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The role of brand experience, brand resonance and brand trust in luxury consumption

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ABSTRACT

Consumption of luxury brands has been rising significantly, particularly in emerging economies.

While some aspects of luxury consumption may be consistent across cultural settings, certain key differences may prevail; with particular attention to the relational and experiential aspects that characterize consumer-brand engagements. The purpose of the current research is to address this previously underexplored area and study the impact of consumer-brand dyadic attributes – incorporating brand experience, brand resonance, brand trust, and consumer involvement on the pursuit of luxury brands within the Indian context. Data was gathered using a survey distributed to 413 luxury brand consumers in four major metropolitan cities in India, employing Smart-PLS for analysis. In addition to the main effects, the moderating impact of gender, geographic location, and generation were explored. The results reveal that brand experience and brand resonance are both essential for luxury consumption, with an additional moderating role of generation and gender. Furthermore, consumer involvement is found to mediate the relationship. Implications for scholarship and practice are discussed.

1. Introduction

Luxury has played an important role throughout human history, having an impact on consumers' habits and aspirations regardless of their social status (Jhamb et al., 2020). Due to a combination of socioeconomic factors and evolving consumer trends, modern-day luxury consumption is no longer limited to the elite and privileged strata of contemporary society (Dhaliwal et al., 2020; Paul, 2019). Thanks to this downward extension propelling the growth of the luxury sector (Husic and Cicic, 2009), the sale of luxury goods increased exponentially during the last decade (Kapferer and Laurent, 2016; Shukla et al., 2015); with further optimistic future projections concerning the anticipated pool of consumers captured by the luxury industry (Husain et al., 2021; Kessous and Valette-Florence, 2019; Paul, 2015). Luxury is frequently associated with expression of aspirations and sentiments (Loureiro et al., 2020). Luxury implies straying from the "trend's" path, forging its road, and enforcing its own set of norms (Wang et al., 2021). The Asia-Pacific luxury market is expected to grow exponentially (Das and Jebarajakirthy, 2020).

The business of luxury brands also has been flourishing over recent decades (Truong et al., 2008; Shahid and Paul, 2021), capturing a wide range of outlets, including personal luxury goods, luxury vehicles, luxury accommodation, fine wines and spirits, cuisines, fine arts and luxurious cruise lines (D'Arpizio and Levato, 2014). Despite their success, it is essential for luxury brands to remain current and agile in their understanding and responding to market-based dynamics driven by cultural and demographic shifts (Joy et al., 2012), technological advancements (Šerić et al., 2014), evolving consumer trends (Seo and Buchanan-Oliver, 2015) and various other socio-economic and geo-political forces (Atwal and Bryson, 2017; Whelan and Hingston, 2018). Despite the exponential increase in luxury spending, there is limited research that explores the ways in which using luxury goods may impact consumers emotionally, mentally and cognitively (Wang et al., 2021).

From the brands' perspective, brand reputation was shown to impact perceptions of credibility and prestige as well as consumer well-being (Loureiro et al., 2018). Furthermore, luxury values tend to trigger positive evaluations of certain outcomes like brand coolness and passionate desire; which altogether have a positive impact on consumer-brand relationships (Loureiro et al., 2020). Although luxury consump-

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tion is frequently linked with materialistic orientations (Sharda and Bhat, 2018) and conspicuous consumption (Bagwell and Bernheim, 1996; Janssen et al., 2017), scholars recognize the broader-scale importance of establishing positive emotional connections between consumers and brands (Loureiro et al., 2018) that ultimately trigger intense sentimental expressions and aspirations (Loureiro et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2021).

From a consumer standpoint, luxury brands are important in that they can represent a source of status (Kessous and Valette-Florence, 2019; Nelissen and Meijers, 2011), prestige (Heine et al., 2016), and mass prestige (Paul, 2015, 2019), and can present individuals with a range of socio-economic benefits (Martínez et al., 2009). Furthermore, various social motivations have been previously associated with consumer engagement within the luxury fashion strata, with ultimate positive contributions to an enhanced sense of subjective well-being (Prentice and Loureiro, 2018). Finally, social values can also have a positive impact on subjective norms but a negative one on behavioral control (Loureiro and Araújo, 2014).

Reaching beyond more traditional developed markets, countries like China and India changed the global landscape of the luxury sector, presenting brands with new and lucrative opportunities (Jhamb et al., 2020), emphasizing the importance of cross-cultural explorations of complex phenomena (D'angelo, 2004; Twitchell, 2002). The Indian context is particularly relevant given the recent exponential growth documented in the luxury sector (Shahid and Paul, 2021; Kapferer, 2012; Peshkova et al., 2016; Shukla et al., 2015; Souiden et al., 2011). Despite this surge, studies that investigate luxury brands and luxury consumption focusing specifically on the Indian context remains limited and constrained to narrow domains.

The business in India is particularly interesting given the combination that blends a highly prevalent ethnic heritage and prestige, maintaining a cultural sense of 'localness' with new forms of consumption (Aggarwal et al., 2019; Jain and Mishra, 2018; Shahid and Paul, 2021). The cultural background is essential given the positioning of luxury brands as special entities that provide unique personal and sociocultural meaning to their clients and followers (Nguyen et al., 2019; Oliver, 2014). Building on the above arguments, the following research questions are formulated to guide the current study:

RQ1: To what extent do brand-consumer relational constructs such as brand experience, brand resonance and brand trust influence luxury consumption in India?

RQ2: What role does consumer involvement play on the consumer-brand relationship among affluent Indian consumers?

RQ3: How do gender and generational affiliation contribute to potential variations in luxury consumption in the Indian market?

Given the research gaps and peculiarities of the luxury sector already highlighted, this study tests and validates the impact of brand experience, resonance, trust, and involvement scales and measures its influence on luxury consumption. Specifically, the study posits that consumer involvement mediates the said relationships. Within the theoretical orbit of luxury brands, the purpose of the current research is to explore how different types of brand experiences influence the consumer journey and, in particular, the luxury consumption and determination to stay with the brand. Specifically, the study posits that consumer involvement mediates the said relationships. The purpose of the current research is to explore how brand experiences, resonance and trust influence the consumer journey and, in particular, the luxury consumption and determination to stay with the brand. After rigorous literary search the authors could not find any study taking Indian luxury market, creating a significant research gap. In order to fill in the gap in previous researches, we propose a comprehensive model to explore the relationship among brand experience, brand resonance, brand trust, and luxury consumption of luxury goods in the Indian market context.

In addition, within the specific context of the Indian market, the current research also explores the impact of generational preferences on brand outcomes. But there is no study in this regard taking Indian luxury market, creating a significant research gap. In order to fill in the gap in previous researches, we propose a comprehensive model to explore the relationship among brand experience, brand resonance, brand trust, and luxury consumption in the Indian market. The authors have concluded from several previous studies that India is emerging as a global market for luxury brands. Thorough research in this regard will give a comprehensive understanding of India's current state of the art of luxury market. The present study can help the luxury brand managers and brands planning to launch their products in the Indian market. It can provide the managers with insights that can help them streamline their marketing strategies and reinforce the importance of the brand experience and resonance; and consumer involvement in luxury consumption by Indian affluent shoppers.

The moderating role of gender and generation can prove extremely important for the brand managers in targeting and segmenting Indian luxury shoppers, while the role of consumer involvement can be seen as an essential construct that aids luxury consumption in India.

The current study will help luxury brand managers in a variety of ways; extending our understanding of consumer-brand relationships within the Indian market; identifying key constructs that trigger consumer luxury consumption in top-rated Indian luxury goods; being able to decipher the role of consumer involvement on advantageous consumer-brand outcomes; and evaluating the importance of gender and generational affiliation on luxury consumption. Ultimately this study aims to help brands to develop a more suitable and effective marketing strategy that suits the particular preferences of the Indian luxury context.

The following section will present a detailed overview of the contemporary extant literature to identify the critical gaps and develop the hypotheses investigated in the current project. Following this, we provide details of the data collection protocols and present the key findings. After discussing our results vis-à-vis existing scholarship, we highlight key theoretical and managerial implications and recommend directions for future research.

2. Literature review and hypothesis development

The current study helps luxury brand marketers, and managers streamline their strategies for achieving competitive advantage and sustainable sales patterns in the longer run. This leads to the formulation of research problem- How can luxury brands successfully incorporate brand experience, resonance, and trust in winning over their consumers, and what is the role of consumer involvement in luxury consumption? We begin the literature review by highlighting a few general observations that characterize the field of luxury brands and luxury consumption, with particular emphasis on variations across generations and cultural contexts.

2.1. Luxury brands and luxury consumption

Luxury consumption has traditionally been associated with characteristics of exclusivity, scarcity, one-of-a-kind features, generally higher price, and superior quality (Christodoulides et al., 2021). From the consumers' identity project perspective, motivations often entail affordances of individuality and distinctions from the mainstream (Albrecht et al., 2013; Zhang and Kim, 2013). Scholars generally agree that luxury tends to be subjective, continuously evolving, and contextual; that is, consumer views and perceptions determine it to a large extent (Christodoulides et al., 2021; Husain et al., 2021).

Consumer motivation to buy luxury brands can be driven by a wide range of purposes, including practical, intimate, economic, and emotional desires (Eng and Bogaert, 2010; Husain et al., 2021). For instance, consumers have been shown to consume and use luxury brands to accentuate their sense of self (Andersson and Andersson, 2006;

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Lundqvist et al., 2013; Zarantonello et al., 2007), enhance their perceived social status (Vickers and Renand, 2003), and establish a unique collective identity for respective social groups (Park, 2014). Additionally, luxury consumerism manifests itself through both the acquisition of classic items that have served as a staple of luxury brand collections for decades, as well as ephemeral objects that tend to be more seasonal (Das and Jebarajakirthy, 2020; Dubois et al., 2021). Furthermore, as the high-end items are extremely durable, purchasing luxury things can be seen as a unique way to engage in sustainable consumerism, providing an additional source of potential motivation (Jennifer et al., 2021).

Luxury consumption often embraces a signaling value that enables consumers to display to everyone else their self-concept that is often connected to being prestigious (Loureiro et al., 2020). Luxury brands communicate with consumers in various ways (e.g., advertising, branding strategy, and warranties) that altogether transmit a notion of credibility linked with observable as well as unobservable product characteristics (Loureiro et al., 2019) in turn can enhance individuals' social image, enable a projection of wealth, and serve as a point of comparison to achieve a desired social position (Loureiro et al., 2020). Finally, luxury brands have also been shown to denote cultural connections among peer groups that in turn can provide a form of differentiation (Wilcox et al., 2009) and a sense of fulfillment by embodying a symbolic significance in the minds of consumers (Choo et al., 2012; Nueno and Quelch, 1998).

2.2. Brand experience

Brand experience is conceptualized as sensations, feelings, cognitions, and behavioral responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications, and environments (Brakus et al., 2009, pp-52). The notion of brand experience surfaced in the seminal work of Holbrook and Hirschman (1982), with several follow-up contributions to help define and capture the complexity as well as the experiential perspective within as well as outside the luxury market niche (Andersson and Andersson, 2006; Lundqvist et al., 2013; Zarantonello et al., 2007; Dash and Paul, 2021). The brand experience commences when a consumer looks for a branded product, either in person or on a website, then pursues to purchasing it, and ultimately concludes with consumption, use and eventual disposal (Loureiro, 2020). Brands are required to provide their consumers with value that reached above and beyond the mere practical qualities and benefits and instead focused on the holistic and multi-faceted consumer experience (Huang, 2017; Kim and Chao, 2019).

While brand experience can be used as an overall measure to approximate the degree of personalized consumer experience enabled by brands (Schmitt, 2009), some frameworks help to capture a more nuanced categorization. One such comprehensive model has been put forth by Brakus et al. (2009), which established meaningful differentiation for brand experience using four separate dimensions of including sensory, affective, intellectual, and behavioral aspects.

2.2.1. Sensory dimension

The sensory dimension of brand experience is concerned with the aesthetics and the sensory qualities of specific brands (Nysveen et al., 2013; Nysveen and Pedersen, 2014). The field of sensory marketing places emphasis on the aesthetically oriented and sensorial triggers that activate the five human senses during experiential encounters. Research shows that visual stimuli tend to be more easily retained in consumers' minds, given that they provide representations for specific brand-related information (Schifferstein et al., 2020). On the other hand, sensory tactile experiences tend to elicit more effective consumer reactions that can impact their decision-making (Hussain, 2019; Lee et al., 2015).

2.2.2. Affective dimension

The affective dimension of brand experience deals with consumer moods and emotions generated during the consumer-brand encounter (Iglesias et al., 2011; Kim and Chao, 2019; Langner et al., 2016). Efficient interactions may elicit unconscious associations that can be retained in the consumers' minds, producing future feelings and emotions when triggered into consciousness (Wang et al., 2019). Further research shows that emotionally charged experiences can positively influence offline as well as online shopping contexts (Park-Poaps and Kang, 2018; Lee et al., 2015). Finally, given the role emotional experiences play on reflections about consumer brand appraisals, positive and healthy consumer-brand relationships may result in higher brand recognition even in the absence of direct external intervention (Thomson et al., 2005).

2.2.3. Behavioral dimension

Brand communications have been shown to stimulate analytical and imaginative thinking in the minds of consumers (Schmitt, 2009; Zarantonello et al., 2007). For instance, exposure to advertisement prior to experiencing the specific brand encounters may trigger a meaningful experience that may result in positive behavioral consequences (Lee and Trim, 2019). As long as brands live up to their promise and meet or exceed expectations, advertising is a good vehicle to contribute to consumers satisfaction, loyalty, and favorable recurrent behavioral outcomes (Waqas et al., 2020).

2.2.4. Intellectual dimension

The final of the four dimensions in the proposed framework captures the intellectual aspects of brand experience (Bapat and Thanigan, 2016; Brakus et al., 2009). By establishing a sense of connection with a brand or service, consumers can advance their associated perception and attitudes over time (Sirdeshmukh et al., 2018), with subsequent contribution potential towards their social, relational, and ideal self-aspects (Jones and Runyan, 2013; Tynan et al., 2010). The correlations among these factors further enhance consumers' confidence in the brand (Jung and Soo, 2012), reinforcing the quality and performance perceptions of the brands (van der Westhuizen, 2018).

When exploring brand experience within the specific context of luxury consumption, prior work concluded that the relationship between attitudes towards luxury brands and the luxury consumption tend to be stronger in the case of those consumers who are interested in experiences and experiential consumption, as opposed to others who show less interest (Zarantonello et al., 2007). When exploring consumers' behavior towards luxury brands (Seiders et al., 2005), scholars often use luxury consumption along with actual purchase behavior (Peña-García et al., 2020) in the field of service marketing (Ahn and Park, 2016) as well as offline and online consumption (Wu et al., 2015). Our understanding of luxury consumption on the brand level requires additional work (Bian and Forsythe, 2012; Sharma and Klein, 2020). Linking brand experience to potential behavioral outcomes, the first hypothesis and sub hypotheses for its constructs are formulated as follows:

H1. Brand experience has a significant relationship with luxury consumptions – as approximated by consumer purchase intention towards selective luxury brands.

H1a. Sensory brand experience has significant relationship with brand experience.

H1b. Intellectual brand experience has significant relationship with brand experience.

H1c. Affective brand experience has significant relationship with brand experience.

H1d. Behavioral brand experience has significant relationship with brand experience.

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2.3. Brand resonance

Brand resonance refers to the degree of engagement and attachment a consumer holds towards a brand, capturing consumer brand interactions that are consistent and harmonious in terms of values and goals (Keller, 2010, 2012). Brand resonance is a relational construct that encompasses intense psychological and emotional connections (Huang et al., 2015) along with a range of cognitive and affective consequences associated with consumer-brand relationships (Keller, 2012; Shieh and Lai, 2017). Brand resonance has been explored in several contexts and seems to be effective in boosting the brand's image and future relationship potential with consumers (Donvito et al., 2020).

Brand resonance refers to how easily a person can *sync* with a brand (Keller, 2010). Brand resonance has been associated with a wide range of positive brand-related outcomes (Waqas et al., 2020), including brand loyalty (Chiou and Droge, 2006), brand equity (Shieh and Lai, 2017), and consumer–brand partnership (Wu et al., 2015). Given its multifaceted orientation, brand resonance has often been conceptualized as a composite of related constituents; including brand attachment (Park et al., 2010), brand judgment (Abd Aziz and Yasin, 2010), and brand engagement (Burgess and Spinks, 2014; Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2018; Chiou and Droge, 2006; Huang, 2017), although thus far not in the Indian context. Consequently, brand attachment, brand engagement, and brand judgment will be used in the current research as an approximation for exploring the brand resonance composite in our focal cultural setting.

2.3.1. Brand attachment

Brand attachment captures the attachment formation process and unique views of brands by consumers (Keller, 2009, 2012). Attachment is an emotionally driven target-specific bond between consumers and brands (Conner et al., 2020). Consumer-brand attachments can resemble human dyads that entail sturdy relationships experienced as early as during infancy with family members, which can subsequently develop with luxury brands (Thomson et al., 2005).

Attachment relationships can emerge following a sequence of positive consumer-brand encounters where the brand manages to consistently meet or ideally exceed the consumers' expectations and overall level of satisfaction (Jacob et al., 2019; So et al., 2013). Whenever a brand fails in this and lose its ability to satisfy, gratify and delight their consumer, the attachment is likely to weaken, particularly when alternative brands are available (Keller, 2009; Palusuk et al., 2019; Park et al., 2007) and brand attachment plays an instrumental role in the creation of brand resonance (Donvito et al., 2020).

2.3.2. Brand engagement

Although the definition of brand engagement has appeared in the marketing literature as early as 2005, there has been little consensus on its conceptualization to date (Brodie et al., 2011). Burgess and Spinks (2014), suggest that consumers' activities go beyond sales and describe the term as a wide range of brand and/or business-oriented consumer behavior that exclude the act of purchase. Brodie et al. (2011), define brand engagement as a psychological phenomenon that occurs between a consumer and a brand – during an immersive consumers experience. Engagement is a multifaceted notion encompassing a range of intellectual, psychological, and behavioral dimensions (Dhaliwal et al., 2020; Hollebeek et al., 2014). On the other hand, long-term engagement and involvement tend to produce brand association, and brands can ultimately benefit from meaningful and durable consumer engagement and commitment (Brandão et al., 2019). Mollen and Wilson (2010), provides a different perspective and conceptualizes brand engagement as a cognitive and affective commitment associated with an active brand connection, which can be expressed by different means (such as eye-catching website) designed to convey brand value. Brand engagement can be improved by several factors including – but not limited to – aesthetic, socio-psychological and technological factors (Bazi et al., 2020). The authors further posit that commitment has an interactive and experiential aspect that separates it from participation.

2.3.3. Brand judgement

Brand judgment captures consumers' opinions and beliefs regarding a given brand (Keller, 2010, 2012). In other words, it is the total perceived conclusive image that a consumer has in their mind after owning and using luxury brands. A good measure for brand judgment comes from the extent of re-use and re-purchase of brands when compared to other competing trademarks (Burgess and Spinks, 2014). Brand judgment depends predominantly on four key constructs; namely brand quality (Richardson et al., 1994), brand perception (Berger, 2017; Kervyn et al., 2012), brand attachment (Keller, 2010), and brand satisfaction (Keller, 2009); all gathered after having concrete and specific experience owning the brands (Gummerus et al., 2012; Keller, 2009). Importantly, brand judgment is relevant to the current study as it has been tied in previous research to luxury consumption which makes it a relevant factor to explore more fully (Teona et al., 2020).

The extant literature on brand resonance presents an excellent opportunity for luxury brands to create attachment relationships; however, available work has not explored ways in which brand experience impacted brand resonance (Burgess and Spinks, 2014; El Naggar and Bendary, 2017; Huang et al., 2015; Shieh and Lai, 2017). Consequently, we formulate the second hypothesis along with sub hypotheses for its constructs are as follows:

H2. Brand resonance– have a significant relationship with luxury consumption – as approximated by consumer purchase intention towards selective luxury brands.

H2a. Brand engagement has significant relationship with brand resonance.

H2b. Brand attachment has significant relationship with brand resonance.

H2c. Brand judgment has significant relationship with brand resonance.

2.4. Brand trust

Brand trust emerges from the set of prior experiences and interaction history throughout the developmental trajectory of the consumer-brand journey and is portrayed as the consumer's experiential process of learning and perceiving over time (Delgado-Ballester and Munuera-Alemán, 2005; Keller, 2012; Keller and Aaker, 1992). In a sense, brand trust captures the total sum of knowledge and experience a consumer has with a brand, resulting from direct brand usage and encounters that may result in favorable or unfavorable experiences (Keller, 2009). The most meaningful point along the consumers journey from the perspective of brand trust tends to be the actual consumption experience, as it links directly to the brand usage and brand experience that in turn can enhance (or hinder) the brand's relevance and credibility (Delgado-Ballester and Munuera-Alemán, 2005; Sirdeshmukh et al., 2018).

Building strong consumer relationships are vital for brands (Urban et al., 2000), given the cumulative effect on shoppers' brand perception and loyalty to the brands (Chiou and Droge, 2006), which in turn has been linked with brand equity (Joseph et al., 2020). Consequently, understanding how brand experience can relate to the maintenance of brand trust is pivotal for industry representatives and brand managers (Burgess and Spinks, 2014; Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2018; Chiou and Droge, 2006; Huang, 2017). Trust is viewed as one of the most vital factors contributing to the encouragement and boost of purchase and luxury consumption of brands; a relationship that is expressed by the following hypothesis:

H3. Brand trust has a significant relationship with luxury consumption

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– as approximated by consumer purchase intention towards selective luxury brands.

2.5. Consumer involvement

Luxury brand competition has been growing exponentially as there are an increasing number of substitute options available to consumers, encouraging advancement in innovations in marketing innovations and advertising channels (Hwang et al., 2020; Prentice and Loureiro, 2018). Loyalty is essential for gaining a competitive edge and maintaining corporate profitability (Bruwer et al., 2017; Sharma and Klein, 2020). Luxury has often be positioned as synonymous with sumptuosity, ostentation, excess, extravagance, frivolity, attractiveness, material power, indulgence, easy living, and affluence (Loureiro and Araújo, 2014).

The importance of consumer involvement in marketing and brand management has been well established (Michaelidou and Dibb, 2008). Involvement is an individual-level variable depicting a difference across consumers in their decision-making and communication patterns (Chaudhuri, 2000; Karpińska-Krakowiak, 2014). It refers to the degree of information processing and importance a consumer attributes to luxury brands (Bapat and Thanigan, 2016).

Recent studies in the consumer involvement literature shifted their orientation towards embracing an increasingly consumer-centric approach (Cheng and Huang, 2013; Karpińska-Krakowiak, 2014; Klein et al., 2016; Sharma and Klein, 2020; Wang et al., 2019). Consumer involvement has been shown to significantly affect consumer behavior, especially in the purchase decision process (Sharma and Klein, 2020). Consumer involvement research has primarily focused on how companies utilize consumer involvement to maximize profit and maintain a competitive advantage in the market (Prentice and Loureiro, 2018), and has been established as one of the most critical features for luxury brand consumption (Prentice et al., 2019). In developing effective consumer involvement strategies and techniques, special care must be taken to achieve sustainable advantage (Karpińska-Krakowiak, 2014). With high consumer involvement, it is possible to turn potential consumers into actual buyers, keep them interested and engaged, and ultimately turn them into repeat buyers (Klein et al., 2016; Sharma and Klein, 2020). To capture this relationship, we formulate the fourth hypothesis as follows:

H4. Consumer involvement has a significant relationship with luxury consumption – as approximated by consumer purchase intention towards selective luxury brands.

The proposed conceptual model to capture the four main hypotheses is presented in Fig. 1.

2.6. The impact of moderator variables

2.6.1. The role of gender of luxury shoppers

Gender is often identified as a variable that represents different consumer styles and personal goals. For instance, males are believed to be more critical in achieving life goals (in that they are more responsive to self-relevant personal data). In contrast, females tend to concentrate more on aspirations related to themselves and their communities (i.e., being expressive and social associations) (Meyers-Levy, 1988). It has also been argued that men's luxury shopping trends tend to be functionally oriented while women's trends are more symbolic and emotionally charged (Dittmar, 2005).

Therefore, the following hypotheses have been formulated to capture the potential moderating role of gender on the different constructs of interest explored in the current study:

H5a. Gender moderates the relationship between brand experience and luxury consumption.

H5b. Gender moderates the relationship between brand resonance and luxury consumption.

H5c. Gender moderates the relationship between brand trust and luxury consumption.

H5d. Gender moderates the relationship between consumer involvement and luxury consumption.

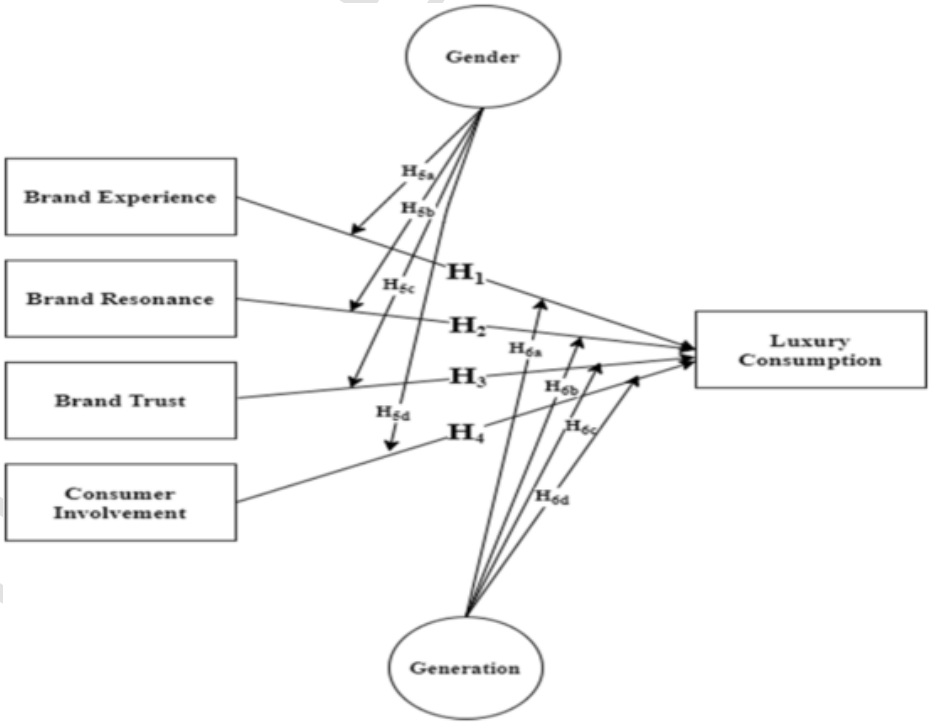


Fig.1. Conceptual model showing the impact of brand experience, brand resonance, brand trust and consumer involvement on luxury consumption among affluent Indian shoppers, taking into account the moderating effect of gender and generation.

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2.6.2. The role of generations of luxury shoppers

Beyond gender, a further moderating variable will be explored in the current study to account for potential generational differences and variations. A notable shift can be observed in the pursuit of luxury goods, with many brands facing a generational shift in their target market (Jiang and Shan, 2018; Kapferer and Michaut-Denizeau, 2019). The 'baby boomers' (born between 1946 and 1964) are considered to have offset the luxury regime they aspire to, with their taste for luxury increasingly expanding to luxury brand experiences (Kapferer and Michaut-Denizeau, 2019; Kim, 2019; Rodrigues and Rodrigues, 2019).

The 'generation-Xs' (born between 1965 and 1981) represent a cohort with more affinity for luxury brands that can be considered a potential target for luxury brands (Kapferer and Michaut-Denizeau, 2019; Kim, 2019). The third and most profitable segment is captured by the 'Millennials' (born between 1982 and 2000), who are considered to be the largest contemporary consumers of luxury brands, and consequently represent a great promise for short-to the medium-term flourishing of the luxury industry (Chu and Kamal, 2011; de Kerviler and Rodriguez, 2019; Rodrigues and Rodrigues, 2019). Last but not least, members of generation Z (born from 2000 and beyond) are anticipated to become the most influential group of luxury brand consumers in the foreseeable future (Francis and Hoefel, 2018; Jain et al., 2014). Generations Y and Z currently account for 45 percent of all luxury consumers and 35 percent of all luxury purchases (D'Arpizio et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2021).

Various studies project a potential gap in terms of psychological and social motivations that can influence luxury consumption in several ways (Sharda and Bhat, 2018). The present study expands upon these findings and postulations by surveying both younger and mature generations and going beyond earlier work. To reflect these changes, the following hypothesis are formulated:

H6a. Generation moderates the relationship between brand experience and luxury consumption.

H6b. Generation moderates the relationship between brand resonance and luxury consumption.

H6c. Generation moderates the relationship between brand trust and luxury consumption.

H6d. Generation moderates the relationship between consumer involvement and luxury consumption.

2.7. The potential mediating role of consumer involvement

Consumer involvement can be described as a type of "*mindset*" that enables researchers to detect conceptual variations in purchasing decisions (Michaelidou and Dibb, 2008b). Involvement implies an enduring association between a person and a specific brand, which can take various forms, including an exhaustive quest for knowledge, enhanced brand recognition, or an ultimate vision statement (Hwang et al., 2020). Situational involvement refers to circumstances of low involvement, in which consumers becomes engaged with a 'situation' that tends to result in a particular purchase choice (Bruwer et al., 2017).

In the case of high involvement purchasing scenarios, an individual tends to analyze available information extensively, which is often referred to as taking the central route to persuasion. In comparison, consumers can use the peripheral path of reasoning in low commitment situations and where price consciousness may be lowered (Wang et al., 2019). Incorporating these notions, the following hypothesis are proposed:

H7a. Consumer involvement mediates the relationship between brand experience and luxury consumption.

H7b. Consumer involvement mediates the relationship between brand resonance and luxury consumption.

H7c. Consumer involvement mediates the relationship between brand trust and luxury consumption.

3. Methods

3.1. Measures and the development of the survey instrument

The constructs selected to be employed in the present study come from previously established and validated scales. Given the aims to capture different geographies in India, and the intentions to use PLS-SEM, the sample size had to be sufficiently large (Hair et al., 1998; Dash and Paul, 2021). A self-administered survey questionnaire was designed and implemented to solicit data from the respondents (Groves et al., 2011; Thornhill et al., 2009). Participation was voluntary, and individuals could terminate their participation at any point. In addition, informed consent was obtained, and participants were reassured about maintaining complete privacy and confidentiality. The questionnaire incorporated four sections, including demographic details, consumer perceptions concerning brand experience, brand resonance, brand trust; consumer involvement; and behavioral intention as approximated by purchase and luxury consumption of preferred luxury brands.

Participants were asked to fill the questionnaire by selecting one of the luxury brands mentioned in it. Further details concerning the survey items are presented in Appendix-1. Question statements were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging between 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 as (strongly agree).

3.2. Procedures and participants

To be able to ensure the relevance of the research context, we decided to concentrate luxury consumption on the top five most prominent luxury brands in India, as evidenced by different industry reports (Cristina and Elena, 2018; Galli and Bassanini, 2020). This approach also enabled identifying participants in a more targeted fashion, focusing on affluent consumers who have purchased luxury items from the selected brands (Fionda and Moore, 2009; Pentina et al., 2018). The four most populated metropolitan cities were targeted in India, including Delhi NCR, Hyderabad, Mumbai, and Bengaluru. This approach ensured greater exposure to a broader range of consumer types (Jain, 2019; Park et al., 2007; Schade et al., 2016), with particular attention to different age groups and generations (Liu et al., 2012, 2019).

3.3. Data collection and analysis plan

Before launching the main study, a pilot study was conducted with a convenience sample of 54 respondents to validate the questionnaire items (Sekaran and Bougie, 2003). The data for the current research was collected between July and October 2019 from India's top four metropolitan cities. Data for the current study were collected offline in a purposive fashion by directly approaching luxury shoppers in shopping malls, showrooms, and exclusive outlets and intercepts in the aforementioned shortlisted cities for this research in the four Indian cities. A convenience sampling approach was engaged for the purposes of the data collection in the present study. The luxury shoppers who made luxury purchases from one of the 5 top brands were approached shortly after leaving the check-out counter. After explaining the study's aims in some detail and obtaining informed consent, participants were given a survey questionnaire to complete. To collect the survey data, the researchers approached consumers who had just finished their shopping and were ready to depart one of the luxury brands' stores, outlets and shops in the area. The majority of luxury consumers were those who spoke English as their first language. Using this sample selection criterion also helps avoid any bias in the study because the questionnaire was written clearly and concisely after being refined during the pilot study phase. The data collection took place in the mornings, afternoons,

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and nights (before the stores closed) seven days a week, including weekends, except for holidays.

As the questionnaire contained 36 items, a minimum sample of ten times was necessary (Hair et al., 1998, 2011), requiring a minimum of 360 responses. In the process of data collection, the researchers have approached, targeted around 1500 luxury consumers. Of the 522 responses obtained, 109 were removed due to missing data, resulting in a total of 413 complete responses used for subsequent analysis. The demographic profile of participants is shown in Table 1 (see Table 6).

As apparent from Table 1, there was a relatively equal representation of males and females, and the pool of participants had a high level of education. Although there was a slightly higher percentage of generation Y and generation X, the number in each category should be sufficient for detailed analysis. Similar observations can be made concerning geographic locations, with slightly more people from Delhi than the other three cities. India's per-capita income was Rs 11,254 a month in the financial year 2019–20 (PTI, 2020). Hence, we can see that majority of our responses comprised of the high-income group only. Partial least square structural equational modelling (PLS-SEM) was used for the analysis. The Smart-PLS was appropriate given the complexity and relationship specifications of the variables in the conceptual model (Sarstedt et al., 2014). The program packages Smart-PLS 3.3 and SPSS 25.0 were used to execute the statistical study.

4. Results

4.1. Reliability and validity tests

Cronbach's alpha was used to verify the reliability of the constructs employed (Cronbach, 1951) while the validity is established with the help of Gaskins validity estimations. AVE expresses the average variance extracted by a latent variable, describing each component's variance (Gefen and Straub, 2005). The threshold value of each construct for AVE is 0.50 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The AVE values across all constructs were greater than 0.50 (Hair et al., 2011; Sarstedt et al., 2014), and the composite reliability was greater than 0.7 for each variable, indicating high internal validity (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1967). Further details are shown in Table 2.

Before gathering the data, truthful replies were made before continuing solutions, recommended by Podsakoff et al. (2003), such as reminding invoked parties about the data's security and privacy. We have

Table 1
Demographic profile of participants.

Variable description	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	199	47%
Female	224	53%
Age Group		
<18 Years (Generation-Z)	91	21.5%
19–37 Years (Generation-Y)	136	32.2%
38–54 Years (Generation-X)	118	27.9%
>54 Years (Baby-Boomers)	78	18.4%
Education Level		
Graduate	84	19.9%
Post graduate	104	24.6%
Research Scholar	210	49.6%
Others	25	5.9%
Income Level		
<5 Lakhs ($ 6842 USD)	114	27%
6-10 Lakhs ($ 8211–13680 USD)	92	21.7%
11-15 Lakhs ($ 15000 -20530USD)	103	24.3%
>16 Lakhs ($ 21900 USD)	114	27%
Place		
Delhi NCR	108	25.0%
Mumbai	106	25.1%
Hyderabad	114	27.0%
Bengaluru	95	22.5%

Table 2
Results of Measurement model – Reliability and Convergent validity.

Construct used	Measurement items	Estimates (standardized)	VIF	AVE	CR	Cronbach's alpha
Sensory Brand Experience	SEN 1	0.936***	1.789	0.677	0.861	0.765
	SEN 2	0.688***	1.658			
	SEN 3	0.826***	1.365			
Affective Brand Experience	AFF 1	0.864***	1.956	0.662	0.853	0.745
	AFF 2	0.658***	1.857			
	AFF 3	0.899***	1.798			
Intellectual Brand Experience	INT 1	0.722***	2.265	0.592	0.813	0.663
	INT 2	0.764***	1.987			
	INT 3	0.819***	1.658			
Behavioral Brand Experience	BEH 1	0.931***	2.172	0.881	0.957	0.933
	BEH 2	0.940***	1.326			
	BEH 3	0.946***	1.698			
Brand Engagement	BE 1	0.907***	2.861	0.672	0.858	0.756
	BE 2	0.720***	2.698			
	BE 3	0.821***	2.687			
Brand Attachment	BA 1	0.690***	1.365	0.537	0.773	0.562
	BA 2	0.864***	1.236			
	BA 3	0.622***	1.056			
Brand Judgement	BJ 1	0.825***	1.236	0.651	0.847	0.740
	BJ 2	0.749***	1.369			
	BJ 3	0.842***	1.987			
Brand Trust	BT 1	0.922***	2.860	0.595	0.783	0.655
	BT 2	0.811***	2.524			
	BT 3	0.506***	1.052			
	BT 4	0.665***	2.489			
Consumer Involvement	CI 1	0.761***	1.322	0.625	0.792	0.798
	CI 2	0.751***	1.568			
	CI 3	0.907***	1.255			
	CI 4	0.733***	1.122			
luxury consumption	PI 1	0.705***	1.198	0.591	0.792	0.660
	PI 2	0.674***	1.033			
	PI 3	0.794***	1.139			
	PI 4	0.619***	1.076			

Significant at ***p < 0.01.

Table 3
Results of measurement model – Discriminant validity.

Factor	Brand experience	Brand Resonance	Brand Trust	Consumer Involvement	luxury consumption
Brand Experience	**0.856**				
Brand Resonance	0.759	**0.802**			
Brand Trust	0.725	0.795	**0.705**		
Consumer Involvement	0.769	0.867	0.808	**0.790**	
luxury consumption	0.7536	0.726	0.636	0.778	**0.700**

Table 4
Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio.

Factor	Brand experience	Brand Resonance	Brand Trust	Consumer Involvement	luxury consumption
Brand Experience	1				
Brand Resonance	0.888	1			
Brand Trust	0.842	0.836	1		
Consumer Involvement	0.765	0.823	0.847	1	
Luxury consumption	0.812	0.891	0.713	0.876	1

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Table 5
Results of PLS SEM.

No.	Hypothetical relationships	Path coefficients	T-statistics	Result
H1	Brand experience → luxury consumption	0.386***	5.967***	Supported
H1a	Sensory brand experience → Brand experience	0.737***	11.093***	Supported
H1b	Intellectual brand experience → Brand experience	0.582***	12.765***	Supported
H1c	Affective brand experience → Brand experience	0.751***	27.132***	Supported
H1d	Behavioral brand experience → Brand experience	0.848***	23.075***	Supported
H2	Brand resonance → luxury consumption	0.109***	1.990**	Supported
H2a	Brand engagement → Brand resonance	0.676***	29.448***	Supported
H2b	Brand attachment→ Brand resonance	0.898***	54.33***	Supported
H2c	Brand judgment→ Brand resonance	0.819***	59.494***	Supported
H3	Brand trust → luxury consumption	0.125*	1.966***	Supported
H4	Consumer Involvement → luxury consumption	0.489*	6.509**	Supported

Significant at * $p < 0.1$, **$p < 0.05$, ***$p < 0.01$.

broken up our survey into two parts — demographic problems and exogenous variables measurement issues — to eliminate future measurement errors. Harman single factor test is the most widely accepted test proposed to detect common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). According to this test, the restricted single-factor EFA was below 50% of the variance, demonstrating that a typical process bias was not a big problem in the analysis. The cumulative variance was found out to be 72.5%. VIF factor amounts should be equal to or below 3.3 (Hair et al., 2011b; Kock, 2015). As per the recommendations of Hair et al. (2011), a VIF value below 3.3 indicates no multicollinearity. For our analysis, the internal VIF factor level values were below 3.3, which means that this model is free of traditional system prejudice, as shown in Table 3. The Fornell-Larcker criteria of discriminant validity of the constructs involved in the study (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Table 4 is demonstrating the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio for gauging the discriminant validity of all the constructs, with the ratio below 0.85 for all the variables, hence establishing the sufficient conditions for discriminant validity.

4.2. PLS-SEM

After validating the measurement model in the previous section, the structural model was analyzed through PLS-SEM using the protocols (Dash and Paul, 2021). The empirical path coefficients, t-statistics, and the results of the hypotheses are shown in the Table 5. The t-values show the better estimates of the relationship status of the constructs, and the threshold for t-value is 1.96 or more, which indicates robust construct relationships (Hair et al., 1998).

As presented in the results, all four hypotheses were supported. The Fig. 2 is showing the research model. In other words, all the independent variables, including brand experience ($\beta = 0.857$, $t = 5.967$), brand resonance ($\beta = 0.109$, $t = 1.990$), brand trust ($\beta = 0.125$, $t = 1.966$) and consumer involvement ($\beta = 0.489$, $t = 6.509$) showed a significant positive impact on luxury consumption, as approximated by self-acclaimed luxury consumption. It is important to mention that brand resonance and brand trust had a slightly weaker relationship with luxury consumption than consumer involvement or brand experience.

4.3. Multigroup moderation analysis (MGA) using PLS-SEM

As a next step, PLS-SEM MGA was employed to analyze the moderating role of gender and generation on the relationship between the selected constructs in the current study. As a comparison of more than two groups was carried out, PLS-SEM's MGA algorithm was employed. Tables 7 and 8 show the final results of the MGA obtained. Initially, to determine the path coefficients of individual categories, the PLS-SEM algorithm was used, subsequently turning to the MGA methodology to assess between groups variations.

4.3.1. The moderating role of gender

The moderation effect of gender was tested as part of the proposed research model, with the results presented in the Table 5. Two of the of the four hypotheses tested were supported, namely H5a and H5d. The moderating role of gender was present on the relationship between brand experience and luxury consumption (βdiff = 0.0568 and $p < 0.1$), which got supported by a confidence level of 90%. This was significant for males ($\beta = 0.4143$ and $p < 0.01$) but not for females ($\beta = 0.3575$ and $p > 0.01$). These findings indicate that male luxury shoppers seem to be more prone to the experiential aspect of luxury consumption. On the other hand, gender was also found to moderate the relationship between consumer involvement and luxury consumption (βdiff = 0.1068 and $p < 0.05$), which got supported by a confidence level of 95%. This also suggested that consumer involvement was an equally relevant construct for both genders in luxury consumption.

4.3.2. The moderating role of generation

To test for the potential moderating effect of generation using the MGA technique, age groups were divided into two categories; one representing a young age group (i.e., between the ages 18–37 years group corresponding to generation Y and Z), and the other representing older consumers (i.e., between the ages 38 to 58 plus years group corresponding to baby boomers and generation X). Of the four hypotheses in the model, supporting evidence for the moderating role of generation was found in the case of H6a and H6d. On the one hand, the moderating role of generation was apparent on the relationship of brand experience and luxury consumption (βdiff = 0.0568 and $p < 0.1$) with a confidence level of 95%. The result of this hypothesis was significant for the mature age group ($\beta = 0.3609$ and $p < 0.01$) but not for the younger age

Table 6
Moderation analysis on gender.

S.No.	Hypothesis	Path coefficients (β)-female	Path coefficients (β)-male	Path coefficients (β_{diff})-difference	Result	95% bias corrected and accelerated confidence interval
H5a	Brand experience → luxury consumption	0.3575	0.4143***	0.0568*	Supported	(0.4895,0.3689)
H5b	Brand resonance → luxury consumption	0.0577	0.1225***	0.0648*	Not Supported	(0.5236,0.3698)
H5c	Brand trust → luxury consumption	0.0373***	0.0813***	0.0440	Not Supported	(0.3256,0.2196)
H5d	Consumer Involvement → luxury consumption	0.5167***	0.4099***	0.1068**	Supported	(0.1965,0.2365)

Significant at * $p < 0.1$, **$p < 0.05$, ***$p < 0.01$.

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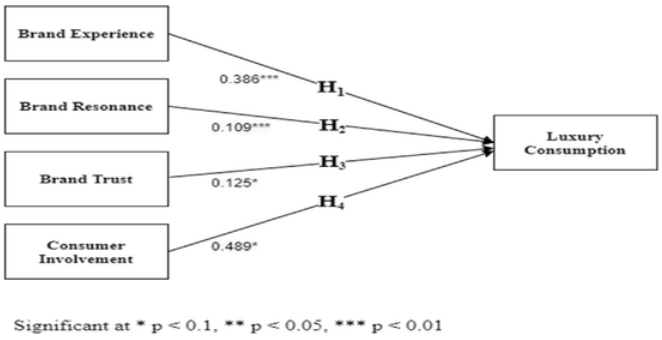


Fig. 2. Results of PLS bootstrapping.

group (β = 0.4143 and p < 0.01). These results indicate that for the mature age group, the experiential aspects of luxury consumption are more prevalent than the younger group. The moderation hypothesis-H6b and H6c were not supported. While, the last hypothesis H6d got supported, which shows the significant role of gender in consumer involvement and luxury consumption (βdiff = 0.0037 and p < 0.1) with a confidence interval of 90%. The result of this hypothesis was significant for both the genders, which implies that generation is significantly moderating the relationship. Both the age groups were considering involvement with the brands as an essential construct. A summary of these findings can be found in Table 7.

4.3.3. Mediating role of consumer involvement

The current study employs the bootstrap method of statistical inference to investigate the mediating effect of a nonparametric resampling test (Hair et al., 2014). This approach is advantageous is it does not presume that the data necessarily fit a normal distribution (Hair et al., 2014). To assess the mediating effect, a parameter known as "variance accounted for" (VAF) was calculated, which can be measured by the value of "indirect effect/total effect." Hair et al. (1998, 2014) identified three different meanings of mediation when it comes to an outcome of VAF - complete mediation (VAF value > 80%), partial mediation (VAF value between 20% and 80%), and no mediation (VAF <20%).

The authors have computed bias-corrected and accelerated confidence intervals for the indirect effects in our model (Chin, 2010; Zhao et al., 2010), using 10,000 subsamples with no sign change. Notably, we calculate the product of the direct effects of brand experience, brand resonance, brand trust on luxury consumption by the direct effect of consumer involvement. The bias-corrected and accelerated confidence intervals do not include zero for all the analyzed indirect effects. Therefore, it can be concluded that consumer involvement mediates the impact of brand experience (confidence interval: (0.3795,0.2959), brand resonance (0.0432,0.2826), and brand trust (0.2658, 0.0226) on luxury consumption.

In this study, a complete mediation effect was found on consumer involvement in the relationship between the brand experience and luxury consumption (H7a, 81.8%); partial mediation in the relationship between brand trust and luxury consumption (H7c, 51.8%), and another partial mediation in the relationship between brand resonance and luxury consumption (h7b, 29.5%). Table 8 summarizes these findings.

5. Discussion

To maintain and escalate the market engagement in the luxury niche, brand marketers can draw consumers with fresh fashion concepts that are tailored to their tastes and desires in specific regions (Ajitha & Sivakumar, 2019). In developing markets, the availability of luxury brands has changed in a way that benefits both advertisers and consumers (Assocham, 2016). Most luxury companies in big cities use a combination of different cues such as in store atmosphere, aroma and so on for delivering a perfect brand experience to the luxury consumers (Dion and Borraz, 2017). Through analyzing consumer perceptions about luxury brands, advertisers and designers will gain a better understanding of consumer's urge to fulfill their needs, allowing them to concentrate their efforts on reforming consumer viewpoints. If shoppers lack a sense of involvement with luxury brands, they would easily switch to other substitutes.

The purpose of the current research aimed to address a previously underexplored area concerning the impact of consumer-brand dyadic attributes – incorporating brand experience, brand resonance, brand trust, and consumer involvement – on the pursuit of luxury brands within the Indian context. The current study contributes to our understanding of the relationship between consumer attitudes and luxury consumption; complementing the body of literature concerning the impact of key consumer-brand relationship attributes on luxury consumption in India, and in turn advancing the literature with needed input from an emerging market perspective. The findings indicated that brand experience, brand resonance, and brand trust have a significant positive impact on luxury consumption in the case of Indian consumers. In addition, consumer involvement was found to mediate the relationship between the core variables and luxury consumption in the Indian luxury market.

Of the variables in our model, the most powerful impact on luxury consumption was exerted by brand experience (H1) and consumer involvement (H4). The behavioral experience followed by affective experience are the two most significant constructs that help in the luxury consumption. The brand experience is an essential feature of the luxury brand industry representing the general social attitude that characterizes emerging markets (Ajitha and Sivakumar, 2019), and our study confirmed this factor to be particularly significant in guiding Indian luxury consumers along their journey. Of the four elements of the brand experience construct (Benedetto and Kim, 2016; Brakus et al., 2009; Wiedmann et al., 2012), the affective and behavioral components showed a significant and considerable impact on overall luxury consumption. These are generally in line with earlier research in other cultural settings (Huang, 2017; Kim and Chao, 2019; Schifferstein et al., 2020), but can now be confirmed in the Indian luxury context.

Table 7
Moderation Analysis on generation.

S.No.	Hypothesis	Path coefficients (β) - Younger group	Path coefficients (β)- Mature group	Path coefficients (β_{diff})- difference	Result	95% bias corrected and accelerated confidence interval
H6a	Brand experience → luxury consumption	0.4143	0.3609***	0.0534**	Supported	(0.3675,0.4531)
H6b	Brand resonance → luxury consumption	0.1225	0.1676**	0.0451	Not Supported	(0.2128,0.4125)
H6c	Brand trust → luxury consumption	0.0813***	0.1203**	0.0309*	Not Supported	(-0.2356,0.6874)
H6d	Consumer Involvement → luxury consumption	0.4499***	0.4069***	0.0037*	Supported	(0.2356,0.0129)

Significant at * p < 0.1, **p < 0.05, ***p < 0.01.

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Table 8
Mediation Analysis of consumer involvement.

No.	Hypothetical relationships	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Total effect	VAF	Result	95% bias corrected and accelerated confidence interval
H7a	Brand experience → Consumer Involvement → luxury consumption	0.0877	0.3967	0.4844	0.818	Accept	(0.3795, 0.2959)
H7b	Brand resonance → Consumer Involvement → luxury consumption	0.2537	0.1062	0.3599	0.295	Accept	(0.0432, 0.2826)
H7c	Brand trust → Consumer Involvement → luxury consumption	0.1222	0.1317	0.2539	0.518	Accept	(0.2658, 0.0226)

Significant at * p < 0.1, **p < 0.05, ***p < 0.01.
Notes: Variance account for (VAF) = Indirect effect/total effect.

Despite their relatively weaker contribution, brand resonance and brand trust were also important, which is different from some earlier work where non-significant relationships were observed between the aforementioned variables (Bian and Forsythe, 2012; Sharma and Klein, 2020). This might be at least in part due to the varying perception of luxury brands across different cultures (Ajitha & Sivakumar, 2019), further confirming the importance of such cross-market investigations. Additionally, the findings also revealed that brand attachment followed by brand judgment are the two most important constructs that leads to establishment of brand resonance for luxury consumers. The result also reveals a weak relationship between brand resonance and brand trust on luxury consumption which may be in part due to the fact that top luxury brands are adopted from Western societies and may not have the same ingrained perceptions in emerging economies. At any rate, this partnership, though, must not be overlooked since even minor influences will help brands develop their business in the long run.

Concentrating on consumer differences via demographic variables provides a solid foundation for segmenting the luxury industry. Age and gender are often positioned as moderators in these relationships. Both age and gender had been shown to exert varying influences on luxury consumption and brand engagements (Kumar et al., 2020). The results of the current study confirmed that the association between brand experience and luxury consumption appeared to vary by gender and age in that the relationship seemed more profound in the case of male and more mature consumers. The moderation impact of gender and generation on the relationship between consumer involvement and luxury consumption suggested more pronounced influences in the case of females and younger age groups; which again is helpful in assisting brands in more personalized alignment of their marketing strategy and communication. In emerging nations, consumer segmentation using generational cohorts has already been addressed extensively (Kang et al., 2021). However, the purchasing habits of different generations in developing countries has remained limited.

Findings that suggest higher luxury consumption for luxury goods in the case of more mature luxury consumers are not surprising given their higher number, higher earnings and longer life expectancy (Lambert-Pandraud and Laurent, 2010). Results concerning younger age groups in a way are particularly interesting, however, as they represent the future target for luxury brands. More specifically, knowing that younger females may benefit particularly from greater consumer involvement help brands establish the kinds of consumer journeys that include various touchpoints that capture the periods before as well as after the mere transaction.

Based on the behavioral traits, luxury shoppers in India search for exotic brands that help them craft a unique persona (Kumar et al., 2020). An adequately targeted strategy, gender, and generational alignment will reinforce this attitude by giving consumers their ideal social profile. Consumers in a group setting portray themselves by using luxury brands for purposes of being more creative and sophisticated. Luxury shoppers require luxury brands to reflect the attributes and raise their status in their social environment (Kauppinen-Räisänen et al., 2020). In the modern age of pursuing luxurious brands, buyers strive to align themselves with cultural norms and be recognized by others and by their peers (Ajitha & Sivakumar, 2019; Jhamb et al., 2020); in line with previous research (Huang, 2017; Schade et al., 2016; Sherman et al., 1997). The involvement can be seen as a significant construct that helps maintain positive consumer-brand relationships.

A consumer history that entails positive experiences with brands have a range of advantageous direct as well as indirect outcomes, including greater luxury consumption Han and Kim (2020); (Ajitha & Sivakumar, 2019), higher likelihood of developing strong attachment relationships (Langner et al., 2016), and also being more forgiving in case a negative potential occurrence (Palusuk et al., 2019). With our current focus on interactions that influence luxury buyers' purchasing decisions, we complement earlier work that posited that consumers anticipate positive outcomes from brand resonance (Huang et al., 2015; Kim, 2019; Shieh and Lai, 2017).

The apparent mediating role of consumer involvement on brand experience and brand trust on luxury consumption, respectively, highlights the essential impact of making a deep and sensual connection with shoppers. The weaker role on the relationship between brand resonance and consumption is in line with previous research (Huang, 2017; Schade et al., 2016; Sherman et al., 1997) and can now be applied to the Indian context as well. In fact, with fast economic development and rising disposable income, India has emerged as one of the most significant growth markets, displaying strong purchasing habits. As a result, more profound knowledge of Indian consumers' luxury brand choices may assist the luxury brand industry to analyze their buying habits and position India as the largest commercial market worldwide (Jain et al., 2017; Jain and Mishra, 2018).

6. Implications

6.1. Theoretical contribution

The current research offers new insights into a field that has not been extensively investigated in the past. Exploring luxury brand consumption in the Indian luxury market is important in that it can offer luxury market players a competitive advantage and sustainable development in this niche segment (Aggarwal et al., 2019; Jhamb et al., 2020; Ong et al., 2018; Pentina et al., 2018). The study proposes a research model of drivers of luxury consumption, which are moderated by demographic segmentation of gender and generation. The Fig. 3 is showing the luxury consumption diagram based on the current study. This research demonstrated that luxury is largely contextual (Wiedmann et al., 2012) and the individual's perceptions toward the same luxury brand that vary (Kumar et al., 2020); particularly when we consider different cultural settings.

Young affluent shoppers consider an experiential connection with the luxury brands, which makes them actual users of it. Numerous young people in India have assimilated western culture and recognize the advantages of luxury consumption in terms of brand trust and involvement (Piacentini and Mailer, 2004). It is critical to developing efficient consumer relationship management activities that continuously remind luxury consumers about the relevance and unique features of luxury brands (Loureiro et al., 2018). The current study also reveals

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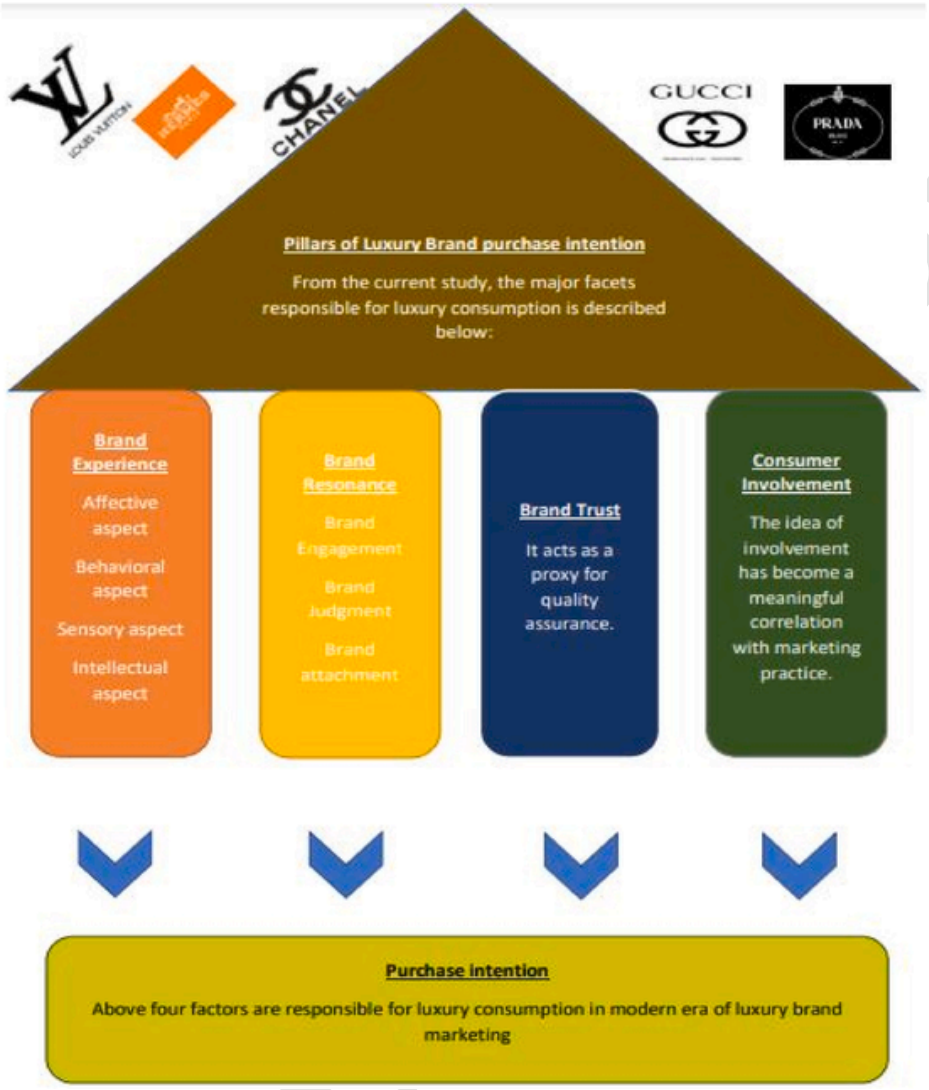


Fig. 3. Luxury consumption diagram* The logos used in the above figure, denotes the brands employed for the current study.

that consumer involvement is a more significant construct for mature group shoppers; this could be because older adults are more inclined towards involvement with luxury brands before purchasing it. While comparing gender, brand experience is significant for males, while consumer involvement is significant for both but stronger for females.

This is the first research of its type to present gender and age distinctions in contemporary luxury and, more broadly, luxury literature. Additionally, this research guides researcher interested in examining the variations in the partnerships between variables among different generations and gender as well. Thus, this research will contribute to a better understanding of the importance of generational variations in consumers' perceptions and purchasing decisions. In general, this research contributes to a better understanding of consumer preferences toward the recently evolving luxury brands. It is one of the first existing studies to examine the moderating impact of gender and generation categories, two critical factors in consumer segmentation.

Although studies on brand experience, resonance, and trust have been addressed in prior research, the majority of these studies focused on individual constructs in more traditional and Western markets, with more limited understanding of their combined impact and emerging markets. The current empirical work broadens our understanding of experience and resonance features to the setting of luxury consumers in developing nations. In addition, the results concerning the impact of brand trust and consumer involvement in luxury consumption demonstrate that consumers may build trust with brands based on various criteria, including packaging, labeling, brand promises, post-purchase sentiments, and, most significantly, involvement with brands throughout the entire consumers journey. As a result, brand trust and consumer participation may have an indirect impact on luxury consumption (Gilal et al., 2020).

Finally, this study reveals significant differences between older and younger consumers regarding the effect of brand resonance and brand trust on luxury consumption in India; with indications that brand experience is more promising for capturing consumers who represent more mature age groups as opposed to younger luxury segments. At the same time, consumer involvement is an essential aspect for young luxury shoppers, in line with earlier work in various cultural settings (Seidel et al., 2020). These findings are important in that they can assist scholars exploring effective segmentation strategies based on consumer profiles and suggest distinct strategic directions to increase trust and involvement for both groups.

6.2. Managerial implications

The current research aids luxury brand marketers and managers in understanding affluent shoppers' attitudes in different segments and generations. The consumers of luxury brands perceive them as representing prestige and legitimacy (Turunen and Laaksonen, 2011). The

development of the luxury brand industry in India continues to develop, and the idea of luxury branding in India is transforming the lifestyle of consumers by fulfilling their demand for prestige (Ahn and Mundel, 2018; Peluso et al., 2017).

This study provides significant insights. First, the brand's experiential value as approximated by brand sensory, affective, behavioral and intellectual dimensions influence the choice of brands in the process of luxury consumption. The importance of these values has been shown with time and cultural contexts (Choo et al., 2012; Donvito et al., 2020); and the current study highlighted in particular that sensory and affective brand experiences are the most significant dimensions across all four generational cohorts. Consequently, marketers should supply affluent shoppers with relevant sensory and affective experiences to acquire experiential value (Dhaliwal et al., 2020; Jain and Mishra, 2018; Keller, 2012). Luxury brand managers can focus on behavioral and affective brand experiences that can help them deliver delightful experiences to their consumers. The luxury brand marketers should leverage a hybrid set of sensory, emotional, intellectual, and behavioral elements which they should engage in their entire marketing mix; communicating through advertisement, visual composition, product presence, and social media (Han and Kim, 2020).

Consumers will buy a product if they can get a sense of it beyond distribution and convenience. The process of marketing and ads should provide a theatrical experience by merging social media communications and personal encounters, allowing consumers to feel immersion and deviance through relevant connections with brands (Cristini et al., 2017; Kauppinen-Räisänen et al., 2020). Furthermore, based on the impact of brand resonance captured by the combination of brand engagement, brand judgment and brand attachment on luxury consumption, brand managers should engage the consumers with the brands they are interested in by providing exciting cues and novel marketing strategies that capture the attention of consumers and maintain it over time (Kang et al., 2021; Shieh and Lai, 2017).

The positive impact of brand trust in luxury consumption – and consumption in general – is not new; but confirming its significant in the Indian context is helpful for brand managers highlights the continued prevalence of this construct across cultural boundaries, with necessary efforts to sustain the consumer-brand relationship over an extended period of time (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2018; Chinomona, 2013). Furthermore, the impact of consumer involvement encourages practitioners to engage their consumer base by creating a community with high personal relevance, satisfaction and delight in order to preserve long-term, mutually beneficial connections with affluent shoppers (Bruwer et al., 2017; Hwang et al., 2020).

Additionally, findings revealed that consumer involvement with the brands and the experiential aspect that brands provide in the purchasing process is crucial for purchasing luxury brands. The luxury brand marketers can target -male luxury shoppers with brand experience aspects and female luxury shoppers with involvement aspects. At the same time, the mature group of shoppers can be targeted by brand experience while younger shoppers by consumer involvement with the brands.

Markets can use the segmentation and moderation results to impact consumers through the development of relevant strategies. One strategy for influencing these audiences is to produce brands that are distinct from rivals and provides an experience that no other brand offers. The results indicate that consumer involvement is the most powerful facilitator of luxury consumption in all classes. As a result, luxury companies must place their brand in the industry in such a way that it aims to include a substantial degree of involvement with the targeted consumers.

7. Conclusions

The research findings can be seen as an insight into the luxury shoppers purchasing behavior in India. The current study analyzed the relationships between brand experience, resonance, trust, and involvement with luxury consumption. The moderating effect of age and generation were analyzed. The results indicated that brand experience and consumer involvement are the two most critical facilitators encouraging luxury consumption in the Indian context. The mediation analysis also re-iterated the importance of brand experience followed by brand trust in luxury shopping.

The current study helps luxury brand managers in a variety of ways; extending their understanding of consumer-brand relationships within the Indian market; identifying key constructs that trigger consumer luxury consumption in top-rated Indian luxury goods; being able to decipher the role of consumer involvement on advantageous consumer-brand outcomes; and evaluating the importance of gender and generational affiliation on luxury consumption. Ultimately this study assists brands in developing a more suitable and effective marketing strategy that suits the preferences of the Indian luxury context. Marketers must priorities intangible advantages while developing a brand's features, and the luxury and masstige selling strategies can be conveyed differently.

8. Limitations and future research directions

Despite the best efforts, the current study is not without some limitations. It is an ancient proverb used in this context that *gold cannot be pure, and people cannot be perfect*. Some of the issues that persist in the present research are described in the following section.

The findings for this study are based on the responses obtained from the luxury brand consumers; hence, the results cannot be generalized beyond the luxury sector of the Indian market. The responses received are only draw on the Indian luxury brand consumers, and they may vary from culture to culture. Further cultures especially in emerging markets should be explored. Furthermore, the current research has employed the cross-sectional approach rather than using a longitudinal research approach; hence the potential shift in the consumer's perception and attitude cannot be adequately captured and predicted (Adnan et al., 2017; Jain et al., 2014). Longitudinal studies would be particularly advantageous to observe variations in consumer preferences over time and with changing life stages. Finally, the present research has pursued participants in India's four metropolitan cities, which may have some similarities in the perception of luxury brands; hence a more diversified sample size can be selected for further studies.

In terms of future studies and research directions, the concept of sustainable luxury that is gaining prominence nowadays can be incorporated in the notion of luxury consumption in emerging markets (Amatulli et al., 2020). There is growing acceptance of the new generation known as the ‘Alpha generation – considered the youngest of all, i.e., born after 2010. This is a generation that is considered the future of the luxury market niche but ways in which to attract them most effectively may differ from other age groups; hence calling for further insights (Kumar et al., 2020; Paul, 2018). A cross-cultural study may also be advantageous incorporating the same research model but across different cultural settings and markets. In addition, in this research, we did not discriminate between individual traits and environmental variables. Future studies might concentrate on finding possible moderators that may arise when considering consumer factors such as socioeconomic, demographic, and cultural values Wiedmann et al. (2012). Finally, an additional study should be conducted to determine whether our proposed model would provide different findings if the analysis was focused on other luxury brands.

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Busolo, 2020; Dash et al., 2021; Fitzsimons and Morwitz, 1996; Jain and Mishra, 2020; Kim et al., 2019; Mishra et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2020; Sun et al., 2021.

Appendix-1. Scale items and source references employed in the current study

Construct Measured	Scale Items	Authors
Sensory	My preferred luxury brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense	Schmitt (2012); Brakus et al. (2009)
	I find my preferred luxury brand interesting in a sensory way	
	My preferred luxury brand appeals to my senses	
Affective	My preferred luxury brand induces feelings and sentiments	
	I feel strong emotions for my preferred luxury brand	
	I consider my preferred luxury brand an emotional brand	
Behavioral	My preferred luxury brand results in bodily experiences	
	My preferred luxury brand is action oriented	
	My preferred luxury brand reminds me of actions and behaviors when I use this brand	
Intellectual	I tend to think and contemplate a lot about my preferred luxury brand	
	My preferred luxury brand makes me think	
	My preferred luxury brand stimulates my curiosity and problem solving	
Brand Trust	My preferred luxury brand never disappoints me	Sahin et al. (2011)
	My preferred luxury brand guarantees my satisfaction	
	I feel confident about my preferred luxury brand	
	My preferred luxury brand meets my expectations	
Consumer Involvement	Choosing a different luxury brand over my preferred brand would be a very difficult choice for me to make	Bloch et al. (1993)
	Whenever I buy my preferred luxury brand it feels like giving myself a present	
	My preferred luxury brand is extremely important to me	
	I pay close attention to my preferred luxury brand	
Brand Attachment	I really love my preferred luxury brand	Huang et al. (2015)
	My preferred luxury brand is special to me	
	My preferred luxury brand is more than just a product to me	
Brand Engagement	I am interested in talking to others about my preferred luxury brand	
	I am proud to have others know that I use my preferred luxury brand	
	I follow news/updates about my preferred luxury brand	
Brand Judgment	My preferred luxury brand knows what his consumers want	
	My preferred luxury brand is very innovative	
	My preferred luxury brand always takes care of their consumers and considers their opinion	
Purchase Intention	I will not buy any other brand even if there are options available in the market	Mittal (1989)
	Commercial ads regarding competing brands are not able to reduce my interest in buying my preferred luxury brand	
	While shopping, I usually select my preferred luxury brands	
	I buy my preferred brand as much as I can	

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