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## Article

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## **Social Media Marketing and Emergence of Aspirational Brand Luxury: Female Consumers' Buying Behavior in Pakistan**

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### **Abstract**

Social media marketing has provided easy access to consumers. Luxury brands frequently keep posted their collections and proceedings on social media with the aim to save interest, engagement, create awareness as well as shape loyalties. This research is conducted in three randomly selected cities of Pakistan. The population of this research study involves all females aged 18 to 35 years and residing in Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad. A multistage random sampling technique was used; a representative sample of 350 women social media users was interviewed. Results show that the most relevant factors that seem to be affecting consumer buying behavior are social media marketing. The chi-square test showed that there is an association between social media usage and buying behavior. Regression analysis accepts the hypothesis that women buying behavior is dependent on social media marketing as well. So it is concluded that women buying behavior is influenced by social media marketing.

**Keywords:** brand luxury, female consumer buying, women consumer behavior, social media marketing.

### **1. Introduction**

Brand luxury is expended by exclusive class buyers as well as by the white-collar class consumers. The rising white-collar class and young consumers, who have an extraordinary disposable income, have begun utilizing these items. These consumers have been instrumental in the higher development rate of the luxury market in Pakistan. These

consumers are widely using social media to purchase branded products. Social media marketing is the tool to attract consumers for luxury consumption. (Chevalier & Mazzalovo, 2008)

Brand luxury purchases by women have been increased. This segment has inspired the emerging class of digital natives to acquire more luxury brands. They make this market potentially promising and lucrative. Unfortunately, we do not have exclusive studies that have captured these elements. In the luxury branding literature, there have been studies on the meaning and perception of luxury in different cultures, purchase behavior processes, luxury buying behavior, the role of values, culture and socioeconomics in affecting extravagance utilization levels of luxury consumption and consumption of luxury by women. However, exclusive studies on aspirational brand luxury as well as the starring role of social media marketing among women consumers in Pakistan are not available in the public domain. Therefore, this study will fill this gap and comprehend the emerging area and domain (Som & Pape, 2015).

### *1.1 Brand Luxury and Consumers*

Brand luxury has developed as a conception since the ancient era as well as continues to wield considerable influence on markets. It has generally been associated with premium value, aesthetics, quality, paucity, individuality, super-flawlessness, particular antiquity and inherited legacy, brand loyalty as well as subconscious associations. However, scholars are unable to provide a universally accepted definition (Godey et al., 2013). This is due to the particular as well as empirical proportions of extravagance. Added to these dimensions is the complexity involved in assessing the role of social comparison and the resulting pressures on consumers (Bogaerts & Pandelaere, 2013). This complexity was further observed in studies of the perception of luxury and its relation to price display, luxury consumption behavior (Bilge, 2015) and the types of luxury. Yet, the studies have not led to substantiation and closure. Therefore, after assessing that the concept of luxury is ambiguous and subjective, there is a need to understand different types of consumers. Consumers focus on luxury products that are acquired by intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, acting as antecedents and precedents (Eastman & Eastman, 2015). Additionally, consumers not only believe in well-designed efficacy however in the sensorial charm that a luxury brand is supposed to offer (Lisa & Turunen, 2015). Consumers are prejudiced by exclusive understandings in addition to extraordinary events at their personal level (Atwal & Williams, 2009). These experiences are specifically related to the feelings of the individuals towards luxury brands (Keller, 2009). These spirits contain great excitement and pleasure (Sung, Choi et al., 2014). Of equal importance to consumers are the dimensions of safety, communal endorsement as well as self-esteem (Fujiwara & Nagasawa, 2015). To summarize, the motivations of

consumers for brand luxury products vary with their values, behavior and experience. The experience and feelings for luxury brands have further evolved into a new category known as an aspirational luxury.

### *1.2 Social Media Marketing and Brand Luxury*

The social media marketing has given simple availability to buyers to sites of extravagance brands. Luxury brands consistently update their accumulations and occasions via web-based networking media with the target to earn a premium, produce mindfulness, commitment and assemble loyalties. Also, design patterns are advanced crosswise over websites and web-based life systems showing. Extravagance design aficionados pursue blog updates and trust their locale individuals for tips and data (Kim & Xu, 2013). Brand luxury purchaser conduct has changed measurements as a result of advanced digital media. Luxury buyers wish to encounter the extravagance retail experience on the web and from the solace of their homes. In the meantime, they are additionally persuaded by utilitarian advantages. In this manner, extravagance style shoppers consistently surf the web to discover explicit items and frequently contrast with guarantee that they get the best arrangement; this component is significant for female buyers (Garber, 2012).

Dodoo (2018) concluded that individuals have other underlying causes for liking brands' Facebook pages. In this way a conceptual model proposing that individuals liked Facebook brands to achieve specific virtual identities was developed and tested to address the question of the latent motivations for liking brands on Facebook. The results demonstrate the significance of brand personality in determining consumer behavior.

Trocchia *et al.* (2015) argued that aspirational brands are often used interchangeably with the term "luxury brand." Further, differences were found between Millennial and Baby Boomers, men and women, and upper and lower income participants in terms of which brands they consider to be aspirational.

Godey *et al.* (2016) explained that how social media marketing activities influence brand equity creation and consumers' behavior towards a brand. The study demonstrates the links between social media marketing efforts and their consequences of brand preferences, price premium, and loyalty too. The study also explores these relationships by analyzing pioneering brands in the luxury sector.

### *1.3 Brand Luxury and Women Consumers*

The purchasing power of women has enhanced significantly and Female consumers have become more excited about luxury brands and are increasingly buying unexpected luxury

products (Singh, 2014). This has ensured that women consumers now channelize their time and resources in terms of experience, status enhancement and financial value. Thus, women are increasingly purchasing luxury products to reward themselves, for gifting, for ostentatious consumption, for investment and to express themselves. Women who purchase extravagance items are powerful, affluent, autonomous and enthusiastic, and frequently look for guidance from style networks. They are highly adept at using social media to optimize their acquisition of luxury products (Schultz & Jain, 2013).

#### *1.4 Social Media Marketing and Buying Behavior in Pakistan*

Goldsmith and Lafferty (2002) said that the purpose of marketing is to attract people. Approach-towards-the advertisements are helpful to understand the buying behavior. Actual ad influenced the approach concerning the product and lastly towards to buy purpose. Most women change their decision when they see new and glamorous items in social media. There are some very common stages of the buying process in every consumer decision first of all the most important factor is seen that are the basic needs of a consumer and how she reacts to that need without the need for buying. A buying decision cannot take place after getting informed about what she needs to buy. The second important decision is to get information about the product or service that is a consumer need to buy information that includes the features and qualities of that services or product the source of information can be anything but most of all now a day's consumers used media to get information either visual or voice information they using media to get this information done. Another stage of consumer decision is valuating consumer goes thorough evaluation process by the basis of product behavior and features whether these are the features that can deliver or not. The benefits that are required by the consumer another interesting factor is the cost of the product very consumer whether he or she will definitely evaluate the cost of the product whether they can afford it or not. The fourth stage is purchasing decisions which can be affected by the different factors the first is the negative feedback from the daily consumer market. Post-purchase behavior is based on customers behavior after the use of the product when they match their expectations to the features of the product and find it self-satisfied or dissatisfied and this can badly or greatly affect the future purchasing decision of purchasing for the same company. Overall if we talk about youth and their experience in the market so we can say that they are even better than the parent's youth apparently aware of all those changing that been happening in the world (Schultz & Jain, 2018).

Regarding marketing youth exposure to television and other social media and media circle is helping them to maintain a healthy pace for their living style and standards. peer groups are also important when it comes to the matter where to buy and what to buy if their experience with a brand is loyal and also good with the shop in terms of cost so they

will take time to change their preference which also one of the major strategy of marketing advisor. There is two very common factors that normally in the way of any kind of consumer behavior the first is social and the second is cultural both factors are having a strong influence on the purchasing decision of youth and some of the other adults' ages social status define. Most of the societies where they stand for that they need to follow a certain purchasing pattern which includes some very high standard s brands and services these are factors mostly have been seen in higher class but in some of the societies middle class is also following the same pattern to look more attractive which not bad but going to a stream can cause a lot of problem later in the day in future cultural norms also have a strong impact on different societies purchasing decisions a high fi society maintain their own culture which defines them as the role model as well for that they need to keep looking like that they define it as it their culture normally (Al-Mutawa, 2013).

Worries over the amazing internet based life impacts have been communicated by the analysts and researchers. These worries about the societal impacts of online digital mediated messages have been solid effect on social researchers. We get various intervened messages each day on the planet where we live and digital media devices have dynamic gadgets in our social associations. Innovation has never been impartial and it persistently has some positive and unfavorable effects. Subsequently to gauge the effects of internet-based life as a media association has picked up engaging quality in Pakistani society today. Thus currently to measure the influences of social media has gained great importance in the developing world as well as in Pakistani society.

## **2. Literature Review**

Jain et al. (2012) described that social media is one of the most powerful mass communication tools to be used nowadays. It can cover a lot of areas and can produce a message of your own liking in just the fraction of second. Youth now-a-days try to follow their role model and there is only one way they can do this and it's the way of preparing their routine like there role models to do most of the companies used model-actor and players those who are famous in their work field. This can help the brand to make a good ground opening these are actors models and players are called brand Ambassador in advertising term most of the intention brands arrange their brand ambassador world toward to promote their brand world while. Youth always try to update their routine life with the taste of some new exciting changes and this all happens when they dress themselves up as nobody else can look like them, this behavior is changed is also one of the reason ads. Kapferer and Bastien (2009) discussed that increasing trends in fashion industry making the women think twice about their daily life standards are these

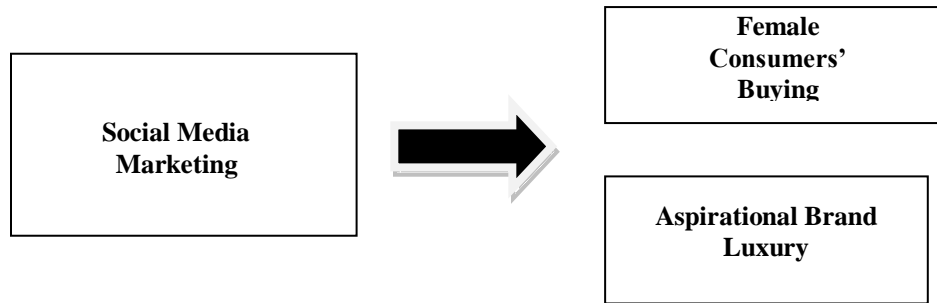
standards suit them when it comes to social class system every human being has a different fashion sense which also makes them unique on huge level the consumers behavior on buying matters is also quite strange sometimes it takes them like forever to go through the whole bunch of stuff and sometimes it is just a formality which is they are offering for their daily needs so all together so we can say that as it always in the cards that human behavior is unpredictable so on the other hand we can also say that human buying behavior or buying power is also quite strange. Most of all the aim of marketing is to meet the needs of target audience to understanding consumer's behavior and also finding out the fact about knowing customer was always not simple for any of them to understand and sometimes the buyers characteristics can also make a change in making buying power field of consumer market consist on different categories if one in favor then other must go against the same field most of the time when it's about women purchasing power for buying a certain product it all depends on consumer inner feeling. Consumer most of the times depend on his or her inner side feelings or in other words sometimes consumers don't want to buy that product but just because it's too much in for a local women trend and also in social media that consumer can't make him or herself stop for buying it there is another interesting factor which plays a very important role and its culture factor in most of the communities culture trend are so much in which high diversity that consumer cannot resist herself. Silva and Nique, (2007) said that when a buyer buys the product there are a number of issues that change his or her mind. One of the very common reasons among all is the celebrity attachment. Especially it becomes more valuable when the celebrity matches up with any other celebrity this can turn the table a- z for the brand. Every brand is now having a strong celebrity attachment which can also help the brand to establish a place in the market when the consumer saw that their favorite celebrity is attached to any brand they automatically become closer to that brand. Ghosh and Varshney (2013) defined the impact of brand image and marketing on consumer's buying behavior, people of our society are so much conscious about their status in the community. Here we meant that status is social status. Most of the people think that using branded product is a kind of their status thing or symbol brand are used in social upper classes as a commodity that shows their social value. Many businesses can change their buying behavior using consumer behavior can also be used as a strong weapon to fight against competitors. Most of the customers prefer buying well known branded products because it helps them to make a strong social status. If a brand can manage a possible business then it can enjoy a large number of consumers as brand image and brand advertising and it can make it successful female buyers procurement manners are most of the time is highly affected by brand status, name and company. The current research has been resolute to use Gerbner's cultivation theory as a road map.

2.1 Hypotheses

- **H<sub>1</sub>:** The selection of brands depends on the family type and influence of social media marketing.
- **H<sub>2</sub>:** Women's buying-behavior is significantly influenced by the background and the influence of social media marketing.

3. Research Design

The researchers used the survey method as its research design. This research is conducted in three randomly selected cities of Pakistan. In the current study three selected cities are Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad. The population of this study comprises all females aged 18 to 35 years. In the current study multistage random sampling method was used, a sample of 350 women social media users was interviewed. The research employed both qualitative and quantitative methods in this research study and women respondents were asked too.



4. Findings

A test-retest method was used to determine its reliability and a value of 0.80 was obtained.

**Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha**

Cronbach's alpha	No. of items
0.80	22

Here for the data collected the value of Cronbach's Alpha is 0.80 which indicates that the questionnaire is reliable to conduct the research.



**Table 2: Demographic Results of the Respondents**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Mode</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Background	Urban	0.475
Family	Nuclear	0.473
Education	Intermediate	1.19
Status	Unmarried	0.40
Social Media	Users	0.72
Age	25.8	6.19

In this research we have computed mode and Standard Deviation for all demographic variables.

**Table 3: Descriptive Analysis of the Questionnaire**

Statements	SA	A	UD	D	SD
Do you think luxury branded products are a major part of your life accessories?	115	134	30	51	20
Do you think social media play a significant role in decision making on shopping?	30	130	98	51	41
Do you think luxury branded products are better than unbranded products?	127	112	44	46	21
Do you think the attributes of a product shown in social media marketing are true?	39	84	75	107	45
Do you think social media marketing makes strong perceptions about that product in your mind?	77	138	56	51	28
Do you think the use of celebrities in marketing effect your buying behavior?	74	139	34	64	39
Do you think social media marketing of luxury brands can change your appearance?	35	58	64	93	10
Women buy luxury branded items, do you think that they are inspired by social media marketing?	69	127	58	61	35
Do social media marketing influence your buying behavior?	62	154	62	44	28
When you have bought something after seeing it on social media, do you find the quality as good as claimed?	74	109	64	62	39
Do you think social media marketing affects your consumption pattern (i.e. what you buy, why you buy etc.)?	64	151	59	54	22
Do social media marketing and the emergence of aspirational brand luxury deceive to women?	88	144	59	41	20
Do you think that social media usually do negative message of various substandard items?	84	144	63	49	10
Do you think that social media carry negative messages of a competitor's brand?	95	115	69	50	20
Do you think social media marketing exaggerate the good points of buying behavior?	52	170	51	55	22
Do you think social media play a significant role in providing information about branded product?	77	143	45	64	21
Do you think that the buying behavior of women is highly influenced by social media?	83	112	30	107	18
Do you think social media play a significant role in making a decision to buy a product in the range of up to Rs.5000/- from social media marketing?	52	96	25	117	06
Do you think social media play a significant role in the selection of a luxury brand?	52	114	22	154	8
Do you think social media play a significant role in what brands to buy?	88	160	13	87	2
Do you think social media marketing plays a significant role in the aspirational luxury?	82	200	12	54	2
Do you think social media play a significant role in the selection of aspirational luxury branded items?	44	138	11	144	8

At a glance, we can see that the majority of the respondents chose the options of strongly agree and agree.

**Table 4: Regression Analysis**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.73	0.053	0.047	3.07
ANOVA				
Model	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F
Regression	362.57	2	181.28	19.81*
Residual	3185.96	348	9.15	
Total	3548.53	350		

**Dependent Variable: women buying behavior                      \*significant**

In this research regression analysis is executed by captivating women buying behavior as dependent variable while preference buying goods and social media effect as independent variables. The above table represents the model Summary. In this table value of “R” is Correlation Coefficient which describes the strength of the relationship as well as the direction. Here the value of R is 0.73 which is positive and greater than 0.7. It indicates that the relationship between dependent and independent variables is strong and positive. The value of R square represents the coefficient of determination which is greater than 0.5. It indicates that the model is fit. The above table represents the results of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), it describes the goodness of model fit. A significant value is less than 0.05 it indicates that the model is good fitted.

**Table 5: Regression Coefficients**

Model	Coefficients	Standard error	t-test	p-value
Intercept	7.39	0.94	7.86	0.000
Preference Buying Goods	0.28	0.33	0.896	0.001
Social Media Marketing Effect	1.92	0.40	4.79	0.000

The above table represents the results of Regression coefficients. A significant level for all independent variables is less than prob. Level which shows that these variables have a significant effect on women buying behavior. The value of the regression coefficient for both variables (Social media marketing effects and Preferences of buying goods) is positive which indicates direct relation; it means social media marketing and women buying behavior have a direct relationship.

**Tests of Association (Chi- Square Test)**

In this paper there are some hypotheses, related to the relationship of variables. To test these hypotheses chi-square test of association is carried out.

- **H<sub>1</sub>**: Family type and the influence of social media marketing effects behind the selection of brands are significantly inter-dependent.

The table provides results of the Chi-Square test for this hypothesis, according to which these variables not independent of each other. In other words social media marketing influences women customers according to family type in the selection of brands. This means there is a significant difference in the buying behavior of women from nuclear and joint family types.

**Table 6: Chi-Square Test**

Test	Value	Df	P-value
Pearson Chi-Square	8.02	4	0.091
Likelihood Ratio	8.31	4	0.081
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.52	1	0.019

- **H<sub>2</sub>**: Background and the influence of social media marketing on women buying behavior.

The table provides results of the Chi-Square test for this hypothesis, according to which these variables not independent of each other. In other words social media marketing influences women customers according to the background in selection of luxury brands. It indicates that social media influences the buying behavior of women.

**Table 7: Chi-Square Test**

Test	Value	Df	P-value
Pearson Chi-Square	4.346 <sup>a</sup>	4	0.361
Likelihood Ratio	4.339	4	0.362
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.969	1	0.085

4.1 Correlation among the Variables

Correlation study performed to check the affiliation concerning variables. It provides strength as well as the direction of the relationship. A negative value indicates inverse and positive value indicates the direct relationship between variables. And value close to 1 indicates the perfect relationship.

In this research correlation analysis is performed to check the relationship between social media marketing, women buying behavior and preference of luxury goods while shopping. The following table shows the results of correlation analysis according to which these three variables have a positive and strong relationship. The value of correlation coefficient between women buying behavior and social media marketing is 0.716 which indicates strong positive relation. It says that social media marketing directly influences the women buying behavior. The significant value for each relationship is less than 0.05 which indicates that there is a significant relationship between all factors.

**Table 8: Correlation Matrix**

<b>Pearson’s Correlation</b>	<b>Women Buying Behavior</b>	<b>Preference Buying Goods</b>	<b>Social Media Marketing Effect</b>
Women Buying Behavior	1.000 0.000	0.903 0.001	0.716 0.002
Preference Buying Goods	0.903 0.001	1.000 0.000	0.816 0.004
Social media marketing effects	0.710 0.002	0.816 0.004	1.000 0.000

**5. Discussion and Conclusion**

Social media marketing effects have been communicated by the social scientists and these concerns have been solid influence on the authorities and social researchers. Therefore the researchers deliberated that current investigation can achieve alarming purposes. This research study shows that branded products are a major part of women’s’ life accessories, Most of the respondents shared that social media have a major part in decision making on shopping. When they asked, luxury branded products is better than unbranded products, most respondents agreed with this statement. The women respondents negated their point of view that the attributes of a product shown in social media marketing are true. While they agreed with the notion that social media marketing makes strong perceptions about that product in your mind and celebrities in the marketing affect buying behavior. When they asked, women buy luxury branded items, do they

think that they are inspired by social media marketing, then mostly female agreed with this statement. When they were asked that social media marketing influences their buying behavior and do they think social media marketing affects their consumption pattern. Most respondents agreed too. The respondents also agreed that the emergence of aspirational brand luxury deceive to women and social media usually does the negative message of various substandard items as well. The also cleared that social media carry negative messages of competitor's brands and social media marketing exaggerate the good points of buying behavior as well as play an important part in providing evidence about the branded product while women are highly influenced by the social media. When they were asked that social media play a significant role in making a decision to buy a product in the range of up to Rs.5000 then almost equally respondents negate as well as agreed with it. The respondents agreed with the notion that social media play a significant role in the selection of a luxury brand and have a great role in what brands to buy in addition to have an important role in the aspirational luxury. Social media along with its effects are as significant matter in society today. People have continually interrogated how social media marketing has emotional impact on them. After conducting this research, certain results came to light. The most relevant factors that seem to be affecting consumer buying behavior are social media marketing. In this research different descriptive and advanced statistical tools have been applied to test whether women buying behavior is influenced by social media marketing or not. In this research Regression analysis accepts the hypothesis that women buying behavior is dependent on social media marketing as well. Correlation Analysis also supports the statement. The chi-square test as well indicates the relationship and supports the hypothesis proposed by the researcher. So it is concluded that women buying behavior is influenced by social media marketing.

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