
SOCIAL COMMERCE AND ITS IMPACT ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR IN MUMBAI.

¹Eram Afreen Talukdar, ²Dr. Saudah Khatri¹Student, Department of M.Com (Part II), Jai Hind College, Autonomous.²Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Jai Hind College, Autonomous.**ABSTRACT**

Social commerce has become a major development in digital retail by merging social media interaction with online purchasing activities. This study explores how social commerce affects consumer purchasing behaviour in Mumbai, with emphasis on influencer marketing, social media advertisements, trust, awareness of platform features, and overall customer satisfaction. Primary data was gathered from 50 respondents using a structured questionnaire, while secondary information was obtained from academic journals, industry reports, and reliable online sources. The results show that young and digitally active consumers are the most frequent users of social commerce platforms, with Instagram and WhatsApp being the most preferred channels. Influencer recommendations, customer reviews, appealing visuals, and targeted advertisements significantly shape buying decisions, while convenience and ease of navigation encourage frequent and impulse purchases. Although most respondents reported overall satisfaction with social commerce, concerns regarding privacy, security, and return policies continue to exist. Hypothesis testing confirms that influencer impact, platform trust, and awareness of social commerce features play a significant role in shaping online purchase decisions. The study concludes that social commerce strongly influences consumer behaviour in Mumbai and presents considerable growth opportunities for businesses adopting transparent and customer-focused strategies.

Keywords: Social Commerce, Consumer Buying Behaviour, Influencer Marketing, Trust, Social Media Platforms, Mumbai.

INTRODUCTION

Social commerce refers to the combination of social media platforms with online buying and selling activities. Unlike traditional e-commerce, it incorporates social interaction, user-generated content, reviews, and influencer recommendations into the purchasing process. This approach makes shopping more interactive and community-oriented, enabling consumers to make better-informed decisions.

In India, social commerce has expanded rapidly due to increased smartphone penetration, affordable internet access, and the popularity of platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube. Unlike conventional e-commerce models, social commerce emphasizes discovery-based and impulse-driven purchases influenced by social validation. It has also created opportunities for small businesses and individual sellers to participate in digital trade with minimal investment. Social commerce has significantly influenced consumer buying behavior by emphasizing social proof, influencer impact, and personalized content.

Reviews, recommendations, and online engagement play a key role in shaping purchase decisions, often leading to impulse buying. Mumbai represents a significant market for social commerce due to its digitally connected and diverse population. The city demonstrates strong engagement with social media and influencer-driven content, particularly in fashion, beauty, and lifestyle segments. The fast-paced urban lifestyle further increases the demand for convenient online shopping options.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE**Patel (2024)**

The study investigated the role of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) in influencing consumer purchase behaviour. It found that online reviews and ratings significantly impact buying intentions. Urban consumers, including those in Mumbai, heavily depend on peer feedback before making purchasing decisions. Positive reviews enhance credibility and trust, whereas negative comments can discourage potential buyers. The research highlights the importance of managing online reputation in social commerce environments.

Kapoor et al. (2023)

This research examined digital fatigue among urban consumers in India and observed that constant exposure to social media content makes consumers more selective about advertisements and influencer promotions. Excessive promotional content reduces engagement, encouraging brands to adopt more authentic and value-driven communication strategies.

Sharma and Verma (2023)

The study analysed the connection between online brand engagement and consumer loyalty. It concluded that regular interaction through personalized content and community discussions strengthens emotional attachment toward brands. In Mumbai's context, consistent brand presence on platforms such as Instagram and Facebook enhances recall, trust, and long-term loyalty.

Sammi and Vij (2022)

This research identified trust as a key determinant of consumer behaviour in social commerce. The study found that consumers place high importance on peer reviews, platform reliability, ease of use, and pricing. Social influence from online communities was also observed to significantly affect purchase intentions. The research suggests that businesses focusing on trust-building measures and user-friendly platforms can improve consumer engagement and sales.

Gupta and Rathi (2022)

This study examined impulse buying behaviour in social commerce and found that features such as flash sales, limited-time offers, and push notifications strongly encourage unplanned purchases. The study noted that mobile-based platforms increase convenience and speed, making impulse buying more common among urban consumers. Social proof, such as trending products and peer recommendations, further intensifies immediate purchase decisions.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To evaluate the level of awareness among Mumbai consumers regarding social commerce features.
- To examine the influence of social media influencers on consumers' purchasing decisions.
- To assess trust and security concerns associated with shopping through social media platforms.
- To analyse the types of products purchased and frequency of purchases through social commerce.

Scope of the study

This research focuses on analysing consumer purchasing behaviour within the framework of social commerce. It examines how various platform features influence buying decisions, with special attention to trust, convenience, pricing, and social influence.

The study considers consumers who regularly use social media platforms for shopping-related activities, including Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and other social commerce applications. Traditional e-commerce websites are excluded unless they integrate social media features.

The research is limited to respondents residing in Mumbai. While findings are location-specific, they may offer insights relevant to other metropolitan cities with similar digital adoption patterns.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**Sources of Data Collection**

The study is based on both primary and secondary sources of data to ensure a comprehensive understanding of consumer buying behaviour in social commerce. Primary data provided first-hand information on consumer perceptions, preferences, and purchasing behaviour, while secondary data supported the conceptual framework and theoretical background related to social commerce and digital consumer behaviour.

a) Primary Data

Primary data was collected through a structured close-ended questionnaire using Google Forms. Responses were obtained from consumers in Mumbai who actively use social commerce platforms, and the data was analysed using descriptive statistical tools.

b) Secondary data

Secondary data was sourced from research journals, books, published articles, websites, and industry reports related to social commerce and consumer behaviour. These sources provided conceptual support and helped in strengthening the analysis of the study

Sample Unit

The sample unit consisted of consumers residing in Mumbai who actively use social commerce platforms for online shopping.

Sample Size

50 Respondents data was collected for this research study.

Sampling Technique

Convenience sampling was adopted due to the ease of access to online respondents and the suitability of digital survey-based data collection.

Statement of Problem

Social commerce has emerged as a prominent retail channel by combining social media engagement with online shopping. In a technologically advanced city like Mumbai, consumer purchasing behaviour is increasingly shaped by influencers, peer reviews, and personalized digital content rather than solely by price and quality.

Despite the rapid growth of social commerce, limited research has examined its specific impact on Mumbai consumers. Issues such as trust, authenticity, privacy, influencer credibility, and demographic differences require deeper investigation to better understand buying behaviour in this environment. Hypothesis of the study

• Hypothesis 1

H₀ :- People are not influenced by social media influencers when shopping online.

H₁ :- People are influenced by social media influencers when shopping online.

• Hypothesis 2

H₀ :- People do not trust social media platforms for online shopping.

H₁ :- People trust social media platforms for online shopping.

• Hypothesis 3

H₀ :- Knowing about social commerce features does not affect people's decision to shop online.

H₁ :- Knowing about social commerce features affects people's decision to shop online.

Data Interpretation and Analysis

Through a structured questionnaire, responses were collected from 50+ individuals to analyse the influence of social commerce on consumer buying behaviour in Mumbai. The questionnaire was divided into the following sections:

Section A: Respondent Profile – This section collected demographic information such as age, gender, educational qualification, and occupation of the respondents.

Section B: Usage of Social Commerce – This section examined the social commerce platforms used for shopping, frequency of purchases, and types of products purchased.

Section C: Influence of Social Media on Buying Behaviour – This section analysed the impact of social media advertisements, influencers, reviews, visual content, and discounts on purchase decisions.

Section D: Impact of Social Commerce – This section assessed the effect of social commerce on convenience, impulse buying, spending behaviour, and shopping preferences.

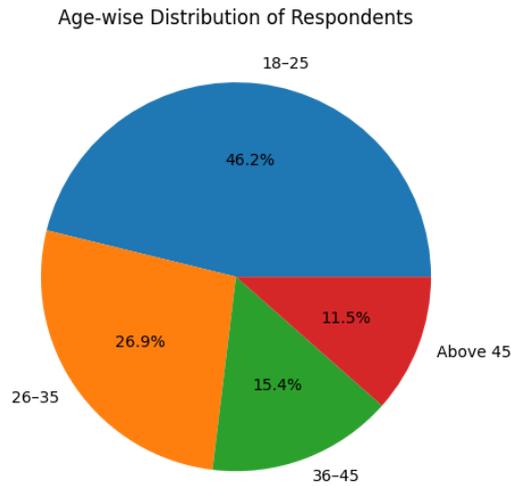
Section E: Trust and Security – This section focused on trust in sellers, fear of fraud, and the role of return and refund policies in buying decisions.

Section F: Overall Opinion – This section measured the overall satisfaction of respondents with social commerce shopping.

The data collected were analyzed using percentage analysis and graphical representation to identify key trends and patterns.

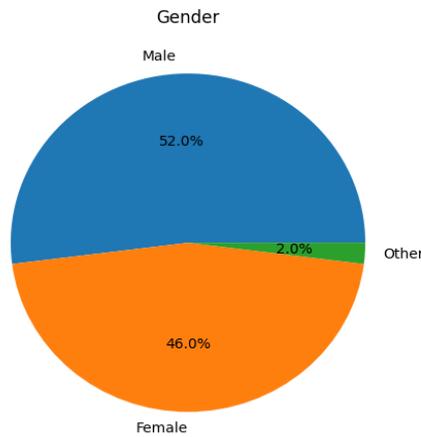
Analysis :-

CHART 1: Age-wise Distribution of Respondents



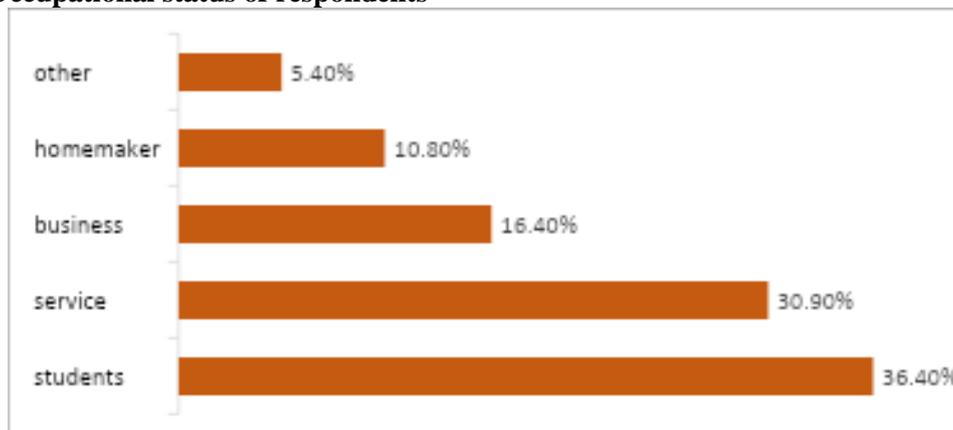
Interpretation: The data indicates that the largest proportion of respondents (46.2%) belong to the 18–25 age group, suggesting that young adults are the most active users of social commerce platforms. This is followed by the 26–35 age group (26.9%). Participation declines among respondents above 35 years, implying that social commerce adoption is stronger among younger, digitally engaged consumers.

CHART 2 :- Gender Distribution



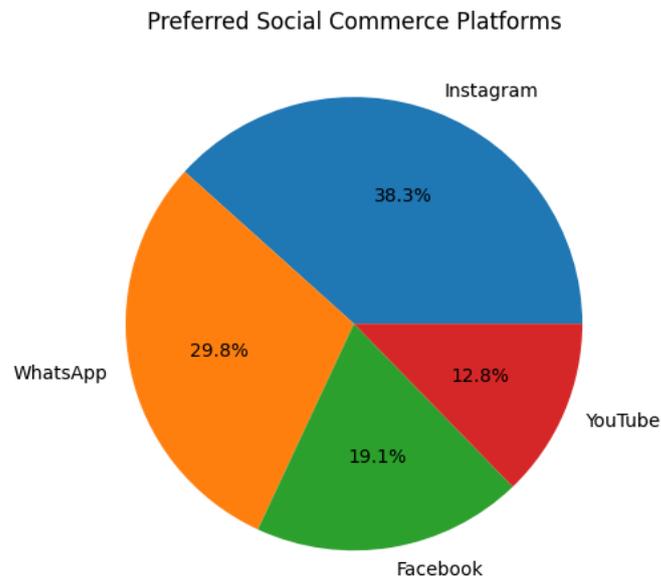
Interpretation :- The findings show a relatively balanced gender distribution, with 52% male and 46% female respondents. This suggests that social commerce platforms appeal to consumers across genders.

CHART 3 :- Occupational status of respondents



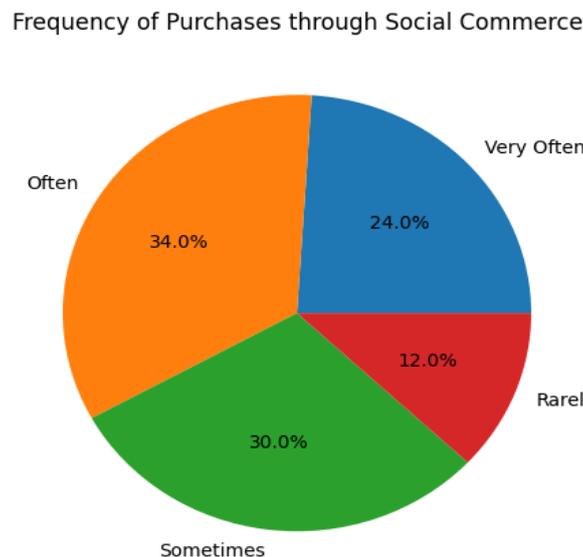
Interpretation :- The chart shows that students constitute the largest segment of respondents (36.4%), followed by service employees at 30.9%. Business professionals account for 16.4%, homemakers 10.9%, and others 5.4%. This indicates that social commerce is particularly popular among students and salaried individuals due to affordability, convenience, and digital exposure. This suggests that marketers and social commerce platforms should focus their strategies on young, digitally active consumers, as they are the most engaged demographic.

CHART 4 :- Preferred Social Commerce Platforms



Interpretation :- Instagram is identified as the most preferred platform, followed by WhatsApp, while Facebook and YouTube have comparatively lower usage. This reflects the strong influence of visually engaging platforms and direct communication channels on purchasing behaviour.

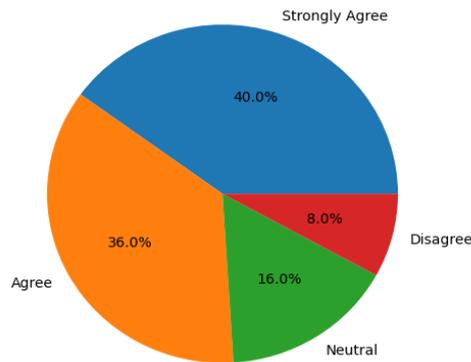
CHART 5 :- Frequency of Purchases through Social Commerce



Interpretation :- A significant number of respondents purchase products either often or sometimes through social media platforms, indicating that social commerce has evolved into a regular and trusted shopping channel rather than an occasional option. It also reflects changing consumer habits in cities like Mumbai, where time constraints and digital familiarity drive consumers toward faster and more interactive shopping experiences.

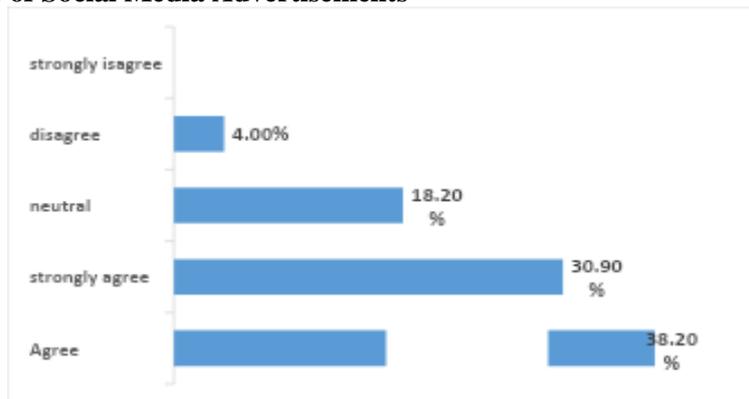
CHART 6 :- Influence of Reviews and Influencers on Buying Decisions

Influence of Reviews and Influencers on Buying Decisions



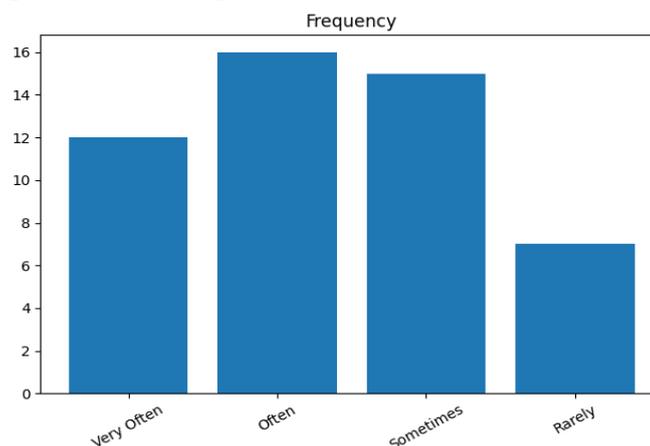
Interpretation :- The graphical analysis indicates that promotional content such as influencer endorsements, user reviews, and attractive visual media plays a significant role in shaping consumer purchase decisions. Nearly **three-fourths of the respondents** expressed agreement that recommendations and feedback from influencers and other users increase their level of confidence while purchasing products online. This highlights a growing tendency among consumers to rely on **social validation and visually driven content** to reduce uncertainty and support their buying choices.

CHART 7 :- Influence of Social Media Advertisements



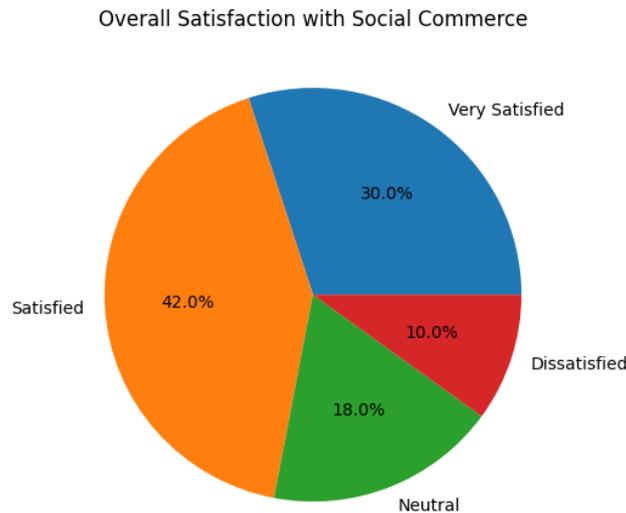
Interpretation :-The chart indicates that a substantial proportion of respondents believe that social media advertisements influence their purchasing decisions, with 38.2% agreeing and 30.9% strongly agreeing with this view. About 18.2% of participants remained neutral, while only a small percentage expressed disagreement. These findings demonstrate the strong impact of targeted social media advertising, suggesting that personalised and visually appealing promotional content plays a key role in capturing consumer interest and encouraging purchase behaviour.

CHART 8 :- Frequency of purchases through social commerce



Interpretation :- The chart shows that 34.5% of respondents purchase products often through social commerce, while 29.1% purchase sometimes. About 21.8% purchase very often, whereas 10.9% purchase rarely and only 3.7% never purchase. This indicates regular usage of social commerce platforms, though purchasing behaviour varies by need, trust level and mainly the demographics of the buyer.

CHART 9 :- Overall Satisfaction with Social Commerce



Interpretation: The chart shows mixed responses regarding trust and security. While majority of respondents trust social commerce sellers, **10.0%** express concern about fraud and return policies. Regarding overall satisfaction, **72.02%** of respondents report being satisfied or very satisfied with social commerce shopping. This indicates high satisfaction levels, though improvements in trust, authenticity, and after-sales services are needed

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- The study reveals that **young consumers aged 18–25 years** are the most active users of social commerce platforms in Mumbai.
- **Instagram and WhatsApp** are identified as the most preferred platforms due to their strong visual appeal and ease of direct interaction with sellers.
- **Influencer endorsements, customer reviews, and social proof** significantly influence consumer confidence and purchasing decisions.
- Social commerce promotes **frequent and impulsive buying behaviour**, largely driven by discounts, engaging content, and seamless purchasing processes.
- A majority of respondents expressed **overall satisfaction** with their social commerce experiences, reflecting increasing acceptance of this mode of shopping.
- **Trust, data security, and return or refund policies** continue to be critical factors affecting consumers' willingness to purchase through social commerce platforms.

SUGGESTIONS OF THE STUDY

- Social commerce platforms and sellers should strengthen **trust and security measures**, such as verified seller badges, secure payment gateways, and transparent policies, to reduce consumer fear of fraud.
- Brands should focus on **authentic influencer collaborations** rather than excessive promotions, ensuring that influencer content is genuine, relatable, and aligned with the brand's values to build long-term credibility.
- Clear and standardized **return and refund policies** should be implemented to improve consumer confidence and satisfaction, especially for first-time buyers.
- Businesses are encouraged to focus on creating **high-quality visual content**, such as images, videos, and live product demonstrations, as these elements strongly impact consumer engagement and purchasing decisions.
- Additionally, **personalised advertising strategies** should be developed using ethical data practices, ensuring a balance between relevance and consumer privacy to prevent negative reactions and digital fatigue.

- Social commerce platforms should enhance **customer engagement features**, such as reviews, ratings, and interactive communication, to foster stronger brand–consumer relationships and encourage repeat purchases.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

- **Hypothesis 1 :-**The high level of agreement among respondents demonstrates that **social media influencers have a significant impact on online shopping behaviour**. Hence, the **null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected**, and the **alternative hypothesis (H₁) is accepted**.
- **Hypothesis 2:** The predominantly positive responses related to **trust, satisfaction, and continued use** of social commerce platforms indicate a significant degree of consumer trust in social media–based shopping. Accordingly, the **null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected**, and the **alternative hypothesis (H₁) is accepted**.
- **Hypothesis 3:** The level of agreement among respondents indicates that awareness and understanding of social commerce features such as reviews, influencer content, easy payment options, and return policies significantly influence online shopping decisions. Therefore, the **null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected** and the **alternative hypothesis (H₁) is accepted**.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The study is based on a **limited sample size of just over 50 respondents**, which may not adequately capture the full socio-economic and demographic diversity of Mumbai’s population.
2. The research is **geographically restricted to Mumbai**, and therefore the findings may not be directly generalizable to other cities or rural areas.
3. The study relies on **self-reported responses**, which may be subject to personal bias or inaccurate recall by respondents.
4. Time constraints limited the depth of analysis, especially regarding **long-term behavioural changes** in social commerce usage.
5. The study focuses only on selected social commerce platforms and does not extensively cover **traditional e-commerce platforms** unless they overlap with social commerce features.

CONCLUSION

Social commerce has become a powerful driver of consumer purchasing behaviour in Mumbai. The study indicates that young, digitally engaged consumers form the core user base of social commerce platforms, with Instagram and WhatsApp emerging as key channels for product discovery and transactions. Factors such as influencer promotions, user-generated reviews, visually appealing content, and targeted advertising play a decisive role in shaping buying decisions, underscoring the importance of social interaction within the online shopping experience. Although overall satisfaction with social commerce remains high, issues related to trust, data security, and return mechanisms continue to influence consumer confidence. To ensure long-term growth, businesses must adopt transparent operations and ethical marketing practices that strengthen trust while maintaining convenience and authenticity in a highly competitive digital environment.

REFERENCES

1. Kapoor, A., Dwivedi, Y. K., & Williams, M. D. (2023). Social commerce: Concept, emerging trends, and future research directions. *International Journal of Information Management*, 68, 102558.
2. Sharma, R., & Verma, S. (2023). Impact of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour in India. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 71, 103188.
3. Kaur, H., & Mehta, V. (2022). Role of social commerce in influencing consumer purchase intention in metropolitan cities. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 34(5), 1121–1138.
4. Sammi, A., & Vij, S. (2022). Trust and social influence in social commerce: Evidence from India. *Journal of Business Research*, 141, 1–12.
5. Godey, B., Manthiou, A., Pederzoli, D., Rokka, J., Aiello, G., Donvito, R., & Singh, R. (2016). Social media marketing efforts and consumer behaviour: A luxury brand perspective. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(12), 5833–5841.