

The Effect of Instagram on Customer Relationship, Customer Equity, and Purchase Intention Towards Luxury Fashion Brands

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Abstract. As the usage of online shopping platforms becomes more important for today's society, luxury fashion brands are prompting to adopt online selling as their distribution channels. Especially in adopting social media marketing on the Instagram platform. However, social media usage brings a dilemma and hesitation to luxury fashion brands because of the different characteristics between social media and the luxury fashion brand itself. Adding that, a lack of studies discusses how luxury fashion brands should use their Instagram to have more effective marketing strategies to manage their customer relationships and customer equity. In response to this situation, this research was conducted to assess the effect of Instagram on building customer relationships and customer equity, which, in return, stimulating purchase intention. A quantitative approach through the questionnaire-survey method was performed in this research, where this research uses descriptive statistics, MANOVA-SPSS, and PLS-SEM to analyze the data. As a result, this research can answer the dilemma of using social media which shows the positive contribution of social media marketing on customer relationships and customer equity, were in the end, creating purchase intention. These findings contribute to maximize the usage on Instagram and give recommendations on how to deliver luxury values to the market.

Keywords: Customer Equity, Customer Relationship, Instagram, Luxury Fashion Brands, Purchase Intention

1 Introduction

In recent years, the consumption of luxury fashion brands has been increased over the years. The consumption and purchasing of luxury fashion brands can give a sense of pride, exclusivity, and prestige to those who wear them, it is caused by the high price, and limited sales that luxury brands offer can generate the exclusivity sense to the buyer [1]. Gucci, Chanel, Hermes, Rolex, and Prada are examples of luxury fashion brands that sell luxury fashion products. Nevertheless, luxury fashion brands face new challenges due to the transformation of retailing and distribution channels by the increasing usage of internet technology. The usage of online shopping platform that becomes more important for today's society is prompting luxury fashion brands to adopt online selling as their distribution channels.

The adoption of online selling can give advantages to luxury fashion brands to reach more customers in other countries even though they didn't operate their offline store. For example,

well-known and reputable luxury fashion brands such as Dior, Gucci, and Prada have already decided to adopt the online selling platform. They engage with customers via online stores using the same brand names as their offline stores, where customers are highly welcome, accepted, and recognized. The online luxury fashion brand can help them attract a younger generation of luxury buyers to purchase their products and give a significant impact to increasing their profit and sales.

Furthermore, in order to adopt online selling, the luxury fashion brands try adopting social media marketing to interact with the customers and share information to increase customer value and building a strong brand names in the customer's minds. Social media gives opportunities to luxury fashion brands to reach a broader market without any distance and time, and make brand's adjustment according to the current trend. Customers can share new product or brand concepts with the firm where these firms can build long-term relationships with customers which lead to customer's loyalty. Therefore, it seems social media have a significant positive effect in influencing the relationship between customer relationship and purchase intention of the luxury fashion brands [2][3], where the relationship takes a significant role for the customers in making a decision on purchasing the expensive products [4].

Moreover, despite the advantages of social media marketing in building relationships, social media marketing gives advantages in maintaining customer equity. As the competitiveness between luxury fashion brands is becoming more heated through a multitude of options, it turns customers' future behavior into a key strategic asset that firms must nurture [3]. The customer' future behavior that aims to optimize long-term performance can be maintain through customer equity as the most important factor of the firm's long-term value. Therefore, it demonstrated that maintaining customer equity is important to luxury fashion brands, where previous study of Lemon et al. [5] explains social media usage have significantly impact on customer equity. Adding that, customer equity are beneficial in affecting customer decision to buy luxury fashion products, or the preference towards luxury fashion brands.

Nevertheless, even though social media brings benefits by building the relationship and maintaining customer equity, using social media is debatable. It brings a dilemma and hesitation to the brand where customers are favorable to touch and feel the luxury products before they buy them. It supported by characteristics differences between luxury brands and social media from how they engage the consumers that can lead to lose the sense of prestige for the luxury fashion brand itself.

Table 1. Contradictory Characteristics

Luxury Brands Characteristics	Social Media Characteristics
Exclusive	Large diffusion
Prestigious and Elitism	Mass media image
Rarity	Unlimited
Personalized service	Common service
In-store experiences	Virtual experiences
Display of products are the important things, followed by price	Both displays of products and price are equally important
Values: traditional, family history, and timeless	Values: modernity, innovation, and instantaneity

Table 1 above shows the different characteristic that makes luxury fashion brand afraid of it [6]. It's affect the slow adoption for luxury fashion brands in using social media platform. Besides that, the products that sold by luxury fashion brands are more expensive that other fashion companies causing the target of luxury fashion brands being the wealth customers [7]. Thus, this wealth association created an elitist attitude which have an opposite characteristic with social media as a mass media image and large diffusion. It can changing the niche and elitism characteristic of luxury fashion brands if they are entering the social media platform.

However, despite the fact that engaging in social media is contradictory to their essence of exclusivity, Fraser [8] said luxury brands that engage in social media can get the advantages, especially, those who are hesitant to visit a luxury store with limited buying power. Brand's social media activities can help to minimize misunderstandings and prejudices about the brand, as well as measuring the brand value, by providing a platform for people to share ideas and knowledge online. Also, previous studies of Stelzner [9] found that 92 of marketers believe social media is a crucial aspects for their communication, with 58 percent of them strongly agree with this statement.

It is supported by the use of social media of the millennial generation and generation Z that increase the usage of social media as their main platform to communicate. Their demand for purchasing luxury brands through online platforms is high, as they get influenced by people around them as well as social media "influencers". There are also a demand from the generation Z, which born between 1995 and 2010 (McKinsey, 2018), as the most discerning set of consumers of the young generation. Generation Z that are the most digital, well-informed, and have the greatest expectations significantly influence the older generation to buy luxury fashion products. Therefore, generation Z seems to transforming the landscape of digital luxury marketing where luxury fashion marketers forcing to reconsider old digital approaches. As a result, it is critical for luxury companies to focus on Gen Z, as Gen Z will have a big influence in the market on how quickly and deeply the changes in the luxury industry evolve.

Furthermore, talking about social media platforms, DeMers [10] said that Instagram is one of the most frequently used social media platforms. Instagram, which had more than 500 million active users in 2010, has more than 2,500 micro-influencers with 60% survey result told that Instagram is the most engaging platform followed by Facebook. It makes luxury brands utilize Instagram platforms to connect with their customers and use advertising features where Instagram can emphasize visual storytelling. It's beneficial to luxury brands to deliver aesthetic standards that can give high engagement to luxury consumers. As a result, Instagram becomes the most suitable social media platform for luxury brands where content being an important thing in doing the marketing activities.

In the context of Indonesia, Indonesia has 79 million active social media users out of 259.1 million people in the total population (Oxford Business Group, 2013). It reaches more than 30% which makes Indonesian customers actively participating in social media. Subsequently, Indonesia was ranked as the 5th highest Instagram by April 2020 (Statista, 2020) that has the biggest market in the Asia Pacific region with approximately 45 million users [12]. As a result, Indonesian consumers were able to keep up with the latest trends and be exposed to luxury products from all over the world.

Afterwards, Indonesia as one of the 21 countries that have the fastest growing economy is predicted to be one of the world's largest economies in 2030 (Indonesia Investments, 2017). Thus, the fastest growth of the economy in Indonesia could have an effect on the rising number of high-net-worth individuals, leading to an increase in brand consciousness and willingness to buy high-end luxury goods. It can be seen from the rise in the purchase of

luxury goods in Indonesia, which has grown at a rate of 3.5 percent per year, as seen in the figure 1 (Statista, 2020).

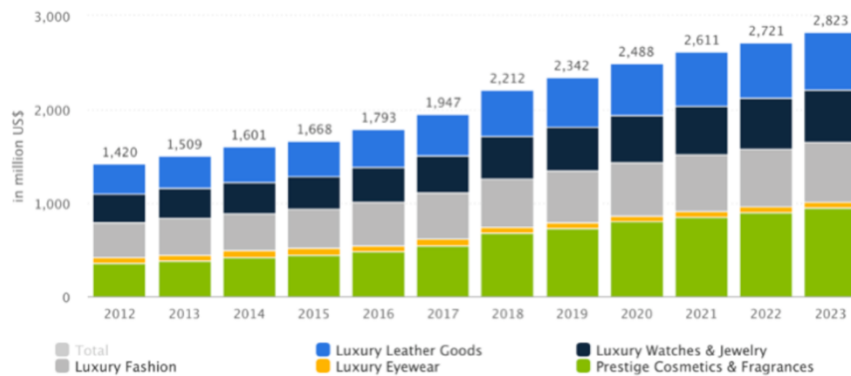


Fig 1. Indonesia's Luxury Market Growth
(<https://www.statista.com/outlook/21030000/120/luxury-fashion/indonesia>, 2020)

As the use of social media marketing increases and realizing the benefit of Instagram platforms, luxury fashion brands are becoming concerned about Instagram usage to establish relationships between luxury customers and maintain customer equity, which, in result, stimulating purchase intention. However, very few studies have been done on how the variables relate to one another, and the lack of studies discussing how luxury fashion brands should use Instagram platform [13]. Furthermore, this is important for luxury fashion brands to find out the relationship between the customer relationship and customer equity as the effect of social media marketing in the Instagram platform. It is amplified by the promising numbers of economic growth and the demand for luxury fashion goods of the Gen Z where Gen Z will have a big influence in the luxury market. Thus, it made this research necessary as the context further, where the companies should recognize how to design it well to illustrate the value of the brand and impact the growing understanding of its brand equity. Therefore, this research is important to meet what customers need regarding luxury fashion brands and give recommendation in Instagram luxury fashion accounts. The result contributes to having more effective marketing strategies of how luxury fashion brands should use the Instagram platform as well as managing customer equity among Indonesian consumers.

2 Method

After evaluating the prior relevant studies, Figure 2 depicts the proposed model for this research

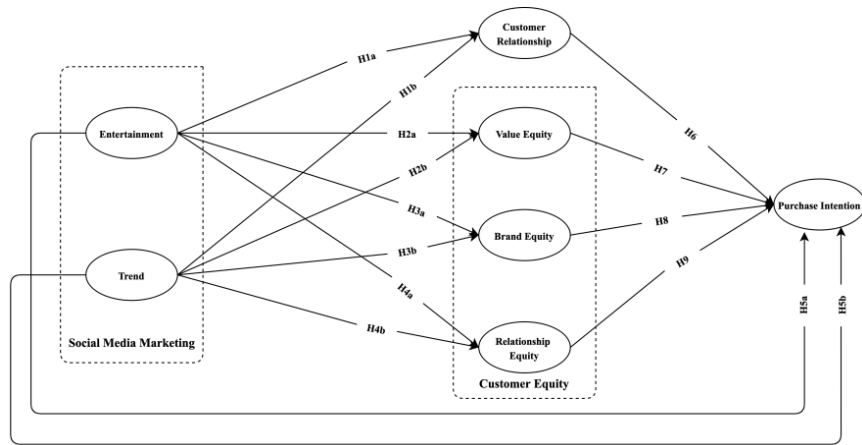


Fig 2. Conceptual Framework

- H1a. Entertainment has a significant positive impact in building customer relationship.
- H1b. Trend has a significant positive impact in building customer relationship.
- H2a. Entertainment has a significant positive impact in building value equity.
- H2b. Trend has a significant positive impact in building value equity.
- H3a. Entertainment has a significant positive impact in building brand equity.
- H3b. Trend has a significant positive impact in building brand equity.
- H4a. Entertainment has a significant positive impact in building relationship equity.
- H4b. Trend has a significant positive impact in building relationship equity.
- H5a. Entertainment has a significant positive impact in building purchase intention.
- H5b. Trend has a significant positive impact in building purchase intention.
- H6. Customer relationship have a significant positive impact in building purchase intention.
- H7. Value equity has a significant positive impact in building purchase intention.
- H8. Brand equity has a significant positive impact in building purchase intention.
- H9. Relationship equity has a significant positive impact in building purchase intention.

In this research, A quantitative approach through the questionnaire-survey method collected 300 online participants who have purchased luxury fashion products and follow luxury fashion Instagram of Brand Gucci, CHANEL, Louis Vuitton, and Dior. To analyze the data, the researcher used descriptive statistics, MANOVA-SPSS, and PLS-SEM, where this research uses a five-point Likert scale to measure the data.

Table 2. Variable definition and operationalization

No	Dimensions	Variable	Definition	Indicators	Sources
1	Social Media Marketing	Entertainment	Entertainment tries to provide fun, playful, and interesting content to give customers experience (Agichtein et al., 2008). Entertainment is the key motivator	The contents spotted on Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton’s Instagram seem to be fascinating. It’s fun to use Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis	Kim and Ko [3] Yadav and Rahman [14]

			to share and create user-generated content.	Vuitton's Instagram.	
				It's exciting to gather information about brands or fashion products from Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton's Instagram.	
				It's easy to pass the time on Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton's Instagram.	
	Trend		The broadness of brand to disseminate the trendiest and the latest information Dauriz, Remy and Sandri (2013). The trend was satisfying what the luxury brand's customers expected from its brand.	It's a leading fashion to use Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton's Instagram. The content on Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton's Instagram is up-to-date. On Instagram, you can find anything trendy from Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton.	
2	Customer Relationship	Intimacy	Related to closeness and connectedness Sternberg (1997). It is essential before clients make a deeper emotional investment.	I am a true admirer of Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton. I have a feeling of intimacy toward Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton. I'm familiar with this Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton well.	Henning-Thurau [15], Ju and Chung [16], Kim and Ko [3]
		Trust	A person's predisposition to believe that specific brands can fulfill the service that has been promised (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). Trust is the most important factor to	I have deep confidence in Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton. Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton offers precise service information.	

			develop long-term relationships.	Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton's employees are completely honest and truthful.	
3	Customer Equity	Value Equity	A rational and objective assessment from the consumers over a brand's offerings (Aravindakshan et al., 2004) The outcomes of perceived value is important to increase customers satisfaction.	Shopping at Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton is worth the time and effort. The quality-price ratio of brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton's products is very good. Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton provides me with high value. Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton is very attractive.	Rust et al. [17], Vogel et al. [18], Ural and Yuksel [19]
		Brand Equity	A subjective and intangible customer's evaluation of a brand's worth over the basic value of goods they sold where it can increase to expand the brands (Keller, 2008).	Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton's image suits my personality. I frequently notice and pay attention to Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton's Instagram advertisements. I frequently notice and pay attention to Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton's media advertisements.	
		Relationship Equity	Consumers' willingness to be attached to the brand beyond objective and subjective evaluations (Zeithaml, Lemon and Rust, 2001). To balance out the value and brand equity, relationship equity is needed.	The preferential treatment I get from Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton is important to me. Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton acknowledges me as being special. I feel connected with other customers of this Brand	Rust et al. [17]

				Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton.	
				I have a high level of trust in this Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton.	
4	Purchase Intention	Purchase Intention	Linked to the desire of customers and attitude toward a brand (Kim and Lee, 2009) that is represented by customers' choice propensity to buy it in the future.	I will definitely buy products marketed on Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton's Instagram pages that I follow.	Yoo and Donthu [20], Husnain and Toor [21]
				I intend to buy products marketed on Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton's Instagram pages that I follow.	
				I will likely buy products marketed on Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton's Instagram pages that I follow.	
				I expect to buy products marketed on Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton's Instagram pages that I follow.	

3 Result and Discussion

3.1 Quantitative

3.1.1 Descriptive Analysis

From the survey that has been conducted, most of the data gathered is above 3, which is considered as being neutral on a five-Likert Scale. The highest average is 4,47 gathered from VE4 (Value Equity) which shows most of the respondents agree that the Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton is very attractive. Meanwhile, the lower average is 2,98 gathered from IN2 (Intimacy) that states "I have a feeling of intimacy toward Brand Gucci/Chanel/Dior/Louis Vuitton", which shows not all the respondents have strong feelings of intimacy towards those brands.

3.1.2 MANOVA-SPSS

One-way MANOVA was conducted to investigate whether there are different result assessments between 4 brands. Thus, the calculation shows that the **Wilks' Lambda** of Multivariate Test in Brand Effect have a significant result of 0.95 which is greater than 0.05. It means that there are no significant differences between social media marketing, customer

relationship, value equity, brand equity, relationship equity, and purchase intention towards Brand Gucci, CHANEL, Louis Vuitton, and Dior. Hence, to conduct the next test which is PLS-SEM, all the questionnaire results will be merged among 4 brands with a total of 300 respondents.

3.1.3 PLS-SEM

Partial Least Square is used to describe causal modelling, which calculates using SmartPLS 3.0. The calculations are carried out to determine the relationship between the variables. To determine if the hypotheses are accepted or not, the bootstrapping process was conducted. The T-statistics value will be analyzed where the values must be greater or equal to 1.96 to determine the significance of the relationship between the model. Thus, the bootstrapping result of this study is depicted in Figure 3.

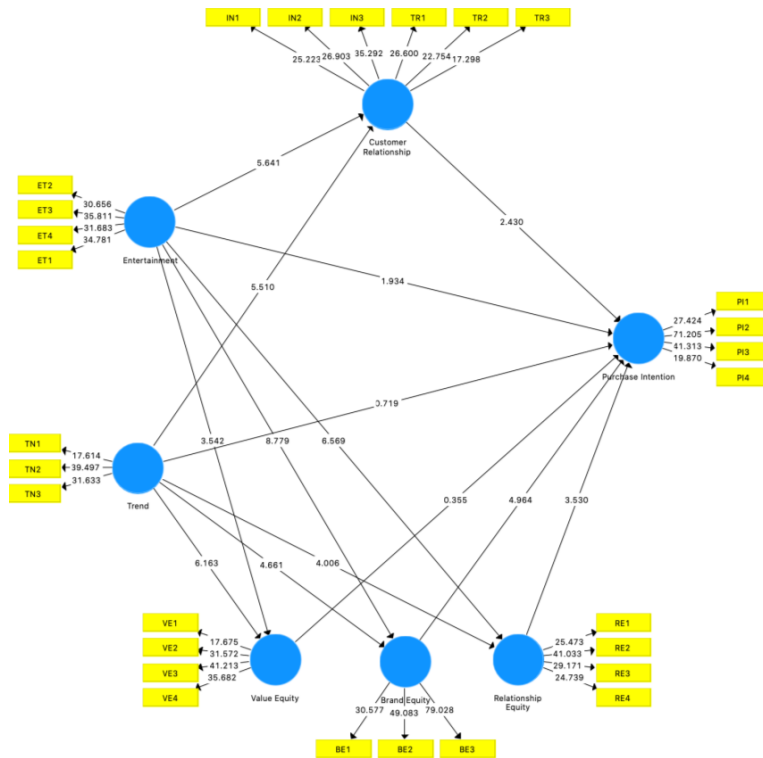


Figure 3. Bootstrapping Result

Thus, the result of the hypothesis testing shows on Table 3.

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing Result

Hypothesis	Structural Path	Path Coefficients	T-Statistics	Result
H1a	Entertainment -> Customer Relationship	0,341	5,641	Accepted
H1b	Trend -> Customer Relationship	0,305	5,510	Accepted

H2a	Entertainment -> Value Equity	0,245	3,542	Accepted
H2b	Trend -> Value Equity	0,402	6,163	Accepted
H3a	Entertainment -> Brand Equity	0,454	8,779	Accepted
H3b	Trend -> Brand Equity	0,245	4,661	Accepted
H4a	Entertainment -> Relationship Equity	0,366	6,569	Accepted
H4b	Trend -> Relationship Equity	0,237	4,006	Accepted
H5a	Entertainment -> Purchase Intention	0,120	1,934	Rejected
H5b	Trend -> Purchase Intention	0,039	0,719	Rejected
H6	Customer Relationship -> Purchase Intention	0,170	2,430	Accepted
H7	Value Equity -> Purchase Intention	-0,022	0,355	Rejected
H8	Brand Equity -> Purchase Intention	0,304	4,964	Accepted
H9	Relationship Equity -> Purchase Intention	0,242	3,530	Accepted

3.2 Discussion

The first hypothesis is accepted. This result is in line with previous studies of Kim and Ko (2010). Where two independent variables (entertainment and trend) give a significant positive impact on building customer relationships. Besides that, the hypothesis between customer relationship and purchase intention was also accepted, align with Gautam and Sharma [22] previous research, meaning that customer relationship building from social media marketing can stimulate purchase intention.

However, the hypothesis that analyses the relationship between social media marketing that directly affect purchase intention was rejected, which means that they are not giving significant positive influence directly to purchase intention, compare with previous studies of Gautam and Sharma [22]. The two constructs of social media marketing must maintain its customer relationship as well as customer equity to stimulate purchase intention.

Moreover, the other hypothesis, entertainment and trend, give significant positive relationships on three customer equity drivers, which is in line with previous studies of Rienetta et al. [23]. Thus, because all the hypotheses were accepted, it indicates that social media marketing of luxury fashion brands can enhance customer equity drivers.

Last, from three customer equity drivers, only two variables that give significant influence to purchase intention, which is brand equity and relationship equity. The other variable, value equity, does not significantly positively influence purchase intention compared with previous research of Rienetta et al. [23]. Therefore, it seems that if value equity is delivered alone to luxury customers, it cannot guarantee for luxury consumers to purchase the products directly. A relationship must be created between luxury consumers and brands to generate purchase intention.

4 Conclusion

RQ 1: What are the factors that influence customers purchase intention of luxury fashion brands in Indonesia?

After evaluating the questionnaire result through PLS-SEM analysis, three factors show a significant positive influence to purchase intention towards luxury fashion brands. Customer relationship, brand equity, and relationship equity show a positive and significant effect on purchase intention, where the most affecting factor is brand equity. Brand Equity which consists of brand awareness, brand attitude, and business ethics, as the most influencing factors to purchase intention illustrate the gen Z as luxury consumers are concerning brand image before making purchase decisions. However, entertainment and trend as part of social media marketing attributes shows positive impact but not significant to purchasing intention. Even more, value equity negatively affects purchase intention and is not significant.

RQ 2: What is the relationship between social media marketing, customer relationship, customer equity, and purchase intention in luxury fashion brands Instagram?

The first relationship shows that two attributes of social media marketing (entertainment and trend) significantly positively impact on building customer relationships. The content posted by luxury fashion brands on Instagram seems can increase trust and intimacy feelings towards a brand as part of customer relationships. It is because the contents delivered by reputable brands are not only giving much information but also entertaining to those who watch them. Therefore, these findings align with behavioral question results where Generation Z, as luxury fashion enthusiasts, is up to date in the luxury fashion industry and needs much information to entertain them to keep updated with the latest trends.

Even better, it proved that customer relationships have a significant positive impact on building purchase intention. The relationship generated from luxury fashion brands is supported by trust and intimacy feelings towards a brand. In which, trust and intimacy feeling can stimulate customers to make a purchase decision with the brand that they trust before. These findings align with behavioral research where Generation Z, as the most digital and well-informed generation, tends to choose a reputable brand that they trust to intentionally purchase those products.

Moreover, the third relationship between social media marketing and customer equity drivers has also been conducted. It has been proven that all constructs of social media marketing which is entertainment and trend, are given a significant impact on customer equity drivers, namely value equity, brand equity, and relationship equity. The content that luxury fashion brands posted can positively deliver the product's value and brand itself if luxury brands can manage it well.

Furthermore, the two drivers from customer equity significantly influence purchase intention. They are brand equity and relationship equity. It indicates that brand image, brands awareness, and relationship perception between luxury fashion customers and brands are essential to stimulate purchase intention. While in the other side value equity does not have a significant impact on building purchase intention. Consequently, luxury fashion brands must maintain their brand equity and relationship equity to deliver the value through Instagram platform.

Besides that, the relationship between social media marketing that directly impacts the purchase intention was also conducted. However, it shows that two attributes of social media marketing (entertainment and trend) have no significant impact on building purchase

intention directly. The relationship must be built before customers purchase luxury products, as well as maintaining customer equity.

RQ 3: What are the recommendations for luxury fashion marketers to be implemented in stimulating purchase intention?

First, luxury fashion brands can actively post pictures or videos that entertaining the audience. Luxury fashion brands must focus on content that gives the current trend to increase the relationship with their customers. Also, luxury fashion brands can actively post the virtual event or current campaign they celebrate because it can increase engagement among their customers. However, to maintain their exclusivity characteristics, luxury fashion brands can collaborate with high-status figures, famous brands, and world-scaled events, where it can lead to increased word of mouth among luxury fashion enthusiasts. For example, nowadays, group brands of Korean people have become trendy. Thus, luxury fashion brands can collaborate with those groups to make campaigns or events to attract luxury fashion enthusiasts, just like BVLGARI Brand did. In which their collaboration can be exposed on their Instagram account.

Second, luxury fashion brands can increase their brand equity through the Instagram platform to create a luxury image among luxury consumers. Brand awareness and brand image as part of brand equity can be enhanced through Instagram advertisements. Luxury fashion brands can utilize Instagram ads that target directly to their market by making interesting videos or photos of their new products or fashion show events. Meanwhile, to enhance relationship equity, luxury fashion brands can utilize Instagram effect features where many followers can try it.

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