

# Quasi-social interaction, Brand identity, Similarity and Brand value for Luxury goods in Hunan, China

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## ABSTRACT

The research investigated the quasi-social interaction, brand identity, similarity and brand value for luxury goods in Hunan, China. The conceptual framework was developed from the literature review, survey, and other contemporary research in management and marketing. Accordingly, the researchers consider the importance of quasi-social interaction, brand identity, similarity and brand value for luxury goods in Hunan, China. In this, the researchers employed the quantitative research approaches. The instruments of research were the steps of a questionnaire. Data were collected from 257 people who are customer of luxury goods shops in Hunan. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics as mean, standard deviation, and percentage on the basis of observing the actual brand cognition of the organizations studied through all operational links in management. Findings are applications of quasi-social interaction, brand identity, similarity and brand value are high-level.

Keywords: quasi-social interaction, brand identity, similarity, brand value

## INTRODUCTION

**The Concept of luxury goods** Understanding the value nature of luxury goods requires considering the components of luxury brands. Defining a luxury item or a brand is difficult. Luxury goods exist at the end of ordinary goods. The end of ordinary goods and the starting point of luxury goods is a matter of degree judged by consumers. Laurent & Dubois (1994). defines luxury goods as "anything that is not essential and is set in the context of the society determining the demand. This is a relative and dynamic terminological definition. The term "luxury" is derived from "luxus", which, according to the definition given in the Tsai S P. (2005) means "a soft or luxurious life, (excessive) indulgent" and "luxury, luxury and rich." The term "luxury" has recently been commonly used by marketers in most products or service categories to convey to consumers specific product levels to persuade them to "upgrade". Other practitioners divide the definition of luxury into luxury goods defined by brands and luxury experiences defined by consumers.

Marketing scholars use the term "luxury" in different ways: for example, Vigneron and Johnson (1999) use "luxury" to describe top brands, Dubois and Czellar (2005) see "prestige" as a unique achievement of brands, and "luxury" is only related to self-indulgence. Economists define luxury goods as goods whose commodity demand is proportional to or proportional to the recipient (i. e., the recipient elasticity of demand is greater than or equal to 1), but the purchase of luxury goods is not only determined by economic factors, in which the recipient is a necessary and not sufficient condition to explain the purchase.

Ko, Costello & Taylor (2019). emphasized the characteristics of luxury brands from the perspective of the consumer: (1) high quality perception; (2) providing real value through expected benefits in function and emotion; (3) market prestige image based on technology,

design, service and other quality; (4) high product premium but worth it; (5) deep connection and resonance with consumers.

Chevalier, Michel. (2012). divide luxury goods into eight categories from a product category perspective: fashion, jewelry, cosmetics, wine, cars, hotels, tourism, and private banking. Among them, the fashion products are considered by the scholars to have a very high aesthetic value and hedonic value. In his book, Han Hongmei (2021), an HSBC director, charts luxury goods as a pyramid at six levels. The pyramid is divided from the bottom up: Every day luxury (everyday luxury), Luxury items priced below \$100, Such as famous brand Japanese red, perfume, cologne, famous wine, Swatch (Swatch), Starbucks coffee, etc.; Affordable luxury (affordable luxury goods), Luxury items priced at \$100- \$300, Such as glasses, Coach (Gucci) and Tiffany (Tiffany) silver ornaments; Accessible Core (Core Luxury items), Luxury items priced at \$300- \$1,500, Such as Gucci (Gucci), Prada (Prada); Premium core (premium core luxury goods), Luxury items priced at between \$1,500- \$5,000, Such as LV (Louis Vuitton), Cartier (Cartier); Superpremium (super-premium luxury goods), Luxury items priced at \$5,000- \$50,000, Such as Hermes (Hermes), Van Cleef & Arpels (Sepal); Ultra (Top Luxury Items), Luxury items priced above \$50,000, Such as Leviev (Levv), Graff (Graf) and various kinds of advanced customization.

Based on the focus of this research in the clothing industry, referring to the definition of luxury goods by previous scholars and the authoritative classification of luxury goods, the luxury goods studied in this paper are defined as the core luxury goods, high-end core luxury goods and ultra-high-end luxury goods from the two aspects of pricing and category.

### **The concept of Quasi-social interaction**

Para-social Interactions (PSI) was first proposed by Horton and Wohl (1956), who identified media people and their audience as a one-way relationship similar to real face-to-face interaction. Frequent interaction between the audience and the media figures will form a spiritual communication behavior, similar to the real social activities. Such social activities only exist on the spiritual level, and the information can only be transmitted to the audience in one way. The audience receives the information and communicates with the media figures in the imagination. There is no actual feedback behavior, and there is no real interaction between the two sides.

### **Motives for luxury consumption**

Motivation is an internal force that stimulates behavioral responses and guides the behavioral response. In marketing activities, there is a close relationship between consumer consumption behavior and enterprise marketing strategy, and consumption motivation is an important aspect. Consumption motivation reflects the psychological needs of consumers, such as spiritual and emotional needs. In terms of the consumption motivation of luxury goods, scholars at home and abroad focus on the following two aspects: social orientation and personal orientation. The earliest foreign related research began at the end of the 19th century, and has formed a relatively complete research framework and relatively rich research conclusions.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The research was to investigate the current issue of quasi-social interaction, brand identity, similarity and brand value for luxury goods in Hunan, China. The conceptual framework was developed from the literature review, survey in the area, and other contemporaneous research in management and marketing. Accordingly, the researchers consider the importance of quasi-social interaction, brand identity, similarity and brand value.

In this, the researchers employed the quantitative research approaches. The instruments of research were the steps of a questionnaire. They have collected data from the students of the Private University in Hunan, China by distributing a total of 257 questionnaires to ask for information from the sample group in order to complete all parts of the questionnaire. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics as mean, standard deviation, and percentage on the basis of observing the actual brand cognition of the organizations studied through all operational links in brand cognition. Findings are applications of quasi-social interaction, brand identity, similarity and brand value is high-level.

## RESULTS

### 4.1 Personal characteristics of student of private university of Henan

Characteristics of entrepreneurs	number (n=257)	Percentage
1. Gender		
- Male	165	64.20
- Female	92	35.79
2. Age		
- 18 - 25 Year	87	33.85
- 26 – 35 year	99	38.52
- 36 – 45 year	48	18.67
- More than 46 year	23	8.96
3. Marital status		
- single	99	38.50
- married	110	42.80
- divorced	48	18.7
4. Degree of education		
- lower than bachelor's degree	54	21.01
- Bachelor's degree	105	40.85
- graduate	98	38.13
5. Working time		
- 1-3 years	87	33.86
- 4-6 years	99	38.52
- More than 7 years	71	27.62
-		
6. Monthly income		
- 1000-3000 Yuan	112	43.58
- 3001-5000 Yuan	99	38.52
- 5001-8000 Yuan	46	17.90
-		

From the table 4.1, the perspective of gender, female are significantly lower than male, accounting for 35.79 percentage, and male 64.20 percentage.

Regarding the age of student, the highest proportion was 26-35 years old, accounting for 38.52%, followed by student aged 18-25 years and student, aged more than 46 years, accounting for 33.85% and 8.96%, respectively, and student, aged 36-45 years 18.67% said that brand cognition who responded to the survey were generally middle age.

Regarding marital status, 42.80 % were single, 38.50% were divorced, and 18.70% were related to married..

From the perspective of educational background, student in private university generally have lower than bachelor's degree, Bachelor's degree, and graduate accounting for 21.01, 40.85%, and 38.13% respectively.

From the perspective of working years, the student is generally in the range of 1-3 years, 4-6 years of employment, accounting for 33.86 and 38.52 respectively, and the student for more than 7 years also account for a certain proportion, 27.62%.

In terms of monthly income, 38.52% of student have a monthly income of 3000-5000 Yuan, 17.90% of student have a monthly income of 5000-8000 Yuan, and only 43.58% of students have a monthly income of 1000-3000 Yuan, indicating that the average income per month of students has basically reached the middle-income level.

#### 4.1 Credibility

Table 4.2 the level of opinion about the Credibility

<b>Credibility</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Rank</b>
1. appearance credibility	3.961	.583	high	4
2. Unique aesthetic credibility	4.123	.532	high	1
3. The credibility of being outstanding according to the audience.	4.111	.561	high	2
4. Security credibility does not imitate.	3.997	.533	high	3
5. After-sales service reliability	3.887	.654	high	5
Total	4.016	.573	high	

From Table 4.2, the mean and standard deviation of the opinion level of the credibility variable is at a high level, with the mean value at a higher level being 4.016. Comprehensive from all aspects, the average of the highest side is "Unique aesthetic credibility" high level average of 4.123, followed by "The credibility of being outstanding according to the audience.", high level of average of 4.111, the last is " After-sales service reliability ", the average is 3.887, in the high level.

#### 4.2 Similarity of views

Table 4.3 the level of opinion about the Similarity of views

<b>Similarity of views</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Rank</b>
1. Similarity of views	3.911	.513	high	4
2. There are shared my values	4.124	.554	high	1
3. There has a lot in common with me	4.112	.512	high	2
4. There are behaved the same way as I did	3.987	.643	high	3
5. There has a thought / vision similar to me	3.786	.568	high	5
Total	3.984	.558	high	

From Table 4.3, both the mean value and the standard deviation regarding the opinion level affecting the Similarity of views are at a high overall level, with the mean value at a higher level being 3.984. From the various aspects of the variables involved, we found that the highest average is "There are shared my values " (4.124), at a high level, followed by "There has a lot in common with me" (4.112), at a high level, the lowest is "There has a thought / vision similar to me ", the average of 3.786, in the same high level.

#### 4.3 Quasi-social interaction

Table 4.4 the level of opinion about the Quasi-social interaction

<b>Quasi-social interaction</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Rank</b>
1. I'm looking forward to new products.	3.822	.554	high	3
2. I think this product is a match for me.	4.109	.575	high	1
3. I think I'm part of this product.	3.987	.632	high	2
4. I easily made the decision to buy this product.	3.789	.654	high	4
Total	3.942	.603	high	

From Table 4.4, the mean and standard deviation of the opinion level of the Quasi-social interaction variable is at a high level, with the mean value at a high level being 3.942. Comprehensive from all aspects, the average of the highest side is "I think this product is a match for me", high-level average of 4.109, followed by "I think I'm part of this product" high

level of an average of 3.987, the last is "I easily made the decision to buy this product" the average is 3.789, in the high level.

#### 4.4 Brand identity

Table 4.5 the level of opinion about Brand identity

<b>Brand identity</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Rank</b>
1. The luxury brand is a symbol of identity and wealth	4.112	.534	high	1
2. I really love people wearing the luxury brand	3.992	.513	high	3
3. I identify with people who like the luxury brand	3.811	.566	high	4
4. Considering all the factors, the luxury brand is a good choice	4.105	.511	high	2
Total	4.005	.531	high	

From Table 4.5, the mean and standard deviation of the opinion level of Brand identity variable is at a high level, with the mean value at a higher level being 4.005. Comprehensive from all aspects, the average of the highest side is "The luxury brand is a symbol of identity and wealth", high level average of 4.112, followed by "Considering all the factors, the luxury brand is a good choice", high level of average of 4.105, the last is "I identify with people who like the luxury brand", the average is 3.811, in the high level.

#### 4.5 Brand Value

Table 4.6 the level of opinion about the Brand Value

<b>Brand Value</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Rank</b>
1. Brand luxury goods is a good value for money	4.103	.553	high	2
2. Brand luxury goods is worth this price because it brings me more value than other brands	4.122	.573	high	1
3. Brand luxury goods is a better value for money than any other brands	3.991	.566	high	3
Total	3.943	.564	high	

From Table 4.6, the mean and standard deviation of the opinion level of the brand value variable is at a high level, with the mean value at a higher level being 3.943. Comprehensive from all aspects, the average of the highest side is "Brand luxury goods is worth this price because it brings me more value than other brands", high-level average of 4.112, followed by "Brand luxury goods is a good value for money "high level of an average of 4.103, the last is "Brand luxury goods is a better value for money than any other brands", the average is 3.991, in the high level

#### 4.6 Brand Cognition

Table 4.7 the level of opinion about the Brand Cognition

<b>Brand Cognition</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Rank</b>
1. If I am shopping for luxury goods brands, my willingness to buy these brands will be very high brand luxury goods	4.111	.563	high	2
2. If I were going to buy luxury goods, I would consider buying this brand luxury goods	4.116	0.567	high	1
3. If I were to buy a luxury goods brand, there is a high probability that I would buy a brand luxury goods	3.986	0.545	high	3
Total	4.071	.558	high	

From Table 4.6, the mean and standard deviation of the opinion level of the Brand cognition variable is at a high level, with the mean value at a higher level being 4.071. Comprehensive from all aspects, the average of the highest side is "If I were going to buy luxury goods, I would consider buying this brand luxury goods", high-level average of 4.116, followed by " If I am shopping for luxury goods brands, my willingness to buy these brands will be very high brand luxury goods " high level of an average of 4,111, the last is " If I were to buy a luxury goods brand, there is a high probability that I would buy a brand luxury goods ", the average is 3.986, in the high level

#### 4.7 The factors affecting the overall

Table 4.8 the level of opinion about the factors affecting the overall

	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Credibility	4.016	.573	medium	1
Similarity of views	3.984	.558	high	3
Quasi-social interaction	3.942	.603	high	5
Brand identity	4.005	.531	high	2
Brand Value	3.943	.564	High	4
Total	3.978	.566	high	

As can be seen in Table 4.8, the mean and standard deviation of opinion levels regarding factors affecting brand cognition are at a high overall level, with a higher-level mean at 3.978. From each variable, we found that the highest average was credibility (4.016), at a high level, followed by brand identity (4.005), and the lowest was Quasi-social interaction, with an average of 3.942.

## CONCLUSION

### (1) The level of opinion about the factors affecting the overall

The mean and standard deviation of opinion levels regarding factors affecting brand cognition are at a high overall level, with a higher-level mean at 3.978. From each variable, we found that the highest average was credibility (4.016), at a high level, followed by brand identity (4.005), and the lowest was Quasi-social interaction, with an average of 3.942.

### (2) Credibility

The mean and standard deviation of the opinion level of the credibility variable is at a high level, with the mean value at a higher level being 4.016. Comprehensive from all aspects, the average of the highest side is "Unique aesthetic credibility" high level average of 4.123, followed by "The credibility of being outstanding according to the audience.", high level of average of 4.111, the last is " After-sales service reliability ", the average is 3.887, in the high level

### (3) Similarity of views

The mean value and the standard deviation regarding the opinion level affecting the Similarity of views are at a high overall level, with the mean value at a higher level being 3.984. From the various aspects of the variables involved, we found that the highest average is "There are shared my values " (4.124), at a high level, followed by "There has a lot in common with me" (4.112), at a high level, the lowest is "There has a thought / vision similar to me ", the average of 3.786, in the same high level.

### (4) Quasi-social interaction

The mean and standard deviation of the opinion level of the Quasi-social interaction variable is at a high level, with the mean value at a high level being 3.942. Comprehensive from all aspects, the average of the highest side is "I think this product is a match for me", high-level average of 4.109, followed by "I think I'm part of this product" high level of an average of 3.987, the last is "I easily made the decision to buy this product" the average is 3.789, in the high level

#### (5) Brand identity

The mean and standard deviation of the opinion level of Brand identity variable is at a high level, with the mean value at a higher level being 4.005. Comprehensive from all aspects, the average of the highest side is "The luxury brand is a symbol of identity and wealth ", high level average of 4.112, followed by " Considering all the factors, the luxury brand is a good choice", high level of average of 4.105, the last is " I identify with people who like the luxury brand", the average is 3.811, in the high level

#### (6) Brand value

The mean and standard deviation of the opinion level of the brand value variable is at a high level, with the mean value at a higher level being 3.943. Comprehensive from all aspects, the average of the highest side is "Brand luxury goods is worth this price because it brings me more value than other brands ", high-level average of 4.112, followed by " Brand luxury goods is a good value for money "high level of an average of 4.103, the last is " Brand luxury goods is a better value for money than any other brands ", the average is 3.991, in the high level

#### (7) Brand Cognition

The mean and standard deviation of the opinion level of the Brand cognition variable is at a high level, with the mean value at a higher level being 4.071. Comprehensive from all aspects, the average of the highest side is "If I were going to buy luxury goods, I would consider buying this brand luxury goods", high-level average of 4.116, followed by " If I am shopping for luxury goods brands, my willingness to buy these brands will be very high brand luxury goods " high level of an average of 4,111, the last is " If I were to buy a luxury goods brand, there is a high probability that I would buy a brand luxury goods ", the average is 3.986, in the high level.

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