

UNDERSTANDING LUXURY CONSUMPTION IN EMERGING MARKETS: THE IMPACT OF VANITY AND ATTITUDE ON PURCHASE INTENTION

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ABSTRACT

The study investigates how vanity affects consumer attitude and purchase intention about luxury products in an emerging market setting, i.e., in case of Delhi NCR. The quantitative research approach was taken with a descriptive and analytical research design, where the data were gathered using a structured questionnaire (n=200 respondents), and analyzed using statistical programs like regression and correlation. The findings show that vanity has a significant impact on consumer attitude, whereas the attitude has a very strong relationship with the purchase intention, but the direct impact of vanity on purchase intention is relatively weak. The results indicate that the influence of luxury consumption is not solely determined by psychological characteristics like vanity but also by attitudinal and situational factors with references to the social impact, perceived worth, and aspiration behavior. This study concludes that consumer attitude is an important mediating process and luxury consumption in the emerging markets is a complex phenomenon which is determined by psychological, social and cultural interactions.

Keywords: Luxury Consumption, Vanity, Consumer Attitude, Purchase Intention, Emerging Markets

1. Introduction

The consumption of luxury in the emerging markets has gone through a paradigm shift in the last ten years due to the high rate of economic growth and development, globalization, and shifts in the socio-cultural landscape. In other countries like India, China, and Brazil, the disposable income of the middle and upper-middle classes has been steadily increasing, which means that a larger number of people in the country can now afford products that used to be the prerogative of the elites (Hung and David 2020). This growing consumer base has moved the definition of luxury as a sign of inherited wealth to acquired success and aspirational identity. Moreover, the awareness and preference to luxury products has intensified with the increased exposure to international brands via digital media, international travel, and cross-cultural interaction (Shukla et al., 2025). In newer markets, luxurious consumption is not simply the functionality or quality but is entrenched in symbolic connotations such as prestige, status, and social distinction (Shukla and Rosendo-Rios 2021). Luxury brands are starting to shape their plans to meet the expectations of the local cultural values and changing consumer demands, due to the realization that the driving forces of luxury consumption in these markets are multifaceted and multifaceted (Arantes & Barbosa Costa 2025).

Vanity is also found to be a strong psychological motivation that determines the consumption behavior of luxuries especially in the society that is rapidly changing in socio-economic aspects. It may be interpreted as an overemphasis on how one looks, their accomplishments, and the need to be admired by others (Shahid et al., 2023). Social comparison processes in emerging markets tend to exacerbate vanity since people constantly compare themselves with their peers, colleagues, and influencers (Dubois et al., 2021). The emergence of online platforms like Instagram and Facebook has only increased this by providing virtual environments in which carefully managed lifestyles and material prosperity are always shown and proved. Highly vain consumers tend to buy luxury products to boost their self-esteem and indicate their status in

society (Bashir and Siddiqui 2021). In this respect, luxury products will be symbolic property that conveys success, beauty and refinement. Additionally, consumption that is driven by vanity can be typically associated with the urge to achieve instant satisfaction and external confirmation, which makes consumers more sensitive to branding, packaging, and marketing appeals (Bharti et al., 2022). This shows the significance of considering vanity as not only an individualistic feature but a socially constructed and culturally enforced behavior in new markets.

Consumer behavior is a major factor that impacts consumer decision making and eventually consumer buying behavior. Attitude is a set of cognitive beliefs, emotional reactions, and behavioral inclinations towards a specific brand or a certain product category (Jhamb et al., 2020). The positive perception of luxury brands in the context of emerging markets is usually shaped with the perception of high quality, exclusivity, craftsmanship, and global prestige (Choi et al., 2020). Luxury brands are linked to reliability and authenticity by consumers, which adds to their perceived value (Dhaliwal et al., 2025). Also, the use of celebrity endorsement, influencer partnerships, and immersive retail experiences are also marketing strategies that help in creating positive brand attitudes (Aggarwal et al., 2024). An example is celebrity endorsements by international celebrities such as Deepika Padukone or Virat Kohli, which can build a strong aspirational value and emotional bond with consumers (Bishnoi and Singh 2022). Moreover, cultural factors also influence attitudes, and the consumption of luxuries is associated with social acknowledgment and group acceptance (Yao et al., 2023). With the growing sophistication and discernment of consumer attitudes, the attitude towards luxury brands becomes more multidimensional, with emotional gratification and a logical assessment of value as the main elements that enhance the probability of purchase (Mandarić et al., 2022).

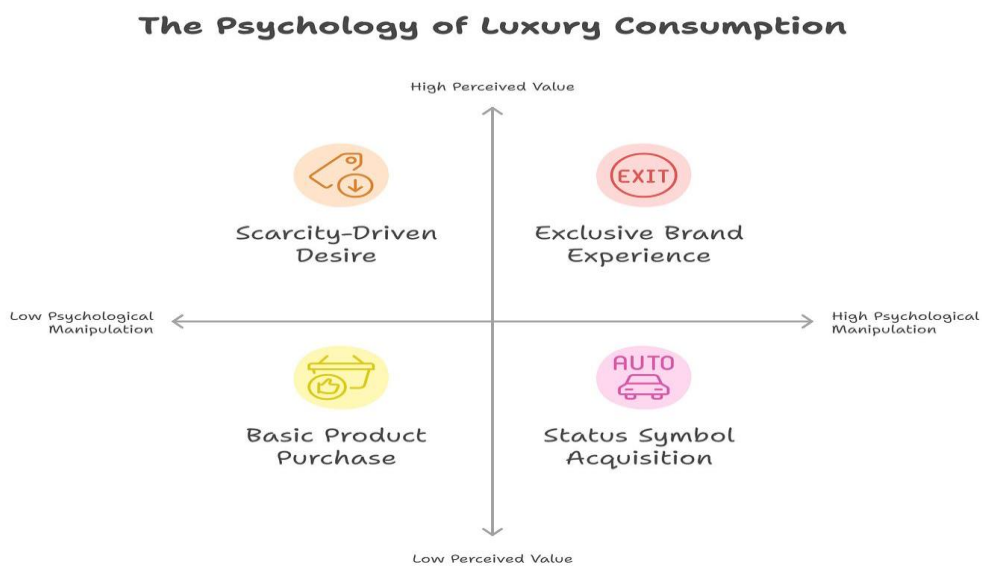


Figure 1: The Psychology of Luxury Consumption

Source: medium.com

Purchase intention is the behavioral expression of the attitude and the psychological motivations of consumers, which is an important predictor of the actual buying behavior. When it comes to luxury consumption, the purchase intention depends on the rich interplay of emotional, cognitive, and social factors (Jain 2024). The desires based on the necessity to be recognized and admired, a result of vanity, tend to become emotional stimuli, whereas the positive attitude to the luxury brands serves to justify the purchase on the cognitive level. This dual influence is a strong incentive to get consumers to buy high-end products even with their high prices (Jain 2021). Moreover, the perceived value, brand trust, and social influence are other factors that mediate purchase intention. As an illustration, consumers will tend to buy luxury products

when they believe that these products provide long-term benefits, lasting quality, and social status (Jain 2020). The influence of peers and social expectations is also essential, since people tend to gain the approval and confirmation of the social circles. Purchase intention is especially high among younger consumers in emerging markets where a strong emphasis is placed on social mobility and status demonstration through luxury consumption as a way of upward social positioning and personal fulfillment (Davari et al., 2022).

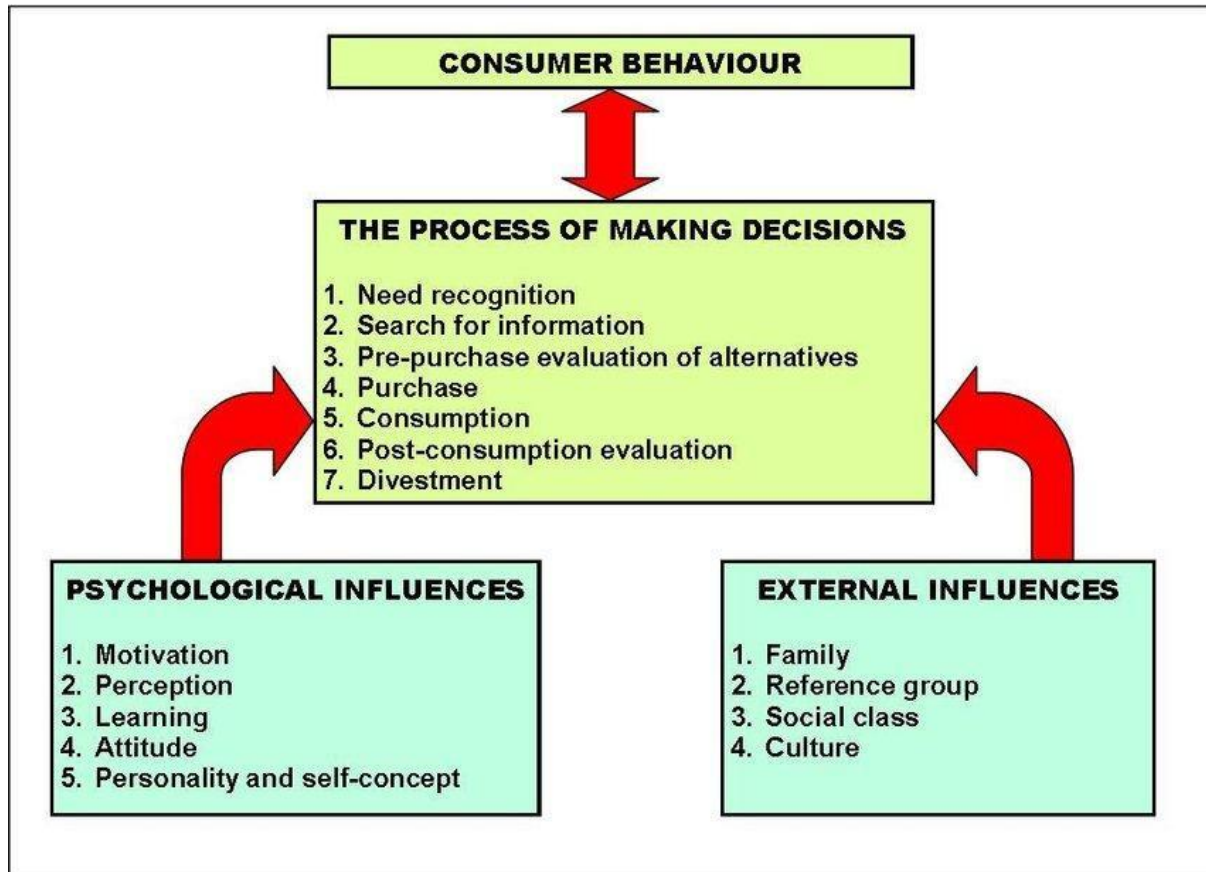


Figure 2: Consumer Decision Process

Source: Goldberg, Roland. (2011)

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The connection among the three variables, namely, vanity, attitude, and purchase intention, provide an inclusive model of the luxury consumption within the emerging markets. These constructs are closely related to each other, where vanity serves as a motivational element to stimulate the desire to be socially perceived,

attitude as a factor that forms the perception and assessment of the consumer in relation to the luxury brand, and purchase intention as a factor that converts the motivation and attitudes into the actual purchasing behavior (Bashir and Siddiqui 2021). The luxury consumption will become even more subtle as the emerging markets keep changing, and the interplay of economic growth, cultural values and technological progress will be reflected (Petračiūtė et al., 2021). Marketers and researchers must understand that in these markets' luxury consumers are not only being motivated by the conventional ideas of exclusivity but rather they are also motivated by psychological and social influences. With such shifts in consumer motives, luxury brands can strategically use these shifts to meet the rising consumer demand and gain a strong presence in the dynamic markets like India to secure long-term growth and sustainability (Jain 2021).

➤ **Scope of the study**

This study is confined to the investigation of the factors of luxury consumption behavior in the emerging markets, but more specifically, it addresses the issue of how vanity, consumer attitude, and purchase intention are involved. It seeks to understand the role of psychological and behavioral attributes in determining the consumption of luxury brands by consumers, especially in urban and aspirational segments. The study is geographically limited to Delhi NCR, which can give understanding of how young professionals and their wealthy consumers consume. It also takes into account the influence of the social factor, online exposure, and cultural values, providing a holistic knowledge that is helpful to marketers, researchers, and policymakers.

2. Literature Review

Vanity is an established psychological construct that is regarded as a critical factor that influences consumer perceptions and evaluative disposition to luxury products. It is a preoccupation of a person with the appearance and achievements and such a preoccupation is usually the cause of the wish to be admired and socially recognized. Vanity plays a strengthening role in creating perception of luxury brands among consumers in the emerging markets where aspirational consumption and identity signalling are eminent. When people have a greater degree of vanity, they begin to link luxury products to their self-image and prestige, resulting in the development of positive attitudes towards these goods, as Shahid et al. (2023) emphasize. This perspective is also reinforced by Wani (2025), who points out that physical and achievement-based vanity are some of the contributing factors towards luxury-oriented judgments. Besides, according to Dubois et al. (2021), luxury consumption is strongly rooted in psychological reasons that are associated with status and recognition, whereas Bharti et al. (2022) confirm that socio-psychological factors like vanity have a stronger impact on consumer perception of exclusivity and desirability.

Additionally, vanity works by social comparison and interpersonal influence which is especially enhanced in digitally connected spaces. The growing influence of social media on exposure to curated lifestyles prompts people to compare themselves with others, thus, creating attitudes towards the consumption of luxuries. George and George (2023) elaborate that brands explicitly appeal to ego and self-image to manipulate consumer perceptions, and Pang et al. (2024) emphasize that self-enhancement motives have a significant impact on the evaluations of luxury. Moreover, according to Aleem et al. (2024), status signaling and brand desire are the focal point of luxury consumption, and Kutaula et al. (2024) highlight the socio-cultural forces at large that shape consumer attitudes. These views imply that vanity is not merely an internalized characteristic and is also a socially-enforced process that influences consumer attitudes.

The positive correlation between vanity and consumer attitude has been well supported by empirical studies. As an example, Ruffatto et al. (2021) prove that vanity can have a great impact on consumption intentions due to intrinsic motivation, and Shahbee et al. (2023) indicate that vanity can positively impact consumer attitudes when mediated by social and personal elements. Likewise, Yurika and Hartini (2020) also highlight the importance of vanity in developing a perception of luxury brands, and Shahid et al. (2023) affirm its relevance in the context of emerging markets. All these results are indicative that vanity is a powerful antecedent in the development of positive attitudes towards luxury consumption.

H1: Vanity has a significant positive impact on consumers' attitude towards luxury consumption

According to the established theories like the Theory of Reasoned Action, consumer attitude is a key determinant of behavioral intention. It is a fusion of both cognitive appraisals and affective reactions that influence consumer buying decisions. When it comes to luxury consumption, the intention to buy luxury products is greatly boosted by the positive attitudes towards luxury brands. Jain (2021) identifies that positive attitudes towards luxury products have a strong impact on young consumers and the intention to purchase them, whereas Jhamb et al. (2020) note the significance of the experiential and emotional dimensions in the formation of such attitudes. Likewise, Dhaliwal et al. (2025) and Bishnoi and Singh (2022) also observe that perceived quality, exclusivity, and emotional branding also reinforce this relationship.

Moreover, the socio-cultural and experiential aspects of luxury consumption support the connection between the attitude and the purchase intention. The luxury goods are usually identified with status signaling, social recognition, and aspirational identity by consumers which amplifies the effect of positive attitudes on the purchase decisions. Gupta et al. (2023) state that consumer engagement is enhanced by luxury experiences whereas Mandarić et al. (2022) propose that the attitudes are determined by the perception of the wider values like sustainability and brand authenticity. Moreover, as Shahid et al. (2023) and Aleem et al. (2024) emphasize, the attitude and intention relationship is supported by the fact that emotional and symbolic factors have a complex relationship that drives luxury consumption.

The mediation of attitude in affecting purchase intention is also supported by empirical evidence. Shahbee et al. (2023) show that purchase intention is driven by socio-psychological variables, including vanity and materialism, via consumer attitude. Likewise, Mishra et al. (2023) indicate that attitude is an important mediator between conspicuous value and purchase intention, whereas Jain and Mishra (2020) highlight the importance of social projection and experiential value in influence the luxury consumption behavior. Pang et al. (2024) also emphasize that emotional and aesthetic considerations are key in the purchase intention because of the attitudinal processes. All these results affirm the fact that consumer attitude is a key determinant of purchase intention in luxury markets.

H2: Consumer attitude has a significant positive relationship with purchase intention for luxury goods

Vanity is also a strong motivational force, which has a direct impact on the intention to buy luxury products, especially in the situation when consumption is related to status and self-presentation. High vanity individuals tend to indulge in conspicuous consumption in order to improve social image and get recognition. Shahid et al. (2023) note that vanity is a major factor in boosting consumer desire to buy luxury items, and Wani (2025) emphasizes that both physical and achievement-based vanity have a positive impact on luxury consumption behavior. Likewise, Dubois et al. (2021) and George and George (2023) focus on the fact that luxury consumption is tightly associated with self-enhancement and ego-motivation.

Besides, social and environmental factors enhance the effects of vanity on purchase intention, especially in emerging markets where there is high social visibility. Consumers are usually in need of confirmation of their purchasing decisions, and luxury items are good as status symbols of achievement and wealth. The study by Pang et al. (2024) notes that attractiveness and self-presentation factors play a significant role in purchase intention whereas the Ruffatto et al. study (2021) focuses on the role of intrinsic motivation like indulgence and vanity. Furthermore, Kutaula et al. (2024) and Aleem et al. (2024) also indicate that the wider socio-cultural and ethical consumption processes also influence the translation of vanity to purchase intention.

Nevertheless, the current literature suggests that the direct correlation between vanity and purchase intention can be different based on contextual and moderating factors. According to Yurika and Hartini (2020), vanity is the variable that interacts with other variables like brand perception and interpersonal influence in purchase intention. Jain (2021) also emphasizes that social and conspicuous values impact the purchase behavior and are merged with the psychological characteristics, whereas Sharma and Shingari (2026) emphasize the changing consumption trends like the inconspicuous luxury that could potentially modify conventional motives. Mishra et al. (2023) also attach importance to the mediating and moderating variables in this association. Nevertheless, despite these differences, vanity also is one of the strongest predictors of purchase

intention especially in the emerging market where aspirational consumption and social signalling are predominant.

H3: Vanity has a significant positive influence on purchase intention of luxury products

3. Research Methodology

The study used a quantitative research approach to analyze the relationship between vanity and consumer attitude and purchase intention in the luxury consumption setting in a systematic manner. The method allows measuring and statistically analysing relationships between variables objectively, which guarantees the reliability and generalizability of the results. The study is being done in the state of Delhi NCR among the luxury products consumers in an urban and aspirational market.

➤ Research Design and Sampling Framework

The research design used is descriptive and analytical to describe the patterns of consumer behavior as well as analyze the relationship between the variables. The study adopts a stratified random sampling method to achieve a representation of various consumer groups with the large sample of 200 respondents who were chosen among the target group of luxury consumers.

➤ Data Collection and Analytical Tools

Both primary and secondary sources are used to collect the data, primary data will be collected using a close ended structured questionnaire which is designed to elicit an answer to the following questions; vanity, consumer attitude and purchase intention. The data collected are analyzed with the help of the MS Excel and SPSS 27 with the application of statistical tools like the mean, standard deviation, regression and correlation to test hypotheses, as well as to find significant relationships between variables.

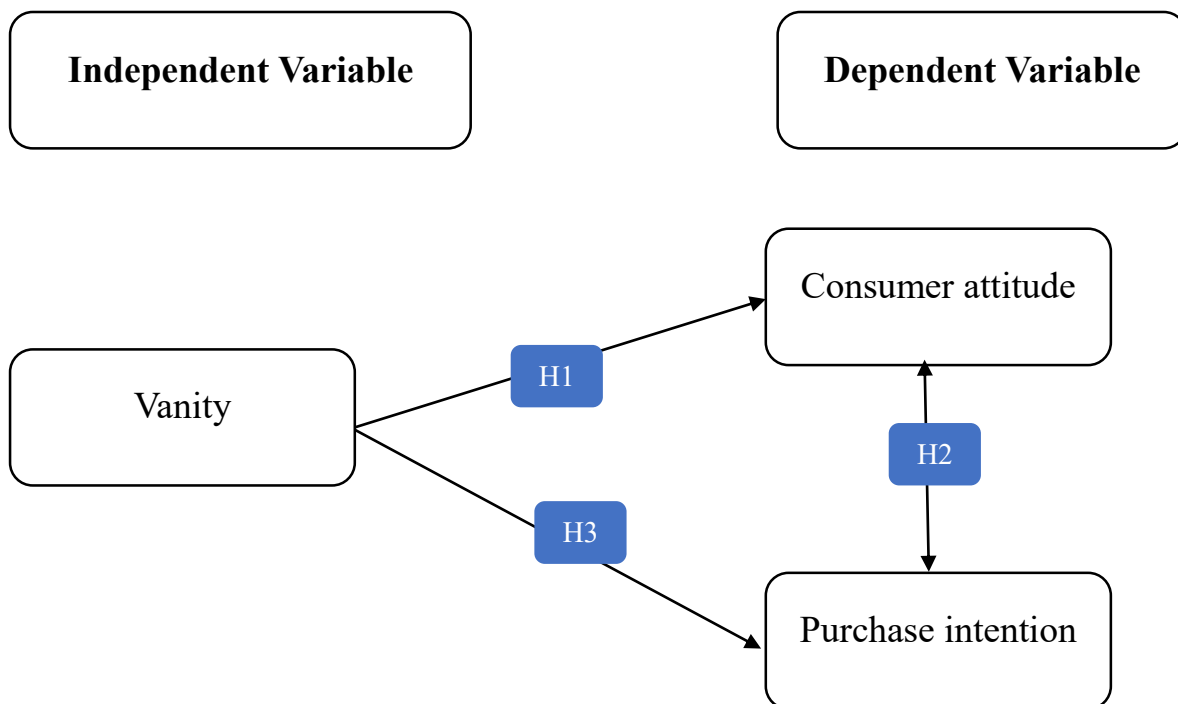


Figure 3: Conceptual Framework

4. Results and Interpretations

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of respondents

S.NO.	Demographic Characteristics	N	%	
1	Gender	Male	112	56%
		Female	88	44%
2	Age Group	Below 20 years	6	3%
		21–30 years	61	30.50%
		31–40 years	69	34.50%
		41–50 years	39	19.50%
		Above 50 years	25	12.50%
3	Occupation	Student	24	12%
		Salaried Employee	91	45.50%
		Self-employed	45	22.50%
		Professional	40	20%
4	Monthly Income	Below Rs 30,000	19	9.50%
		Rs 30,000 – Rs 60,000	55	27.50%
		Rs 60,001 – Rs 1,00,000	58	29%
		Rs 1,00,001 – Rs 2,00,000	47	23.50%
		Above Rs 2,00,000	21	10.50%
5	Frequency of Purchasing Luxury Products	Rarely	29	14.50%
		Occasionally	44	22%
		Sometimes	55	27.50%
		Frequently	42	21%
		Very Frequently	30	15%
6	Preferred Category of Luxury Products	Fashion & Apparel	40	20%
		Accessories (Watches, Bags, etc.)	36	18%
		Cosmetics & Beauty Products	57	28.50%
		Automobiles	31	15.50%
		Electronics	36	18%
7	Source of Influence for Luxury Purchase	Social-Media	31	15.50%
		Influencers	45	22.50%
		Friends	48	24%
		Advertisement	42	21%
		Personal Preference	34	17%

The demographic profile of respondents indicates a relatively balanced yet slightly male-dominated sample, with 56% males and 44% females, ensuring reasonable gender representation. In terms of age distribution, the majority of respondents fall within the economically active age groups, particularly 31–40 years (34.5%) and 21–30 years (30.5%), suggesting that luxury consumption is more prominent among young and middle-aged individuals. Occupationally, a significant proportion comprises salaried employees (45.5%), followed by self-employed individuals (22.5%) and professionals (20%), reflecting a financially stable respondent

base. This is further supported by income distribution, where most respondents earn between Rs 60,001–Rs 1,00,000 (29%) and Rs 30,000–Rs 60,000 (27.5%), indicating moderate to high purchasing power. Regarding purchasing behavior, respondents mostly purchase luxury products “sometimes” (27.5%) or “occasionally” (22%), highlighting a cautious yet consistent engagement with luxury consumption. Cosmetics and beauty products (28.5%) emerge as the most preferred luxury category, followed by fashion and apparel (20%), indicating a strong inclination toward personal appearance and lifestyle enhancement. Lastly, social influence plays a crucial role, with friends (24%) and influencers (22.5%) being the major drivers of luxury purchases, demonstrating the importance of peer and digital influence in shaping consumer behavior.

➤ **Outcomes Based on Objectives**

Objective 1: To analyze the impact of vanity on consumers’ attitude towards luxury consumption.

Table 2: Model Summary Table

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.385 ^a	.148	.144	2.31797
a. Predictors: (Constant), Vanity				

The model summary shows that the relationship between vanity and the dependent variable is moderate with the positive value of 0.385. The R square of 0.148 indicates that about 14.8 percent of the change in the dependent variable (attitude or purchase intention) is due to vanity, and the 85.2 percent change is due to other factors not incorporated in the model. The value of Adjusted R Square (0.144) is nearly equal to the R Square value which shows that the model fits reasonably, and the number of predictors does not influence it substantially. Further, its standard error of the estimate (2.31797) indicates the average difference between the observed and the predicted values, which suggest a medium degree of accuracy of prediction. On the whole, the results indicate that vanity is a substantial, yet not prevailing predictor, which adds value to the explanation of consumer behavior in luxury consumption, but other factors are also very important.

Table 3: ANOVA^a Table

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	184.933	1	184.933	34.419	.000 ^b
	Residual	1063.847	198	5.373		
	Total	1248.780	199			
a. Dependent Variable: Consumer attitude						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Vanity						

The results of the ANOVA show that the regression model is statistically significant to explain the consumer attitude. The F-value is not very low and the significance value (Sig. = 0.000) is lower than the standard of 0.05 which proves that the model is very significant. It implies that vanity as an independent variable significantly influences consumer attitude towards luxury products. Also, the regression sum of squares (184.933) is compared to the residual sum of squares (1063.847) indicating that the model explains a significant part of the variation in consumer attitude though a significant part remains unexplained. Overall, the findings support the hypothesis that vanity plays an important role in shaping consumer attitudes in the context of luxury consumption.

Table 4: Coefficients^a Table

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	6.128	.711		8.614	.000
	Vanity	.374	.064	.385	5.867	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer attitude

The table of coefficients indicates that vanity has a positive, statistically significant impact on consumer attitude to luxury products. The coefficient (B = 0.374) is not standardized meaning that consumer attitude changes by 0.374 units as vanity increases by one unit, all other factors remaining constant. The standardized coefficient (Beta = 0.385) indicates a moderate positive effect of vanity on consumer attitude. Moreover, the t-value (5.867) is fairly large and the level of significance (Sig. = 0.000) is significantly lower than 0.05, which proves this fact. This constant value (6.128) indicates that there exists a minimum level of consumer attitude even without vanity. On the whole, the findings can be used to prove the hypothesis that vanity has a strong and positive effect on the consumer attitude in the luxury consumption setting.

Objective 2: To evaluate the relationship between consumer attitude and purchase intention for luxury goods.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics Table

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Consumer attitude	10.1900	2.50505	200
Purchase intention	9.3550	2.98219	200

The descriptive statistics show that the mean score of consumer attitude is 10.19 with a standard deviation of 2.505, which implies that the respondents have a moderately positive attitude towards luxury products, and the responses are not very varied. By comparison, purchase intention is lower with a mean of 9.355, and a higher standard deviation of 2.982 implying that although the respondents have a fair level of intention to buy luxury goods, their answers are more scattered and irregular than their attitudes. Both variables have equal sample size (N = 200) thus being comparable. All in all, the results indicate that consumers are generally positively inclined towards luxury goods, but this does not necessarily carry evenly over to purchase intention indicating the impact of other variables like income, social influence, or affordability on the actual purchase intentions.

Table 6: Correlations Table

Correlations			
		Consumer attitude	Purchase intention
Consumer attitude	Pearson Correlation	1	.512**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	200	200
Purchase intention	Pearson Correlation	.512**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	200	200

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

The correlation analysis shows moderate and positive relationship between consumer attitude and purchase intention with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.512. This implies that the more favorable the attitude of the consumers towards luxury products, the higher the intention to purchase the luxury products. The

significance value (Sig. = 0.000) of 0.01 is lower than the 1% level and does not come by chance which proves that the relationship is not due to chance but rather statistically significant. The correlation is strong, which means that there is a significant association, but not a perfect one, which means that although attitude is an important factor in the purchase intention, there might also be other factors to be considered. Having a uniform sample of 200 individuals on both variables, the findings are credible and affirm the hypothesis that consumer attitude is a major factor in the determination of purchase intention in the luxury consumption setting.

Objective 3: To assess the direct influence of vanity on purchase intention of luxury products.

Table 7: Model Summary Table

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.175 ^a	.030	.026	2.94382
a. Predictors: (Constant), Vanity				

According to the model summary, vanity is weakly positively associated with the dependent variable, which is shown by the value of R of 0.175. The value of R Sq (0.030) indicates that vanity can only explain 3.0 percent of the variation in the dependent variable (purchase intention) whereas a significant portion of 97 percent is determined by other factors that are not represented in the model. Adjusted R Square (0.026) is quite near the R Square which means that the model is stable but has less explanatory power. Moreover, the standard error of estimate (2.94382) is quite high which indicates more variation in the observed values compared to the predicted value and less accurate predictions. The overall results of the findings suggest that vanity can have a small impact on the dependent variable in this model and other factors like income, social influence, or brand perception could have an even greater impact.

Table 8: ANOVA^a Table

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	53.911	1	53.911	6.221	.013 ^b
	Residual	1715.884	198	8.666		
	Total	1769.795	199			
a. Dependent Variable: Purchase intention						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Vanity						

The outcome of ANOVA tests shows that the regression equation that studies the relationship between vanity and purchase intention is statistically significant. The F-value and the significance level of 6.221/0.013 is less than the 0.05 mark which shows that the entire model is significant and that vanity influences the purchase intention significantly. Even though the regression sum of squares (53.911) is quite low in comparison with the residual sum of squares (1715.884) which implies that a significant part of variation is not explained by the model, the model still shows that vanity is an important factor in predicting purchase intention. In general, these results confirm the hypothesis that the effect of vanity on the purchase intention of consumers of luxury products is statistically significant, but relatively weak.

Table 9: Coefficients^a Table

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	7.162	.904		7.927	.000
	Vanity	.202	.081	.175	2.494	.013
a. Dependent Variable: Purchase intention						

The coefficients table shows that the positive but weak influence on the purchase intention is produced by vanity. The unstandardized coefficient (B = 0.202) indicates that the higher the vanity by one unit, the higher

the purchase intention by 0.202 units, other factors remaining constant. The standardized coefficient (Beta = 0.175) also supports the fact that the effect is positive yet not very strong. The t-value (2.494) and the level of significance (Sig. = 0.013) are less than 0.05 and this indicates that this relationship is statistically significant. The unchanged amount (7.162) indicates that there is a minimum level of a purchase intention when there is no vanity. On the whole, the findings allow us to conclude that vanity has a significant impact on purchasing intention, but its impact is relatively small, which means that other factors are probably more significant when it comes to consumer purchase intentions in the luxury market.

5. Discussion

By conceptualizing vanity as socially constructed and culturally supported psychological construct, the study moves the knowledge about luxury consumption in emerging markets forward by proposing that consumer behavior is influenced by vanity rather than individual predispositions. In the fast-growing economies like India, the consumption of luxuries is becoming more and more linked to aspirational identity construction, social upward mobility and symbolic self-representation as consumers use the high-quality brands to express status and success. This shift of traditional elitist consumption to aspirational accessibility has long been recognized in the literature (Hung and David, 2020; Shukla et al., 2025). Moreover, the stimulation of vanity-based consumption is enhanced by social comparison and peer assessment procedures, especially in digital mediated social spaces where curated lifestyles and material success are constantly being flaunted (Dubois et al., 2021). Empirical research also indicates that vanity is strongly connected to other socio-psychological motivations like status consumption, require-uniqueness, and interpersonal impact, which together strengthen luxury-focused behaviors (Shahid et al., 2023; Bharti et al., 2022). Strategically, brands actively capitalize on these psychological dispositions by incorporating aspirational and ego-affirming indications in their marketing messages, thus enhancing consumer-brand recognition and desirability (George and George, 2023). Vanity therefore should not be understood as an innate characteristic but rather as a dynamic concept that is influenced by cultural values, technological exposure and market pressures.

Simultaneously, consumer attitude is a critical evaluative process and mediates the connections between psychological motivations and behavioral consequences, which fits the theoretical views on the topic, including the Theory of Reasoned Action. Perceptions of luxury brands are established by cognitive evaluation (e.g., perceived quality, exclusivity) and affective reaction (e.g., emotional attachment, aspirational appeal) that mutually affect the decision-making (Jhamb et al., 2020; Dhaliwal et al., 2025). Nevertheless, the literature has constantly emphasized that positive attitudes do not necessarily translate directly into purchase intention, and an attitude behavior gap exists that can be determined by the context and situation (Mandarić et al., 2022; Jain, 2021). Extrinsic factors like perceived value, financial capability, and social norms are key factors in influencing the consumption outcome, especially in the emerging markets with socio-economic diversities (Davari et al., 2022). Also, changing consumption patterns, such as inconspicuous luxury and experience consumption, indicate a shift of conspicuous status signaling to less overt and individualized forms of luxury (Sharma and Shingari, 2026; Gupta et al., 2023). These forces are especially applicable in urban areas like Delhi NCR, where the exposure to the international standards of luxury and the increasing use of digital ecosystems further complicates consumer decision-making. In general, the discussion highlights that the phenomenon of luxury consumption is complex and is determined by the interplay between psychological motivators, attitudinal processes, and more general socio-cultural factors.

6. Conclusion

The study finds that, the interrelationship between vanity, consumer attitude and purchase intention is comprehensively understood through a study of the linkage between luxury consumption behavior in an emerging market situation. It confirms that the concept of luxury consumption is no longer limited to the old conceptions of exclusiveness but rather takes place through psychological and socio-cultural forces, where consumers strive to create and express their identity via symbolic consumption. Vanity comes out as a major driving force that influences the way consumers perceive and evaluate luxury products and this supports the notion that consumption decisions are entrenched in the self-concept and social comparison processes.

Moreover, consumer attitude is a key intervening variable that converts these internal drives into behavioral tendencies which is why it is a critical component of an established behavioral pattern. The study thereby adds to the existing literature by situating luxury consumption within the Indian context of the socio-economic and cultural environment of Delhi NCR, where aspirational consumption, exposure to digital environments and social signaling are especially strong.

Meanwhile, the study highlights the complexity of purchase intention as a result of psychological, attitudinal, and external factors, and luxury consumption behavior cannot be described by the effect of a single determinant. Although vanity and attitude are also important factors that influence consumer intentions, other contextual factors like income levels, social influence, perceived value, and other changing consumption patterns also significantly affect actual buying behavior. It underscores the necessity to have a more holistic perspective of consumer decision-making within luxury markets, especially in emerging economies where change is happening fast and consumers are diverse. The results further indicate that marketers need to drop the old school of thought about positioning and concentrate more on developing meaningful brand experiences that resonate with the psychological needs of consumers and cultural desires. In general, the study finds that the luxury consumerism in the emerging markets is a dynamic and multidimensional phenomenon, which has to be explored continuously to reflect its dynamic character and to provide insights to the theories and practice.

I. Research Implication

The study has major implications to the academia and industry by emphasizing the role played in determining luxury consumption behavior in the emerging markets by psychological constructs like vanity and attitude. It implies marketers must develop strategies that resonate with the self-image, social status aspirations and emotions of consumers as opposed to concentrating on product attributes. The results are also relevant to the development of theory through incorporating both psychological and behavioral approaches into the framework of luxury consumption, especially in the case of Delhi NCR. It also offers information to policymakers and researchers to learn the changing consumption trends that are influenced by digital factors, social comparisons, and aspirational lifestyles in fast emerging economies.

II. Research Limitation

The study has its limitations which must be recognized despite the contributions it has made. The study is also geographically restricted to Delhi NCR, which can restrict the applicability of the results to other areas with different socio-cultural and economic statuses. The quantitative methodology and the structured questionnaire does not allow much insight into consumer motives that would have been gained in the context of a qualitative study. Additionally, the study concentrates on a few variables including vanity, attitude, and purchase intention, and ignores other impactful variables like brand loyalty, cultural values, and perceived risk. The data is also cross-sectional and this restricts the possibility of analyzing how the consumer behavior has changed over time.

III. Research Future Scope

The study can broaden the study of the future by adding more variables to include social influence, brand trust, perceived value, and cultural dimensions to come up with a more detailed picture of the consumption behavior of luxury. A comparative analysis between various countries or regions can furnish more information regarding cross-cultural differences in consumer motivations. Researchers can also use mixed-method solutions and incorporate both quantitative and qualitative analysis to study underlying psychological motivations more accurately. Longitudinal research may also be carried out to study the changes in consumer attitudes and buying intentions. Also, the future research could consider the new trends like digital luxury consumption, sustainability and experience luxury to capture the new market dynamics.

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