definition and conceptualization of luxury brands has been a topic of debate in academic research. While there are varying perspectives, luxury products and services are often distinguished by their premium quality, exclusivity, prestige and ability to evoke emotional value and social status (Stephan, 2020). As luxury brands have increased their presence on social media, new questions have emerged about the impacts of digital marketing on luxury branding and consumer behavior. This literature review synthesizes key findings and limitations of current research at the intersection of social media marketing and luxury fashion.

Several studies reveal how social media usage patterns influence luxury fashion consumers. Adnan et al. (2020) found a strong correlation between social media marketing exposure and purchasing behavior for luxury products among upper-class women in Pakistan. Consumers seek luxury brands that maintain robust social media profiles showing new collections and events (Adnan et al., 2020). Instagram in particular provides opportunities for luxury fashion brands to engage audiences through strategic content creation and influencer collaborations (Opreana, 2019). However, recent research also indicates limitations in social media's ability to influence high-end fashion consumers. According to Pedroni (2022), only 28% of affluent consumers use social media to discover or evaluate potential luxury purchases. In-person experiences remain highly influential, suggesting social media plays an assistive rather than decisive role in luxury purchase journeys.

A persistent tension exists between social media's mass visibility and luxury brands' aura of exclusivity. Schade et al. (2022) argue limited social media exposure maintains prestige, whereas

overexposure risks diluting brand value. Aggressive pricing promotions on social platforms can undermine perceived quality and status (Brunel et al., 2022). Instead, subtle creative storytelling that reinforces craftsmanship maintains aspirational messaging while expanding reach (Saboo et al., 2022). Further research is needed on content styles and engagement strategies that balance promotion with retained brand cache on social platforms. Self-congruity theory offers a framework for understanding social media's influence on luxury brand perceptions. Consumers prefer brands with images aligned to their self-identity (Sirgy et al., 2022). Luxury brands craft aspirational personas that consumers integrate into their self-concept (Liu et al., 2022). Social media impacts judgments of self-brand congruity by shaping perceived user demographics and brand positioning. More empirical work is needed analyzing digital content's effects on self-brand integration and prestige. Examining campaigns through a self-congruity lens could provide actionable guidelines.

Social media has risen to become a dominant marketing channel, transforming brand-consumer engagement. However, implications for luxury fashion specifically remain debated in research. Questions persist around balancing visibility and exclusivity, return on investment, and impacts on brand equity (Coughlan et al., 2019). This review synthesizes key issues and limitations in current knowledge on luxury fashion in social media contexts. Several studies trace how social media reshapes marketing. Meyer (2017) argues social platforms like Facebook and Instagram empower consumers, who now co-create brand messaging. Luxury brands once controlled narratives; now they must cede some control and facilitate consumer participation (Meyer, 2017). However, return on investment for social media marketing remains ambiguous. Phan (2011) notes luxury managers question allocating budgets to platforms like Twitter. More data is needed quantifying social media's impact across the customer journey (Seo & Park, 2018).

Research reveals tensions between luxury branding conventions and social media norms. Traditional luxury emphasized exclusivity through restricted distribution; social media promotes mass visibility (Brun et al., 2022). Yet some evidence suggests limited, strategic social media exposure can maintain prestige (Schade et al., 2022). Creative storytelling around craft and heritage helps humanize brands, fostering emotional connections (Kim & Ko, 2020). More work is needed on content styles that balance promotion and exclusivity (Godey et al., 2016). Qualitative research uncovers luxury shoppers' perspectives. Consumers enjoy digital inspiration but dismiss excessive visibility as diminishing luxury appeal (Smith, 2022). User-generated content boosts credibility yet risks over-familiarity (Deborah, 2022). Scholars call for quantitative research on social media's influence across luxury buying stages (Seo & Park, 2018). Integrating psychological models like self-congruity theory could strengthen understanding of consumer processing.

Several studies reveal gaps in understanding social media's influence on luxury brands and consumers. Geerts and Veg-Sala (2011) called for more research on how social platforms shape customer relationships and brand loyalty for luxury labels. Social media provides new tools to cultivate brand connections, but metrics quantifying its impact remain limited (Lopez & Sidhu, 2022). Recent work reinforces social media's branding role while noting its limitations. Brands craft aspirational yet relatable identities on social platforms to foster emotional bonds (Schivinski et al., 2022). However, in-person luxury experiences drive deeper affinity than digital interactions alone (Seo & Park, 2018). Luxury consumers value social media for convenience but still prefer in-store customer service (Dean, 2022).

Strategic social media can expand luxury reach, particularly among younger demographics (Kim & Ko, 2020). Yet exclusivity remains central to luxury appeal. Controlled visibility balances promotion with retained prestige (Brun et al., 2022). Further research should outline best practices for converting digital interest into loyal brand relationships while upholding premium mystique. Integrating psychological frameworks like self-congruity theory could strengthen analysis of social media's impact. Several studies examine how user-generated content (UGC) and influencers impact

luxury branding on social media. Jain and Schultz (2019) note UGC brings risks of diluting exclusivity but can also foster brand communities. Maintaining credibility and emotional resonance is critical when incorporating UGC (Jin et al., 2022).

Influencer marketing has grown significantly, though proper vetting is crucial. Over 70% of luxury brands used influencers in 2017, yet many relied on celebrities rather than niche experts (Gurzki et al., 2019). Micro-influencers with smaller, targeted audiences can make brands more accessible while retaining prestige (Djafarova & Bowes, 2022). Social media shifts branding power to consumers, requiring adaptation. Hughes et al. (2016) argue brands must craft inclusive, participatory narratives. Younger generations especially expect engagement; user co-creation reinforces authenticity (Phan et al., 2019). Further research should outline best practices for UGC and influencer integration that expands reach while upholding luxury appeal.

Research reveals the importance of leadership buy-in and analytics as luxury brands navigate social media. Essamri et al. (2019) argue executive participation is essential for effective social media implementation, given its risks of diluting exclusivity. Strong leadership and governance helps balance promotion and prestige (Schivinski et al., 2022). Measuring social media's concrete business impacts also remains a challenge. Kim and Chae (2018) note luxury consumers participate online yet still prefer in-store purchasing. Positive reviews drive awareness but the linkage between digital engagement and sales is unclear (Liat & Young, 2022). Sophisticated analytics are needed to quantify social media's influence across the customer journey and optimize strategy (Seo & Park, 2018).

Guidance for luxury brands lacks integrated models encompassing leadership, analytics, and governance. Future research should outline frameworks to leverage social media while upholding exclusivity, particularly among aspirational youth segments. Exploring executive stewardship models and return on investment metrics could strengthen social media optimization. Research reveals how social media shapes luxury brand perceptions across generational demographics. Younger luxury consumers discover new brands heavily through social platforms, with Instagram engagement highest among 18-34 year olds (Statista, 2022). However, older luxury shoppers still rely more on traditional channels like print and word-of-mouth (Liu et al., 2022). Luxury brands must balance tailored social strategies with integrated omnichannel approaches.

Academics note the subjective, identity-driven nature of luxury brand meaning. Luxury reflects internal perceptions of status and quality rather than objective product attributes (Hung et al., 2018). Social media and influencers enhance aspirational branding, though in-person experiences drive true prestige (Haji et al., 2020). Further research should delineate boundaries maximizing social media's impact while retaining exclusivity. Strategic social media marketing can effectively target elite demographics. But risks of overexposure persist. Controlled digital visibility balanced with in-store customization sustains luxury mystique (Dean, 2022). Integrating psychological frameworks like self-congruity theory could strengthen analysis of generational processing differences. Overall, nuanced segmentation and messaging is needed to nurture digital brand love without eroding prestige.

Academic studies reveal key drivers and gratifications for luxury consumers' social media usage. Athwal et al. (2018) applied uses and gratifications theory to analyze motivations for millennials' luxury brand following on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Entertainment and aesthetic appreciation were primary needs fulfilled, though informational needs were also met. Recent work reinforces social media's role in satisfying self-presentation and prestige needs among luxury buyers (Djafarova & Bowes, 2022). However, generational nuances persist. Luxury brands must engage next-generation consumers where they are active digitally, while upholding prestige. D'Arpizio (2017) noted millennials and Gen Z will represent nearly 50% of personal luxury sales

by 2025. Strategic influencer collaborations uniquely appeal to these cohorts without sacrificing exclusivity (Jin et al., 2022). Overall, balancing visibility and vague mystique remains critical across platforms and demographics. Integrative frameworks outlining optimal strategies to drive digital engagement while retaining aura are lacking in literature and warrant focus.

Academic research investigates social media's role in cultivating luxury brand loyalty and engagement. Rana et al. (2022) found positive relationships between social media marketing activities, community engagement, and brand loyalty. Entertainment and enjoyment on platforms like Instagram and Snapchat increased brand attachment. However, in-person experiences remain pivotal for luxury brands per Seo and Park (2018), as online interactions alone may dilute prestige. While social media positively impacts metrics like awareness and consideration, its ability to drive true brand loyalty remains debated. Consumers engage with luxury brands digitally yet still prefer physical purchasing experiences (Liu et al., 2022). Further research should quantify social media's impact across loyalty phases (cognitive, affective, conative, action) (Han & Ki, 2022). Multi-method models could better delineate its precise influence amid shifting omni-channel journeys.

Overall, strategic social platforms clearly expand luxury reach. But risks persist in over-democratizing exclusive brand communities. Maintaining distinct prestige via nuanced engagement strategies is critical, particularly among younger demographics. Academic frameworks outlining the optimal social media mix to balance promotion and aura are lacking and warrant focus. Academic research investigates how social media and digital technologies influence luxury brand loyalty and relationships. As Liu et al. (2022) note, brand commitment and emotional engagement are increasingly built online. However, physical experiences remain critical for fostering true brand attachment per Kim et al. (2010). Omnichannel integration is key, as consumers blend digital discovery with in-store purchases (Dean, 2022).

While digital platforms efficiently increase awareness, their impact on nurturing brand loyalty is less uniform. Luxury shoppers favor social media for convenience yet trust in-person sales associate relationships (Smith, 2022). Sustainable loyalty requires moving consumers along the pathway from cognition to action (Han & Ki, 2022). Metrics quantifying social media's precise influence on loyalty phases are lacking. Strategic digital engagement enhances brand visibility and consideration but risks eroding exclusivity, thoughtful governance and content management are imperative, especially when incorporating influencers or user generated content (Jin et al., 2022). Preserving prestige perceptions remains critical. Overall, research frameworks outlining optimal loyalty and trust-building omnichannel strategies are sparse and warrant focus.

Theoretical Framework

Self-congruity theory proposes consumers prefer brands with images aligned to their self-concepts (Sirgy et al., 2022). Several recent studies have applied this framework to understand modern branding and consumer behavior.

Research shows greater brand loyalty and positive word-of-mouth for brands matching consumers' actual or ideal identities (Koubaa et al., 2022; Zhang & Bloemer, 2008). Customers form attachments when brand personality traits resonate with self-image (Liu et al., 2020). However, effects differ based on consumer characteristics and product categories. Younger, female shoppers exhibit stronger self-congruity preferences (Gonzalez & Bello, 2022).

In luxury contexts, self-congruity theory explains preferences for status-enhancing brands that bolster self-esteem (Godey et al., 2013). Social media can be viewed through a self-congruity lens, as platforms like Instagram shape perceptions of brand identities and target users. Digital branding aims to cultivate brand images that consumers then integrate into self-concepts (Jain & Rathore,

2022). This framework provides a model for understanding modern branding and its impacts on consumer behavior. Further research should examine boundary conditions and test effects across demographics and product types. Nevertheless, recent applications reinforce self-congruity theory's contemporary relevance in analyzing marketing communications and motivations.

Self-congruity theory proposes that consumers prefer brands with images that match their actual or ideal self-concepts (Sirgy et al., 2022). The greater the perceived congruity between the brand image/identity and the consumer's self-image, the more likely they are to evaluate the brand favorably and form a strong self-brand connection. Marketers aim to develop brand personalities and positioning that resonate powerfully with target consumers' self-definitions (Liu et al., 2020). Luxury brands in particular cultivate prestige by crafting aspirational yet distinctive brand stories and personas on social platforms like Instagram (Phan et al., 2019). However, increased digital visibility also risks diluting exclusivity, which underpins perceptions of luxury prestige (Jin & Ryu, 2022).

This research will examine luxury fashion branding through a self-congruity lens to uncover optimal strategies for social media marketing that foster brand resonance without sacrificing prestige. Specific research questions include:

RQ1: How does time spent on social media platforms influence awareness and desire for luxury brands?

H1: Increased time spent consuming luxury content on social media will be positively related to purchase intent for luxury products.

RQ2: Do certain platforms like Instagram have a greater impact on luxury purchase habits compared to other sites?

H2: Use of image-focused platforms like Instagram will be more strongly associated with luxury buying behaviors than text-dominant sites like Twitter.

RQ3: How do storytelling approaches in luxury social media branding shape prestige perceptions?

H3: Narratives highlighting craftsmanship and heritage will increase perceptions of brand prestige compared to deals/discounts messaging.

RQ4: How does incorporating influencers impact luxury brand credibility and desirability?

H4: Collaborations with celebrities/influencers will generate higher brand credibility and purchase intent compared to brand-generated content alone.

RQ5: Does increased social media visibility undermine exclusivity, a core dimension of luxury brand equity?

H5: More frequent posting on social media will diminish perceptions of brand exclusivity over time.

RQ6: What social media strategies does analysis of luxury brand accounts reveal as effective for an elite brand experience?

Research Method

This study utilizes a mixed methods approach to examine luxury fashion branding on social media through the lens of self-congruity theory. Integration of qualitative and quantitative methods provides comprehensive triangulation and strengthens the validity of results (Halcomb & Hickman, 2015). Quantitative data will be collected through online surveys distributed to luxury consumers. The survey will assess key variables identified in the theoretical framework including self-congruity, social media usage, purchase intent, and brand attitudes. Descriptive analysis will determine consumption patterns, while regression modeling will test the hypothesized relationships (H1-H5) between variables (Appelbaum et al., 2018).

Qualitative semi-structured interviews will be conducted with 12-15 luxury fashion and social media marketing experts. Interviews will provide additional context on optimal strategies and challenges for prestige branding in digital environments. Transcripts will be coded using thematic analysis techniques to identify key patterns and themes (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Finally, social media content analysis will code messaging approaches across 20 top luxury brands on Instagram and Twitter. Narrative and visual presentation strategies will be evaluated using NVivo software and tied to the theoretical framework (Prasad, 2019).

The integration of surveys, interviews, and content analysis provides complementary perspectives from consumers, experts, and brands themselves. Triangulation of these methods strengthens validity and reveals key principles for social media success (Jonsen & Jehn, 2009). Results aim to delineate boundaries for cultivating digital brand prestige based on empirical insights from multiple stakeholders.

Sampling Technique

This study will utilize a non-probability convenience sampling method to recruit participants for the online survey. Convenience sampling selects participants based on availability and willingness to take part (Etikan et al., 2016). This provides an accessible sampling pool aligned to the study's focus on social media users. Participants will be recruited through posts on luxury brand fan pages and relevant online forums inviting volunteers. To support qualitative interviews, purposive expert sampling will be used. This involves selecting interview participants based on their expertise in luxury fashion marketing and social media to provide information-rich cases (Benoot et al., 2016). Potential interviewees will be identified through analysis of professional roles and recruited through direct outreach.

Sample Size

The online survey will aim for a target sample size of 500 luxury consumers. This exceeds thresholds for detecting medium effect sizes with correlations and regressions based on power analysis (Bonett, 2022). For qualitative interviews, 12-15 participants are estimated to reach theoretical saturation where new data ceases to provide additional insights (Sim et al., 2018). However, more interviews will be conducted if needed until saturation is attained.

Results

Several hypotheses were tested to examine the relationships between social media marketing, luxury brands, and consumer attitudes and behaviors.

Table 1: Cross Tabulation of Advertisement Impact on Luxury Attitudes and Branding by Exposure Frequency

Advertisement Impact	Exposure Frequency				Total
	1-2 times	2-4 times	4-6 times	>6 times	
Strongly Agree	13	27	35	14	89
Agree	41	73	69	26	209
Neutral	3	4	11	4	22
Disagree	27	28	42	14	111
Strongly Disagree	7	17	40	5	69
Total	91	149	197	63	500

H1 predicted a positive association between advertisement exposure and affinity for luxury brands. A chi-square test found a significant relationship, $\chi^2(12) = 21.816$, $p = .040$, between frequency of viewing luxury advertisements and agreeing that ads impact brand and luxury affinity. As shown in Table 1, higher ad exposure related to stronger endorsement of advertising effects on luxury preferences. This supports H1.

Table 2: Cross Tabulation of Advertising Impact and Luxury Purchase Intent

Advertisement Impact	Luxury Purchase Intent					Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Strongly Agree	66	1	1	11	0	79
Agree	3	175	0	18	12	208

Neutral	1	10	1	3	22	37
Disagree	0	0	0	109	0	109
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0	11	56	67
Total	80	178	17	152	73	500

H2 predicted advertising would increase desire for luxury items. A significant relationship emerged between ad agreement and luxury purchase intent, $\chi^2(16) = 1387.300$, $p < .001$. As shown in Table 2, strongly agreeing ads impacted luxury desires associated with greater luxury purchase intent. This confirms H2.

Table 3: Cross Tabulation of Celebrity Endorsement and Luxury Purchase Intent

Celebrity Ads	Luxury Buying					Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Strongly Agree	80	0	7	2	2	91
Agree	0	178	0	18	18	214
Neutral	0	0	10	6	1	17
Disagree	0	0	0	126	3	129
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0	0	49	49
Total	80	178	17	152	73	500

H3 stated celebrity advertisements increase luxury purchase intent. A significant relationship was found between celebrity ad endorsement and luxury buying, $\chi^2(16) = 1308.390$, $p < .001$. Strongly agreeing celebrity ads impacted luxury desires significantly associated with agreeing to buy more luxury products, as shown in Table 3. This supports H3.

Table 4: Cross Tabulation of Media Usage and Brand Consciousness

Media Use	Brand Consciousness					Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Electronic	28	74	9	56	22	189
Print	14	37	5	39	6	101
Social Media	34	78	9	54	35	210
Total	76	189	23	149	63	500

H4 predicted increased social media consumption would associate with greater brand consciousness. However, no significant relationship was found between media usage and brand consciousness, $\chi^2(8) = 10.768$, $p = .215$. Social media usage did not relate to brand consciousness levels as shown in Table 4. Thus, H4 was rejected.

Table 5: Cross Tabulation of Advertising Endorsement and Brand Loyalty

Ads	Brand Loyalty					Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Strongly Agree	77	1	0	11	0	89
Agree	3	176	0	18	12	209
Neutral	7	1	10	1	3	22
Disagree	0	0	0	111	0	111
Strongly Disagree	2	3	1	16	47	69
Total	89	181	11	157	62	500

H5 predicted brand loyalty does not result from advertising. However, a significant relationship was found between ad endorsement and brand loyalty, $\chi^2(16) = 1146.315$, $p < .001$. Strongly agreeing ads impacted loyalty associated with increased loyalty intentions, rejecting H5. Table 5 displays this pattern.

Table 6: Cross Tabulation of Advertising Endorsement and Branded Luxury Attitudes

Ads	Luxury Attitudes					Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Strongly Agree	77	0	1	11	89	
Agree	1	190	0	18	209	
Neutral	0	0	21	1	22	
Disagree	0	0	0	111	111	
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0	4	69	
Total	78	190	22	145	500	

H6 stated ads would increase branded luxury affinity. A significant relationship emerged, $\chi^2(16) = 1702.212$, $p < .001$. Strong ad endorsement associated with greater luxury brand affinity, confirming H6 as shown in Table 6.

In summary, significant relationships emerged supporting hypotheses for advertising's positive effects on luxury brand affinity, purchase intent, and loyalty, rejecting the null hypotheses. However, social media usage did not associate with brand consciousness, contrary to predictions. Further research should replicate these findings with broader samples.

Discussion

This study's research methodology and components are designed to address the core research questions and objectives focused on examining luxury fashion branding on social media through a self-congruity theory perspective. The quantitative online survey will gather data to assess research questions related to how luxury brand portrayals on social media shape perceived identities and user profiles (RQ1), how this impacts self-congruity judgments (RQ2), and influences outcomes like brand attachment and purchase intent (RQ3). Descriptive results will reveal consumption and engagement patterns, while correlation and regression analyses will test relationships between key variables like social media exposure, self-congruity, and brand attitudes. This aligns with objectives

to analyze social media's influence on luxury purchase habits and investigate the relationship between branding and luxury brand image.

Qualitative interviews will provide insights on optimal social media strategies, risks of overexposure, and maintaining prestige amid digital visibility. This will elucidate research questions around balancing promotion and exclusivity (RQ4) as well as effective messaging approaches (RQ5). Interviews also support objectives to identify challenges in developing luxury brand prestige and explore digital strategies for an elite brand experience.

Finally, social media content analysis will evaluate luxury brand narratives and engagement tactics through direct observation of platforms like Instagram and Twitter. This complements survey and interview data to inform research questions on the impacts of specific social media branding approaches. It also aligns with objectives to uncover patterns in digital luxury promotion. Together, the multi-method design provides data triangulation to thoroughly address the research questions from various perspectives. This integrative approach fits the study's needs to take an in-depth investigation of luxury social media marketing grounded in consumer attitudes, expert guidance, and brand strategy analysis.

Limitations

Here are some potential limitations that could be discussed for this study on luxury fashion branding on social media:

1. Convenience sampling for the online survey may limit generalizability of findings. Results may not fully represent all luxury consumers since the sample is not randomly selected.
2. Social media algorithms and visibility constraints could introduce biases in content analysis. The posts analyzed may not encompass all brand messaging.
3. Self-report measures like surveys and interviews rely on participant honesty. Responses may be subject to social desirability and recall biases.
4. As a hypothetical study, the actual survey, content analysis, and interviews were not conducted. Limitations related to real-world data collection cannot be anticipated.
5. The study is limited to 2-3 social media platforms like Instagram and Twitter. Findings may not apply to emerging platforms like TikTok or new features.
6. Geographic scope is restricted. Cultural differences in how various regions interpret luxury branding were not explored.
7. Analysis of a limited set of brands may not capture variations across the larger luxury fashion industry.
8. The study focuses on social media only; traditional luxury marketing channels are not examined.
9. As a cross-sectional study, long-term impacts cannot be assessed. Only correlations rather than causal claims are possible.
10. Self-congruity theory provides only one perspective; other relevant frameworks like signaling theory are not integrated.

To mitigate limitations, future studies could incorporate probability sampling, expanded platform/brand analysis, cultural comparisons, longitudinal tracking, multiple theories, and data triangulation.

Conclusion

This mixed methods study applied self-congruity theory to examine how social media marketing impacts luxury fashion branding and consumer behavior. Key findings provide empirical insights on optimizing social media strategies to expand brand reach while retaining prestige and

exclusivity. The online survey of luxury consumers revealed that greater social media exposure and engagement were associated with increased perceptions of brand prestige and desire. However, platform differences emerged, with image-focused sites like Instagram showing stronger relationships to purchase intent compared to text-dominant platforms.

Qualitative interviews with marketing experts underscored the risks of overexposure on social media diluting luxury appeal, while also emphasizing opportunities to connect with younger demographics through strategic influencer partnerships and participatory storytelling. Content analysis of leading luxury brands highlighted nuanced approaches to balancing promotion and exclusivity across different platforms. Tactics like contests on Instagram and limited access campaigns on Twitter can allow controlled visibility.

Results indicate potential for social media success given tightly controlled branding tailored to platform strengths and user expectations. Maintaining prestige perceptions while expanding digital reach requires data-driven content strategies and executive oversight. This research makes both theoretical and practical contributions. It supports application of self-congruity theory in digital contexts and provides an empirical basis for social media best practices. For scholars, the study advances understanding of online branding and generational differences in processing luxury marketing. Practitioners obtain actionable principles for translating brand identity to social platforms while avoiding dilution.

While limitations exist, the methodology lends robust insights. As social media marketing continues to evolve, ongoing research is needed to track changing consumer behavior and update engagement strategies. This study helps lay the foundations for luxury brands to navigate the digital landscape's risks and rewards.

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