



Consumers Acceptance Of Luxury Fashion Retailing Through E-Commerce In Saudi Arabia Metro Cities

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ABSTRACT

The foundations of the luxury sector were created with an eye toward beauty and creativity. Many upscale department stores in the fashion industry have been established for decades, and many of them have French origins and generations-long family traditions. Globalization, market circumstances, economic growth, digitization, international travel, and cultural convergence all had a role in shifting this emphasis later on. The success and rise of high-end labels since the 1980s is notable. While these enlargements are beneficial in terms of earning income, the premium brand suffers the greatest damage when its exclusivity is compromised. This research surveys customers in a few of Saudi Arabia's largest cities to gauge how they feel about high-end fashion labels. Premium quality, social status, happiness, inner pleasure, brand credibility, and other factors all influence how customers feel about fashion luxury commerce. Seven hundred participants were randomly chosen to participate in the study's analysis, and the hypotheses were tested using a combination of correlation and regression. Males and females do not vary in their perceptions of the luxury fashion shop environment, according to the study's results.

Keywords: Fashion, Luxury, Retailing, Tradition, Consumers, Attitude.

1. Introduction

Over the course of the last few years, there has been a significant change in the manner in which high-end apparel is sold, with the introduction of e-commerce playing an essential part in playing a critical role in influencing buyer decisions. In Saudi Arabia, which has one of the economies developing at the quickest rate in the world, there has been a boom in the high-end fashion industry. As a result of the growing number of rich individuals in the nation and the expansion of the country's middle class, there has been an increase in the demand for expensive apparel. When seen in this perspective, the success of luxury fashion businesses in Saudi Arabia's main cities via the use of online marketplaces is a subject that generates a great deal of fascination.[1] In order to have an understanding of the popularity of luxury fashion e-commerce in Saudi Arabia metropolitan areas, it is essential to first have an understanding of the context in which this transition is occurring. The high-end fashion sector in Saudi Arabia has seen a significant transformation over the course of the last decade. The industry, which was formerly seen of as being mostly conventional and driven by couture, is now transforming into one that is both dynamic and diverse.[2]

The rise of Saudi Arabia's middle class and the concomitant growth in the country's population's level of discretionary income have both contributed to the expansion of Saudi Arabia's luxury fashion sector. Several international and domestic luxury brands have built shops in Saudi Arabia's most populous cities, including Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore, and Chennai, after recognizing the enormous potential of the Saudi Arabia market. Not only has this expansion made high-end apparel more accessible to a greater number of individuals, but it has also provided consumers with more alternatives to choose from. In recent years, specialty boutiques in Saudi Arabia's fashion industry have given way to a more widespread presence in the country's general retail scene.[3]

The realm of high-end fashion in Saudi Arabia has been substantially impacted by the proliferation of internet shopping. People are increasingly turning to the internet to do their shopping since it is convenient, quick, and easy to do so on mobile devices and with high-speed internet connections. The upheaval brought on by the

internet has not spared the luxury fashion business; both established brands and up-and-coming designers now offer their items on the internet. Customers can now browse and purchase high-end apparel without ever having to leave the comfort of their own homes thanks to the rise of e-commerce. This transformation was exacerbated by the COVID-19 outbreak, which compelled even the most traditional clients to resort to online buying.[4]

It's possible that a variety of factors are contributing to the rise in popularity of online shopping for high-end clothes in Saudi Arabia's most populous cities. The major advantage is how simple it is to use. Users of e-commerce websites have the ability to look at and purchase high-end apparel and accessories whenever and wherever they choose, thanks to the portability of online shopping. When time is of the essence, such as in contemporary metropolitan environments, this is an extremely appealing option.[5]

In addition to this, internet stores often have a more comprehensive selection of products than their brick-and-mortar counterparts. Brick-and-mortar stores could have a more limited assortment of luxury products than their virtual counterparts do online. E-commerce websites, on the other hand, may provide a diverse range of products, allowing customers the opportunity to evaluate and contrast a number of brands, styles, and costs before making a purchase.[6]

It is also essential to have transparent pricing. Because of the competitive pricing, discounts, and special offers made available by internet merchants, upscale fashion is now within reach of a wider demographic of consumers. Consumers in Saudi Arabia, which is a market that places a strong emphasis on cost savings, would value the ease of being able to quickly and easily compare prices and identify the best deals.[7]

It is impossible to adequately emphasize the relevance of online advertising and social networking websites. The high-end fashion sector in Saudi Arabia has invested a significant amount of capital into its internet and social media presence. Customers feel more connected to the brand than they ever have before as a direct result of this.[8]

Consumers have developed a more favorable attitude toward online shopping as a result of the excellent experiences they have had on various e-commerce websites. These positive experiences range from the ease of return policies to the usefulness of personalised advice. It has satisfied a demand in the online luxury shopping experience by informing clients that the things they are buying are authentic, which has made the experience more enjoyable for them.

The ever-evolving preferences of customers as well as the ever-changing nature of the luxury fashion sector are reflected in the growing popularity of online shopping for high-end goods in the most populous cities in Saudi Arabia. It is projected that there would be an increase in client tolerance as e-commerce gets deeper embedded in the high-end garment business.[9]

Because of factors such as accessibility, variety, affordability, advertising, and simplicity of use, the luxury clothing e-commerce market in Saudi Arabia's main cities is positioned to see expansion in the near future. As these components continue to evolve, it will be fascinating to see how customers of luxury apparel adjust to the changing digital world.[10]

In 2017, there was a 5 percent growth throughout the globe in the demand for luxury goods, which brought the total to an estimated €1.2 trillion. From its present level of \$23.8 billion, the Saudi Arabia market is predicted to rise all the way up to \$30 billion by the year 2020, as stated in the Assocham Report. There would be three times as many people who are worth more than a million dollars, and the size of the Saudi Arabia market would increase by a factor of five. When segmenting the market, many elements such as products, sex (male, female), distribution methods, geographical locations, consumer income, and other aspects are considered.[11]

In addition, they stress the dynamic nature of the Saudi Arabia consumer base as well as its diversified composition in order to highlight the specific characteristics of the market. In a same manner, luxury consumers may be divided into two distinct categories: the established wealthy (also known as "old customers" and "old money") and the emerging affluent (also known as "Saudi Arabia Retailer.com"). Although other large cities such as Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chennai, Ahmedabad, etc. are also key centers for the Saudi Arabia luxury sector, Mumbai and Delhi are the most important hubs for the luxury sector in Saudi Arabia. To be more specific, the purpose of this research is to investigate the perceptions and attitudes of Saudi Arabia customers in a few key cities about fashion luxury brands. This is done so that Saudi Arabia luxury companies and shops may make suitable adjustments to their marketing strategy.[12]

The rising demand for luxury goods in Saudi Arabia may be traced back to a variety of socioeconomic shifts in the country's people. Globalization has enhanced the buying power of young people because of improved access to employment and greater salaries. It's often believed that since young people have less responsibilities at the outset of their careers, they are more likely to be materialistic and spend freely. This resulted in a very visible pattern of consumption.[13]

The Saudi Arabia consumer places a high value on outward appearances, and as a result, they have a favorable view of counterfeits. They are willing to buy fake luxury brands because they believe that doing so will improve their public image and make them appear more put together at all times.[14]

Many Saudi Arabia customers place a high value on appearances and hence pay close attention to the brands of luxury goods they purchase. This is the reality that materialism plays a significant influence in the mindset of Saudi Arabia customers who are willing to buy fake goods. Counterfeits have no linear link with honesty or cost-effectiveness. Consumers are motivated to purchase fakes by many factors, including the need to seem hip and popular. Many people place a premium on seeming well-off by owning name-brand goods, while those who cannot afford the real thing eagerly anticipate cheaper knockoffs.[15]

Consumer behavior is commonly understood to refer to the manner in which people make purchases; however, it encompasses much more than just purchasing habits. Consumer behavior is typically defined as the following: the consumer's ultimate decision after factoring in the purchase, use, and disposal of goods and services as well as the consumer's time and opinion at various points in the decision-making process. In addition to material things, consumer behavior also encompasses services, hobbies, and points of view. Attitude and mental norm have had a considerable and favorable effect on consumers' propensity to buy. The feeling of being in charge of one's actions has a direct and beneficial effect on consumer behavior.[16]

The luxury-purchasing decisions people make may be broken down into two categories: private and public. While others' thoughts, comments, and ideas form the basis of one's non-personal perception of luxury, one's own thoughts and emotions provide the foundation of their personal experience of luxury. Perceptions of luxury outside of the individual, as studied by consumers' minds:

- (1) The impression that those who can afford luxury are more prominent members of society.
- (2) A feeling of exclusivity, as conveyed by a product's perceived uniqueness, is often associated with the high cost of luxury items. By following one's own tastes, disobeying the norms, or avoiding comparable consumption, one might boost their own sense of self-worth and social standing.

The perceived quality of luxury brands is higher than that of non-luxury goods, inspiring confidence in their superiority.

Two notions capture individuals' conceptions of opulence:

- (1) One's "perceived extended self" is a part of themselves that they use to interpret and categorize the world via symbols.
- (2) Perceived hedonism is associated with the enjoyment of sensual delight and pleasure as a result of affluence.

Different from their Chinese and Western counterparts, Saudi Arabia clients have a particular personality. Saudi Arabias are known for their thrifty shopping habits and their appreciation of a good deal. People are always looking for a good deal, which is why they check into how much popular things cost in other nations. Because it is so prohibitively expensive to import products, many consumers choose to conduct their shopping in Singapore, Dubai, or London instead. These cities are home to some of the lowest prices in the world. The average consumer has become more daring and curious in trying out new products. [17]

This is not a common way that people make purchases. People of today are eager to experiment with a wide range of hues and styles, regardless of their age. Because customers are familiar with brands and fixated on their logos, it is crucial for businesses to prominently display their logos. In Saudi Arabia, men's footwear that is sold under a well-known brand name is often more successful in the market. The low level of sales may be attributed to the fact that women do not recognize the worth in shoes. On the other hand, women often choose flashier accessories such as sunglasses and handbags. [18]

A common way to pass the time is to brag about what you have. When it comes to making purchases, value and reputation are highly crucial factors for Saudi Arabia shoppers. The prestige that people associate with the brand that they are paying for is the key element that determines whether or not a brand is successful in Saudi Arabia. Although the quality and craftsmanship of a product are significant to people in Saudi Arabia, they are not the decisive factor in whether or not a brand is successful in Saudi Arabia.[19]

2. Review of literature

Qin Bian et al. (2022), [20] consumers see luxury goods as an opportunity for "indulgence of the senses," regardless of cost. Luxury brand purchases are essentially symbolic, reflecting the aspirations and standing of the buyer. Luxury goods tend to have a high ratio of intangible usefulness to price but a low ratio of functional utility to price. Since luxury is an amorphous notion, various demographics will have varying impressions of luxury goods.

Sinha et al. (2022) [21] Young adults in metropolitan areas were shown to be the primary consumers of luxury goods by In the beginning of their careers, they have less financial obligations and a greater propensity to spend lavishly. Luxury shoppers in Saudi Arabia are looking for things that complement one another and are stylish and visually pleasing, but they are also concerned of price. The biggest obstacle is teaching people about the luxury sector.

Sanyal et al. (2017) [22] the purchasing habits of Saudi Arabia consumers have changed dramatically over the previous decade. Consumers now have more disposable money thanks to wage increases. Therefore, customers are rapidly embracing international luxury brands. The influence of customers' need for individuality and awareness of the latest trends on their perception of premium brands was investigated. Luxury purchases are often made for ego-stroking, social climbing, and public display of one's social standing. While Saudi Arabia consumers talk about luxury brands' uniqueness, exclusivity, and appeal to personal taste, the majority of the market has yet to form this perception, and the value of the brand or logo has a significant impact on how often a luxury good is used.

As Pubuddi S. (2018) [23] pointed out in his discussion of the topic, fashion has evolved into more than just a means of generating revenue. Think about the individuals in each social group and adapt to ever-evolving fashion trends. Individuals have the freedom to choose whether they want to follow trendy, stylish, or ethical fashion. The PRADA premium brand has seen a decline in sales over the last two years, and the company hopes that increasing their presence in online retail would help them find new customers and reverse the trend. This study determined the extent to which the company's choice was feasible after investigating the target location. Moreover, the luxury fashion sector in Sri Lanka is little understood. Findings indicate a correlation between brand awareness, social comparison, fashion innovation, fashion engagement, and the desire to make an online purchase. Regression research showed that social comparison and fashion innovation positively affected consumers' propensity to make purchases online.

3. Research methodology

This study used a descriptive approach to research. Customers that shop for designer labels online are the most reliable source of information. Each individual customer will be responsible for completing their own survey. There are no open-ended questions here; rather, a 5-point Likert scale will be used for all responses. Secondary sources include scholarly publications both domestic and outside, such as working papers, conference proceedings, unpublished library materials, and doctoral theses and dissertations. Since a representative sample of the Saudi Arabia consumer community as a whole is obviously not feasible, the researcher has developed hypotheses to guide her towards a more narrowly focused conclusion. Therefore, a deductive method is used in the research. The research is conducted in major cities like Saudi Gulf, The city of Jeddah, The city of Riyadh, and so on. In this context, "population" refers to a cross-section of consumers from various occupational backgrounds. This study used a convenience sampling method. It entails picking aspects of the sample that are most accessible to take part in the study and who can offer the data needed to back up the research based on the practicality of the situation.

A sample is a selection of data from a larger population. More than 700 customers were randomly chosen to participate in this study's sample. The instrument's dependability scale for measuring consumers' sentiments about high-end fashion retailers is .921. Excel, part of Microsoft's Office suite, was used to code the data. After the data has been coded, it will be analyzed using SPSS 20.0. The information is analyzed by means of a regression and a correlation.

Hypothesis of the Study

H01: There is no significant impact of Saudi Arabia buyers' mindsets on e-commerce fashion and luxury retail purchases.

4. Results

H01: There is no significant impact of Saudi Arabia buyers' mindsets on e-commerce fashion and luxury retail purchases.

Table 1: Indicators of Saudi Arabia consumers' openness to making fashion and luxury retail purchases online.

	Pearson Correlation				Sig. (1-tailed)				N			
	purchasing decision	Attitude	Prefer Online	Prefer Offline	purchasing decision	Attitude	Prefer Online	Prefer Offline	purchasing decision	Attitude	Prefer Online	Prefer Offline
purchasing decision	1	0.733	0.005	0.336	.	0	.	0.001	700	700	700	700
Attitude	0.733	1	1	0.454	0	.	0.001	.	700	700	700	700

Given that the p-value for the correlations shown in the table above is less than 0.05, it is clear that the 0.733 Pearson correlation coefficient between Saudi Arabia customers' attitudes and their purchase decisions of Fashion Luxury Retail via e-commerce is statistically significant. The preference of a son for online vs offline interaction has a correlation value of 0.005. As a result, we can deduce that the mindset of Saudi Arabia customers is directly linked to their choice of Fashion Luxury Brands. Furthermore, a linear regression analysis may be used to represent the link between the variables, since the value of the linear correlation coefficient r indicates a robust positive association.

Table 2: The influence of the Saudi Arabia consumer's attitude toward online fashion and luxury retail sales was modeled.

Model		1
R		.733a
RSquare		0.538
Adjusted R Square		0.537
Std. Error of the	Estimate	0.55518
Change Statistics	RSquare Change	0.538
	FChange	821.221
	df1	1
	df2	706
	Sig. F Change	0
Durbin- Watson		1.964

The above table displays the correlations, and it can be seen that the p-value for the connection between Saudi Arabia customers' attitudes and their decisions to buy fashion luxury brands is 0.000, making the 0.733 Pearson coefficients for this relationship statistically significant. Therefore, it is determined that the mindset of Saudi Arabia customers is significantly related to their choice to shop for fashion luxury retail online. Since a positive value for the correlation coefficient r indicates a strong link between the variables, we can utilize regression analysis to represent that connection. R^2 is 0.538, which is a moderate level of significance. In this case, the attitude of Saudi Arabia customers accounts for 53.8% of the variance in their choice to shop for fashion and luxury goods online.

Table 3: Comparative analysis of factors influencing Saudi Arabia customers' preferences in online luxury fashion retail

Model	Regression	Residual	Total
Sum of Squares	253.122	217.608	470.73
df	1	706	707
Mean Square	253.122	0.308	
F	821.221		
Sig.	.000 ^b		

In the ANOVA table, the 'F' value of 821.221 is shown to be statistically significant at the 0.05 level (also significant at 0.000) with $df=1/707$. This finding indicates that Saudi Arabia customers' outlook has a substantial impact on their propensity to shop for fashion and luxury goods online. Given this, we may conclude that H_{01} , which states that "the attitude of Saudi Arabia consumers has no significant effect on their purchasing decision of Fashion Luxury Retail through e-commerce," is false. As a result, it's safe to say that Saudi Arabia shoppers' outlooks had a major impact on whether or not they made online purchases of high-end apparel and accessories.

Table 4: The impact of Saudi Arabia customers' online shopping attitudes on the fashion and luxury retail industry

Model		(Constant)	Attitude
Unstandardized Coefficients	B	0.536	0.841
	Std. Error	0.109	0.029
Standardized Coefficients	Beta	0.733	
t		4.925	28.657
Sig.		0	0
95.0% Confidence Interval for B	Lower Bound	0.323	0.784
	Upper Bound	0.75	0.899

Values of Unstandardized Coefficients (.841) and Beta (.536) are statistically significant at the .000 level, and the T value ('attitude of Saudi Arabia consumers and purchasing decision of Fashion Luxury Brands') is 4.925, which is statistically significant at the .05 level, from the table of coefficients on the effect of attitude on purchasing decisions made by Saudi Arabia consumers of such brands. The resulting linear equation reads: $Y = .536 + .841(X_1)$.

5. Discussion

The high quality of trendy luxury goods makes buyers feel unique, and this in turn affects their purchase attitudes. The survey also discovered that customers get satisfaction from representing the brand and want to carve out an identifiable social niche for themselves. The research also showed that consumers care about the

approval of others when they are seen wearing high-end fashion brands. Consumers also want for a sense of euphoria through which they may exert control over others. The results demonstrate that consumers place aesthetic value on owning prestigious fashion labels. They experience hedonic worth and pleasure as a result of buying these labels. It makes people happy, takes the edge off of stressful situations, and generally improves their mood.

Countless businesses place a premium on producing only the highest quality goods, and their ads ought to reflect that. Since millennials are the demographic most likely to buy fashion luxury products, they should be the primary focus of their advertising efforts. They also need to create measures, including exchange and simple return policies, to promote and maintain brand loyalty.

Since the target demographic is mostly comprised of young people, the product's marketing efforts should center on appealing to their sense of style and current tastes and trends. Modern customers focus not just on pricing, but also on the whole value of the products or services they purchase. It is advised that a promotional strategy be implemented to boost sales of branded items. The merchants' use of distinctive selling factors ensures that customers get only top-shelf labels. Customers believe high-end products should be of the highest quality and have both a distinctive visual identity and a solid reputation in the market.[24]

The target market for luxury fashion firms is the upper class, so it stands to reason that the products they produce will be of higher quality and include unique designs that the general public won't find appealing. There is constant evolution in consumer tastes and preferences, making it essential for businesses to stay up with these shifts in order to better serve their customers. Companies selling high-end clothes should figure out how to connect with people who value the products for their own sake, and they should also keep in touch with those who purchase luxury goods to show off their wealth. The premium fashion label's marketing should center on the enriching benefits to the user's life as a result of owning and utilizing the product. Advertising strategies that take into account these distinctions and similarities will be more effective.[25]

6. Conclusion

Possible results from the research follow from the premise that spending money on ostentatious items is a proxy for a comfortable way of life. The premium price tag is justified by the high quality of the item. One of the most significant characteristics of a premium brand's practical worth is its quality. One of the most important aspects of luxury is its practical worth, which is enhanced by the high quality of the materials used and the skill of the workers. Luxury products provide buyers with a sense of fulfillment and pleasure. One of the main reasons why people purchase premium products is because they look nice. They experience hedonic worth and pleasure as a result of buying these labels. It makes people happy, takes the edge off of stressful situations, and generally improves their mood. When it comes to the really exceptional worth of luxuries, they come out on top. Those that shop in the luxury market are looking for unique items. They need to sell items that not everyone has access to. This is not a mass-produced item. When a thing becomes commonplace, the wealthy no longer feel the need to purchase it.

Conclusions drawn from studies indicate that a combination of factors, including quality, price, aesthetics, uniqueness, extraordinariness, and symbolism, play a role in the luxury purchasing choice. As one of the "8 p's," the quality of the buyer's experience is considered almost as crucial as the quality of the product itself. The study's findings emphasize the significance of value for the money. The findings also corroborate the notion that luxury items are defined by intangible qualities like prestige, uniqueness, and the quality of the purchase experience. According to the respondents, family and friends are the most influential reference groups on their consumer purchasing decisions, which is consistent with the theoretical emphasis on the relevance of this reference group as an influencer on purchasing decisions. To better understand the future of high-end retail in Saudi Arabia's major cities, we'll go into each of these variables and analyze how it affects customer acceptability.

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