
Influence of Perceived Quality and Self-Esteem on Women's Purchase Intention: Luxury Makeup Brands

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Abstract —Luxury brands have often been associated with the core competences of creativity, exclusivity, craftsmanship, precision, high quality, innovation and premium pricing. These product attributes give consumers the satisfaction of not only owning expensive items but the extra-added psychological benefits like esteem, prestige and a sense of a high status that reminds them and others that they belong to an exclusive group of only a select few, who can afford these premium items. Thus, this research aims to investigate the relationship between and influence of Perceived Quality and Self Esteem on luxury branded makeup purchase. Data from 141 questionnaires were completed by women living in Kuala Lumpur. The findings of the study showed that perceived quality and self-esteem have significant effects on consumers' intention towards buying luxury branded makeup. Implication and areas for future research are further discussed.

Keywords: *Luxury Brand, Women, Makeup, Perceived Quality, Self-Esteem*

I. Introduction

In the early days, luxury brands were the “thing” of the privileged few, but now they have become more affordable to many more middle-market consumers (Tsai, 2005). For a lady, foundations and lipsticks has become the most important makeup product in her daily life. For instance, the luxury makeup of Chanel brand gives a sense of beauty and self-esteem to women to be more confident by hiding the imperfect skin behind it. Human wants are the things that we have no control of which comes from individual personality and temptation. People buy Chanel's beauty product because it has the symbol of wealth and high-class beauty product where people assume that the more expensive it is, the higher the quality. Nagasawa (2011) claimed that Chanel's beauty products boast superior standards in terms of both packaging and quality. The motives for acquiring luxury brands were traditionally regarded as constrainable to the notion of “*buying to impress others*”, which are still more or less serves as a strategic principle for the marketing management of luxury brands (Tsai, 2005). Sullivan (2009) stated that the new luxury is not just about “having” anymore. Instead it refers to the ability to choose anything, to choose better than others, and to choose things that others don't, and can't have. Generally, luxury sectors have influenced consumer's purchase behavior on things that are not necessities to buy. These self-selected elites are generally price insensitive and choose to spend their time and money on objects that are plainly opulence rather than necessities (Mansharamani & Khanna, 2008). This is due to the influential factors such as perceived quality and self-esteem.

Cosmetics nowadays have become an essential part in women's daily routine and most of them would relentlessly follow the trend of new releases of makeup brands in the market. They would rather purchase the luxury makeup brands compared to buying the usual drugstore brands that serves a similar function. Kapferer (2012) states that luxury product aims to target a special group of consumers who want to show that they belong to a high social class group which also leads to an increased self-esteem. In addition, quality plays an important

role to which it defines the whole brand of a particular product and/or service. Quality of a makeup is important to women as it reflects a healthy lifestyle that contributes toward general health. Thus, the study aims to understand the influence of perceived quality and self-esteem on consumers' purchase intention on luxury makeup brands.

II. Literature Review

1.1. Perceived Quality

People perceive luxury brands to possess certain quality characteristics such as the use of ingredients or materials which gives them a luxurious feeling upon consumption. In other word, luxurious brands provide superior quality and performance for consumer. Vigneron and Johnson (2014) stated that the quality of luxury brand has influenced consumers to perceive them as it is because it provides superior characteristic that non-luxury brands have not. Perceived quality can be explained as consumer's opinion on luxury product or brand that can fulfill her/his expectation. Perceived quality does not directly influence consumers feeling but it is a perception and judgments about what is important to consumers. It is the consumers' judgment on the product itself whether it meets their expectation or not. In fact, in services sector service quality has an impact on customer. Study revealed that 4.7% revealed that the participants decided to stay with their current service providers due to better services and the effectiveness of their service person or salesperson (Putit & Abdullah, 2019). Consumers may perceive more value from a luxury brand because they assume that it will have a greater brand quality and comfort (Aaker, 1991). In addition, luxury brands are assumed as high quality products that premium brand or prestige brand has. For example, Dubois (2001) claimed that some respondents perceive quality to be one of the strongest connections to luxury, where luxury, in turn reflects the quality of the product.

Besides that, people assume that the higher the price, the higher the quality of one product has. Customers expect an extremely high quality when purchasing luxury goods. Pricing is important here, as the value of money equates to the value of perception that consumers has when perceiving luxury goods (Arora 2013; Heine 2011). This is because the good quality products are always difficult and expensive to acquire which explains its high value. Therefore, this shows that the qualities of the luxury cosmetic product are important in order to attract new customer and meet their expectations. Moreover, Gentry et al. (2001) found that consumers do not necessarily buy luxury brands because of the brand name itself but more towards the quality reflected by that name. The reason is, consumers desire the satisfaction of using the quality material which gives them a sense of reliability and durability of using it. Thus, based on the literature, the following hypothesis is suggested for the study:

H1: There is a positive and significant relationship between perceived quality and purchase intention towards luxury makeup brand

1.2. Self-Esteem

Self-esteem refers to the consumers' feeling about oneself. Presently, consumers are likely to buy themselves a luxury cosmetic brand to reward themselves which makes them feel good and self-worthy. As stated by Wanke (2009), people reward themselves through buying. It gives a sense of life value and sense of purpose in doing what they do. In evidence, Pyszczynski (1986) reported that people evaluate themselves through self-esteem. This also means that they evaluate the various features and characteristics that they possess (Brown, 2001). As mentioned before, consumers reward themselves by buying luxury brand. It is not just about luxury brand; it is also about how the consumer buy and what they buy that gives a sense of purpose of letting people know what they want and need. According to Tatt (2010), the successful shopper feels a sensation of satisfaction, execution and fulfillment when they buy these said luxury goods.

Self-esteem can be tied to the hedonic value. Hedonic value occurs when consumers are more interested with their own thoughts and feelings without even caring about how much price would the luxury goods be. Egziabher (2015) stated that a product would possess hedonic value when a person purchases them not for its practicality, but more towards the feelings that they would get when purchasing the product. In this case, it reflects a sense of achievement and self-esteem. By referring to the literature, the following hypothesis is suggested:

H2: There is a positive and significant relationship between self-esteem and purchase intention towards luxury makeup brand.

1.3. Purchase Intention

Ajzen (1991) explained that theory of planned behavior is driven by a person's intention to perform specific behavior and is presumed that that person possess motivational factors that affects his or her behavior. These factors also affect the effort that the person is willing to give to carry out the said behavior. According to Ajzen (2015), the intention to perform the behavior heavily depends on three considerations or beliefs namely behavioral belief, normative belief and control beliefs. Behavioral belief is a person's assumption on the consequences when performing the behavior whether it is positive or negative which would then leads to an "attitude towards the behavior". A normative belief, on the other hand, refers to what the person would perceive how an important referent group would want him or her to behave. Thus, this would create perceived social pressure towards the person to execute the behavior. Finally the control belief, as stated by Ajzen (2015), is the availability of perceived factors that would affect the ability of the person to perform the behavior. All of these beliefs would then affect the person to perform or refrain themselves from the behavior which leads to perceived behavioral control or self-efficacy.

With respect to this study, Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior is implemented, to which self-esteem variable is the "behavioral belief" of the consequences that a consumer would get when purchasing the luxury brand of makeups. This is supported by Beheshti (2009) on perceived image, in which the individuals' perceived own self can have an effect on how they will behave presently. This could also affect how they behave when purchasing a certain product and, in this case, they might perceive that buying luxury make up brand can give a positive effect on how they will view themselves. Besides that, the luxury label would undoubtedly improve their social standing in a group which can be observed as the normative belief. Finally, the control belief in this study would be the quality of the brand that would affect them to purchase the product. According to Jalilvand et. al. (2011), control belief becomes a more imminent factor in deciding how a person behaves when there are certain obstacles to a performance. In this case, the obstacles are the perceived quality that would lead to better performance and the effect of self-esteem on product purchase. Therefore, with the presence of all these three factors, the self-efficacy of a person is more favorable towards purchasing the luxury brand makeup.

In relation Country of Origin (COO) product and brand among East Malaysian consumers (Mohd Amirul, Jati Kasuma & Dayang Humida, 2018), the result indicates that high level of product involvement has a significant moderating effect towards the influence of brand image on purchase intention. This means that the degree of influence on consumers' purchase intention caused by the brand image depends on the high level of product involvement.

III. Methodology

A convenient sampling was used in this study. The data was collected by distributing questionnaires to the working adults in Kuala Lumpur, the capital city of Malaysia. A total of 160 questionnaires were distributed but only 141 questionnaires were returned and acceptable to be used for the study. Respondents answered Likert scale questionnaires and the items used to measure the suggested variables are based on the items adopted from the past researches. The construct of perceived quality was adopted and adapted from previous studies undertaken by Tajuddin et al. (2013), Cademan et al. (2012), Goyal (2014), and Truong et al. (2011). Self-esteem construct was adopted and adapted from Narayanan (2014), Giovanni et. al. (2015) and Egziabher (2015). Finally, the studies of Tajuddin et al. (2013), Ueacharoenkit (2013), Lu (2013) and Narayanan (2014) were adapted to measure the items for purchase intention. To analyze the data obtained and proving the hypotheses, correlation and multiple regressions were used to test the relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable.

IV. Results

1.4. Sample Profile

Table 1 reveals the sample profile of the respondents for this study. The respondents are mostly made up of 21 to 50 years of age while a 62.4% of them are single. Most of the respondents are Malays while other ethnicities are Chinese, Indians and other Bumiputera from Sarawak and Sabah. It was found that respondents are willing to pay only between RM 100 to 300 for their makeup brands and that the most liked makeup brand is Mac followed by Tarte and Chanel.

Table 1 Sampled Profile of Respondents

Demographic		Frequency	Percentage %
Age	21-24	54	38.3
	25-30	32	22.7
	31-50	46	32.6
	>51	9	6.4
Marital Status	Single	88	62.4
	Married	53	37.6
Race	Malay	96	68.1
	Chinese	20	14.2
	India	5	3.5
	Bumiputera Sarawak and Sabah	20	14.2
Price you willing to pay	100-300	75	53.2
	301-500	24	17
	501-700	11	7.8
	701-1,000	11	7.8
	1,001 and above	20	14.2
What luxury makeup brand do you like?	Chanel	19	13.5
	Mac	39	27.7
	Dior	14	9.9
	Lancome	14	9.9
	Huda Beauty	7	5
	Anastasia Beverlyhills	2	1.4
	Morphe	13	9.2
	Tarte	24	17
	Marc Jacob	9	6.4

1.5. Pearson Correlation Analysis

H1: There is a significant and positive relationship between perceived quality and purchase intention towards luxury makeup brand.

H2: There is a significant and positive relationship between perceived quality and purchase intention towards luxury makeup brand.

Based on Table 2 shown, it is summarized that all the variables present has a positive and relationship between each other. Based on the guidelines referred from Cohen (1998, as cited by Pallant (2013), positive correlation coefficient indicates that there is a positive linear relationship between the variables, as one variable increase in value, so does the other. In contrast, a negative value indicates a negative linear relationship between the variables as one variable increase in value, the other variable will decrease. Table 2 shows that there is a positive relationship between purchase intention and perceived quality ($r = 0.493$, $p = 0.00$). This means that as the value of the independent variable of perceived quality increases, the dependent variable of purchase intention would increase as well. The result of the Pearson's correlation analysis also shows that there exists a positive relationship between self-esteem and purchase intention ($r = 0.495$, $p = 0.00$) which means as self-esteem increases, purchase intention would increase as well. Therefore, it can be concluded that both hypotheses 1 and 2 suggested in this study are accepted. This further shows that the correlation results of this analysis supported the study by Gentry et al. (2001) and Egziabher (2015), in which customers are not only looking at the brand name itself but also its perceived quality that resides with the brand, thus giving them more confidence upon evaluating the performance of the product.

Table 2 Pearson Correlation Analysis

	Perceived Quality	Self-esteem	Purchase Intention
Perceived Quality	1	.425**	.493**
		.000	.000
	141	141	141
Self-Esteem	.425**	1	.562**
	.000		.000
	141	141	141
Purchase Intention	.493**	.562**	1
	.000	.000	
	141	141	141

** , Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

1.6. Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 3 of the model summary shows that the regression model result was significant ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$). Table 3 also explained that the value of both self-esteem and perceived quality (as independent variables) explains 38.6% of the variance in purchase intention (dependent variable) based on the adjusted R square value. This means that the intention to purchase a luxury make up brand is affected by self-esteem and perceived quality towards the product apart from other determinants contributing about 61.4% that are not included in this study.

Table 3 Model Summary – Effect of Perceived Quality and Self-Esteem on Purchase Intention

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Change Statistics R Square Change
1	.628 ^a	.395	.386	.395

Significant: 0.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Perceived Quality, Self-Esteem

Based on the coefficient analysis shown in Table 4, it can be concluded that both perceived quality and self-esteem (independent variables) have a significant relationship with and influence on purchase intention (dependent variable). This can be explained by the Beta and significance value shown in table 4 where the relationship between perceived quality and purchase intention is significant at $B = 0.310$ and $\text{Sig.} = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$). Whereas, a significant relationship between self-esteem and purchase intention is shown as $B = 0.430$ and $\text{Sig.} = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$).

Table 4 Coefficient Table: Effect of Perceived Quality and Self-Esteem on Purchase Intention

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.105	.278		3.968	.000
Perceived Quality	.298	.070	.310	4.237	.000
Self-Esteem	.373	.063	.430	5.882	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

This means that as the variable of perceived quality increases by 1 and the value of self-esteem is held constant, the value of purchase intention variable would increase by 0.310. The same is applied when the value of self-esteem increases by 1 and perceived quality is held constant, the value of purchase intention would increase by 0.430. The regression analysis results supported the literature by Gentry et al. (2001) which states that consumers buy product not only because of the brand but the quality as reflected by the name it carries. This statement is in line with the second hypothesis of this study, to which, perceived quality has a significant influence on purchase intention. The statement by Egziabher (2015) and Jati Kasuma, Darel Nicol Luna, Ratnawatie Panie and Yusman Yacob (2014) agreed that a person purchasing a product, values the feelings they get such as their self-esteem which supports the fourth hypothesis of this study. The findings of this analysis show that in purchasing a makeup brand, customers would relate to them emotionally in regard to how it will affect their self-esteem upon using the said brand. Since this is a product that is used on the body, it is proven that they will scrutinize its quality further which explains the higher B value compared to self-esteem variable. Therefore, it can be concluded that H2 of this study is accepted.

V. Conclusion and Recommendations

The objective of this study is to examine factors that influence women's purchase intention of luxury branded makeup, namely, perceived quality and self-esteem. Demographic factors such as age, race, marital status, length of membership, price and makeup brand that they liked, have been used to describe the characteristics of respondents. Based on this study 141 women respondents were involved. Majority of the respondents are working adults and most of them were aged between 21 and 24 years old. In the hypothesis testing, all the relationships are positively correlated. This means that the variables present in the study are positively affected by one another whereby when one increases or improves, the others would as well. The result also reveals that perceived quality and purchase intention have significant relationships with the purchase intention of buying luxury makeup brands.

This study also provides a valuable insight on purchasing of luxury makeup brands by indicating that self-esteem and perceived quality are two crucial factors that determine purchase intention. It shows that women buying this luxury branded makeups acquire self-fulfillment as they deserved to feel valuable and rewarded for their own personal needs. Perceived quality shows that women put an importance unto the quality of makeup products bought for the purpose of long-lasting usage or more importantly, healthy issues such as non-irritable skin and non-chemical reaction.

In an attempt to increase more consumers' usage of the luxury branded makeups, marketers should enhance the awareness and visibility of their makeup products by advertising them frequently on television, radio and social media. In terms of advertising, marketers should also emphasize the quality of their products as well. For example, L'oreal video advertisement would be able to showcase its high-class Lipstick products being worn by famous celebrities or models. Self-esteem could also be incorporated into their brand communications as well. Marketers should capitalize on the "causal and effect" model of using or not using their product. One example of advertisement to note here is Lancôme advertisement of "What Makes a Women Beautiful". This ad shows that consumers who purchase such Lancôme would boost their self-esteem by making their face more radiant and beautiful. In terms of pricing, marketers should understand the market capability in specific locations, by being careful in setting a reasonable or acceptable price in keeping up with the "premium" status of the said brand of product. Also, marketers should emphasize on the raw materials used on their makeup products to ensure better quality visibility. This would inevitably improve consumers' brand trust as consumers nowadays are more knowledgeable in researching a product with the help of internet of things (IoT).

The results of this study could provide useful information for marketers to understand how they can improve their brand communications and marketing strategy. Future research could be observed by including other determining factors such as status and materialism since luxury branded products can potentially be correlated with perceived status due to its premium facets. It is also recommended that intra-cultural demographic studies be undertaken amongst the respective ethnic groups in this study.

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