

Received: 3 November 2023 Accepted: 28 November 2023
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33182/tbm.v1i2.3198>

Online Luxury Consumer's Brands Loyalty among Bangladeshi Women in East London¹

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Abstract

The advent of advanced technology has revolutionized online business, significantly impacting the luxury clothing market. Women of Bangladeshi heritage in East London, initially sceptical about online purchases, have embraced the convenience of upgraded technology. Past studies assert that a substantial portion of purchases is now conducted online. This shift is attributed to online shopping's accessibility, flexibility, and features such as cash refunds, absent in physical stores. For the fashion industry, online business proves strategic, expanding growth and success. However, existing literature overlooks issues like transaction complexities and potential data compromises in online shopping. This case study investigates brand loyalty and customer satisfaction among East London's immigrant women in online luxury clothing purchases. The findings reveal the strong influence of luxury brands on women, emphasizing the need for continuous innovation. Diversity in consumer perceptions necessitates brand attention for sustained growth. Women allocate more budget to luxury clothing, signalling an opportunity for brands to expand collections. Quality emerges as a key factor, urging brands to refine quality control. Strong brand loyalty among women suggests effective business strategies and enduring customer relationships. The study highlights the increasing preference for online shopping, driven by factors like diverse products and free delivery. These insights guide luxury brands in tailoring strategies for customer satisfaction and sustained success. The complex dynamics of women's perceptions, preferences, and behaviours in the luxury fashion market offer nuanced insights for strategic adaptation. Continuous improvement, diversification, and targeted marketing on digital platforms are recommended for sustained brand success.

Keywords: *Luxury consumption; brand loyalty; retail market; East London; Bangladeshi women*

Introduction

The advent of advanced technology has significantly elevated the sophistication of online business. Initially, there was a lack of trust in the market; however, contemporary circumstances indicate that the superficial services of the internet have substantially enhanced the viability of online shopping. Notably, women of Bangladeshi heritage, particularly in East London, who were initially hesitant about online purchases, have witnessed a profound shift in their shopping patterns due to the introduction of upgraded technology (Fu et al., 2020). Fu et al. (2020) further assert that a substantial proportion of purchases are now executed through online platforms.

Online shopping, characterized by its accessibility and flexibility, allows customers to modify their product choices, with the added benefit of cash refunds, a feature absent in physical stores (Farah et al., 2018). In the context of the fashion industry, online business has proven

¹ This case study is based on research carried out for partial fulfilment of a postgraduate degree at the University of Hertfordshire.

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to be a strategic approach for expanding growth and enhancing organizational success (Kawaf and Istanbuluoglu, 2019). This approach facilitates market share expansion in East London for fashion brands while concurrently upholding their credibility. The consequential impact has been a favourable enhancement of overall productivity, marked by increased revenue levels (Jo et al., 2020). The proficiency of the online shopping system, encompassing digital marketing and user-friendly ordering platforms, has contributed to the industry's potential for optimizing profitability (Santy and Alfiana, 2021).

However, it is imperative to acknowledge that certain issues associated with online purchases have not been addressed in the existing literature. Notably absent from consideration are the complexities inherent in online transactions and the potential compromise of buyers' confidential information due to hacking incidents (Ryu et al., 2019).

This case study aims to delineate brand loyalty and customer satisfaction among immigrant female residents of East London in the context of online purchases of luxury women's clothing. It is warranted by the paucity of studies on South Asian women consumers (see Jain et al., 2016). The study was carried out in the aftermath of the pandemic (Vatansever et al., 2021). The subsequent section will expound on the significance of cultivating positive customer relationships and fostering brand loyalty. Women's perceptions and motivations toward luxury fashion brands

The fashion industry, a multi-billion-dollar sector, is profoundly influenced by the active participation of women. Throughout history, women's fashion has been intricately linked with luxury. Globally recognized brands such as Louis Vuitton, Gucci, and Prada exemplify the pinnacle of luxury in women's fashion, characterized by superior quality and elevated price points. Mensa and Deng (2021) note that the affinity for luxury fashion brands among women is contingent upon various factors. McCormick and Ram (2022) posit that women with higher educational qualifications and better employment opportunities exhibit greater purchasing power, leading them to favour luxury brands over ordinary alternatives.

Contrary to historical trends, Youn and Cho (2021) observe a contemporary phenomenon wherein women, irrespective of financial capacity, align themselves with luxury products. Emmanuel-Stephen et al. (2021) attribute this behaviour to a sense of belonging, positing that women derive emotional assurance from adhering to a purchasing habit focused on luxury fashion brands.

Brand awareness holds paramount significance in the fashion industry. Ibrahim et al. (2021) contend that companies with high brand recognition enjoy global acknowledgment, resulting in increased sales and overall growth. Multinational luxury fashion businesses employ diverse strategies to enhance brand awareness on a global scale.

Perceived quality, defined as consumers' subjective evaluation of a product or service's value, plays a pivotal role in the decision-making process. Lacap et al. (2021) emphasize that women in East London, particularly those engaged in online luxury clothing shopping, place faith in a brand that aligns with their quality expectations.

Brand loyalty, characterized by repeated purchases from the same brand, is a crucial aspect of consumer behaviour. Guan et al. (2021) assert that emotional bonds contribute significantly to brand loyalty, influencing customers to remain committed to a brand with shared values. Le et al. (2021) suggest that fostering customer loyalty, even without altering the



manufacturing process, can substantially impact business growth. Women in East London, engaged in online luxury clothing shopping, are recognized for their heightened brand loyalty.

Customer satisfaction is deemed indispensable for organizational success. Koay et al. (2022) posit that customer satisfaction is pivotal for business growth and sustainability in a competitive market. Rastegar (2018) emphasizes the role of product quality in enhancing customer satisfaction and establishing a unique market position. Online luxury shopping platforms for women's clothing in East London prioritize maintaining perceived product quality to captivate the attention of their clientele.

The STP (Segmentation, Targeting, Positioning) model, as highlighted by Centobelli et al. (2022), underscores the fashion industry's capacity to capture a significant market share through upgraded technology. This approach facilitates easy access to clothing items from any location, contributing to an overall improvement in customer satisfaction levels (Figure 1).

Figure 1. STP Model



Customer satisfaction and loyalty towards fashion brands

In the contemporary fashion industry, customers wield unprecedented influence, with women playing a pivotal role in shaping the preferences and designs of numerous fashion brands (Sharma et al., 2020). This influence extends beyond individual purchasing decisions, as customers, guided by their experiences, contribute to brand awareness through digital platforms, enabling brands to receive valuable feedback and reviews. The financial investment made by consumers directly reflects the demands and dynamics of the fashion industry, underscoring the centrality of customer satisfaction (Rather et al., 2019). Acknowledging and responding to customer preferences is essential for both retaining existing customers and attracting potential ones.

Retaining customer loyalty is particularly critical for businesses, as acquiring new customers can be more costly than maintaining existing ones (Garfinkel, February 11, 2019). Loyal customers necessitate fewer marketing efforts, while their advocacy, based on their extensive knowledge and experience with a brand, fosters word-of-mouth promotion among friends,

family, and colleagues. In the context of East London's female consumers, known for their creativity and preference for high-end brands, loyalty often aligns with luxury and status (Standard, 2022). Moreover, the rich natural environment in East London contributes to a demand for quality-based clothing.

Customer satisfaction, a pivotal factor for business acceleration, is closely linked to the success of sales revenue and the attainment of business objectives (Otto et al., 2020). The advancement in technology, particularly in online marketing, has facilitated the expansion of the global market share for luxury fashion brands, thereby enhancing overall profitability. This technological progress has also empowered women in East London, enabling convenient and informed purchasing decisions.

Satisfied customers, particularly in the context of East London, contribute to a reduction in the overall churn rate, fostering business growth (Arora and Narula, 2018). The resulting decrease in churn rate has positive implications for overall productivity, allowing the fashion industry in East London to leverage economies of scale and achieve higher levels of success. Highly satisfied customers play a crucial role in consumer retention, paving the way for a more proficient and resilient business model (EI-Adly, 2019).

The relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty is foundational for organizational success. Brand loyalty, characterized by emotional connectivity with customers, is a key factor in maintaining a robust consumer base (Devi and Yasa, 2021). Customer satisfaction serves as a crucial juncture, influencing consumers to reject substitutes and reinforcing the brand's position in the international market. Beyond meeting consumer needs, brand loyalty contributes to achieving productivity and profitability targets, allowing organizations to compete effectively in their respective industries.

Effective strategies for building brand loyalty involve frequent engagement with consumers, often facilitated through social media platforms, enabling brands to communicate ongoing sales and offers, thus fostering customer involvement. Sustainable development goals and contributions to societal betterment are additional elements that successful brands incorporate into their strategies (Ashraf et al., 2018). Distinctive logo designs, taglines, and limited-edition collections also play a role in attracting and retaining a consumer base. Additionally, consumer trust in a brand facilitates effective advertising across regions and among potential customers. Notably, renowned organizations prioritize product focus and profitability concentration while producing special collections for a limited period to preserve product uniqueness and satisfy consumer expectations.

In preliminary research, it has become evident that there is a notable absence of adequate data pertaining to the perceptions and motivations of women towards luxury fashion products. Additionally, there is a scarcity of well-defined strategies aimed at both maintaining customer loyalty and augmenting customer satisfaction. The dearth of suitable strategies and models has posed significant challenges for the researcher in aligning the identified strategies with the crucial aspects of customer satisfaction and loyalty within the context of online luxury shopping platforms for women's clothing in East London. This is where this case study aims to offer a modest contribution.

The research design encompasses the methods and processes employed for the systematic collection and analysis of data, facilitating the organized presentation of findings (Bloomfield and Fisher, 2019). In this study, a "descriptive design" is adopted, enabling real-time data



collection through personal interviews. The descriptive design proves apt, providing systematic insights into the observed phenomena during the study.

The study relies on the primary data collection method, recognizing potential challenges in collecting data from online sources. To address this, the initial 100 participants, working Bangladeshi women, were selected. From this pool, 50 participants were excluded for failing to complete the survey forms. Of the remaining 50, 30 participants provided complete responses.

Findings and Analysis

This section provides an exploration of the primary findings derived from a research sample of 30 individuals, focusing on brand consciousness, factors influencing customer satisfaction in luxury clothing shopping, brand preferences, purchasing frequency from different luxury brands, satisfaction with online shopping platforms, factors engaging women in online fashion shopping, reasons for women's disloyalty to brands, factors in favour of offline shopping, and perceptions of loyalty towards luxury versus local brands. Here these findings are presented:

Brand Consciousness:

Out of the 30 participants, 50% are identified as brand-conscious individuals, while 27% exhibit occasional brand consciousness. Conversely, 23% do not consider themselves brand-conscious.

Factors Increasing Customer Satisfaction:

In terms of factors enhancing customer satisfaction during luxury clothing shopping, 46% prioritize the product's value, 37% emphasize customer support, and 17% associate customer satisfaction with rewards.

Preferences Toward a Particular Brand:

Among the participants, 17% favour switching brands based on price, while 50% adhere to a specific brand irrespective of price, and 33% consider multiple factors before choosing a brand.

Frequency of Buying Different Luxury Brands:

Approximately 47% of the respondents frequently buy from different luxury brands, 40% occasionally do so, and only 13% never opt for different luxury brands.

Satisfaction with Online Shopping in East London:

Regarding the preference for purchasing platforms in East London, 60% of the women prefer both online and offline shopping, while 20% exclusively choose each method.

Factors Engaging Women in Online Shopping:

43% are attracted to online shopping due to a varied range of products and services, 37% appreciate free delivery, and 20% are engaged by additional offers.

Reasons for Women's Disloyalty to Brands:

A notable 50% of women cite a brand's inability to keep up with trends as the primary reason for decreased loyalty.

Factors in Favor of Offline Shopping:

Factors influencing offline shopping include 37% who prefer in-store shopping for price negotiation, 33% who find offline shopping cheaper, and 47% who believe brand image significantly affects satisfaction and loyalty.

Loyal Brand or Luxury Brand:

A majority of 60% strongly agree that luxury brands retain more customer loyalty than local brands, while 33% express neutrality on the matter, and only 7% disagree.

These findings shed light on various aspects of consumer behaviour, preferences, and satisfaction related to luxury fashion products. Now, it is important to interpret these. The representations derived from the analysis of data collected from 30 brand-conscious participants illuminate key insights into the dynamics of consumer behaviour, particularly among women, with respect to luxury fashion brands.

Luxury brands exhibit a substantial following among women, attributed to their superior product quality and strategic branding approaches (Rehman, 2021). The positive reception among women indicates a strong brand-conscious culture, emphasizing the need for luxury brands to continuously innovate and diversify their product offerings to cater to the discerning preferences of their customer base (Teah et al., 2021).

While the majority of women exhibit a positive inclination towards luxury brands, the presence of moderate to negative responses underscores the diversity in consumer perceptions (Vincent and Gaur, 2021). This diversity is a crucial aspect that demands attention from luxury brands to address potential challenges and ensure sustained brand growth (Shahid and Paul, 2021).

The study reveals that women predominantly allocate more of their budget to clothing purchases within the luxury fashion domain. This insight serves as a strategic cue for luxury brands to focus on expanding and diversifying their clothing collections to enhance customer engagement and satisfaction.

Quality emerges as a pivotal factor influencing women's engagement with luxury fashion brands, even amidst higher pricing (Hang et al., 2021). While trends and durability play roles in influencing sales, the primary determinant of customer satisfaction remains the quality of products. Luxury brands should prioritize and further refine their quality control measures based on this insight.

The data illustrates a strong trend of brand loyalty among female customers in East London, with a significant majority preferring to consistently purchase from a single luxury brand (Sasono et al., 2021). This loyalty is a testament to the effectiveness of premium brands' business strategies and their ability to consistently deliver high-quality experiences, fostering enduring customer relationships.

The findings highlight the prevalent practice of customers extensively researching various luxury brands before making purchases. This underscores the importance of a positive brand



image and the growing popularity of premium items influencing consumer decision-making (Khan et al., 2022).

While women have the choice between online and offline shopping based on their preferences and needs, the study hints at the increasing preference for online shopping (Sahetapy et al., 2020). Engaging factors such as a diverse range of products and services, free delivery services, and additional offers contribute to making online platforms more appealing.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This case study examined the satisfaction and brand loyalty among Bangladeshi women in East London. In conclusion, the findings provide nuanced insights into the complex interplay of factors influencing women's perceptions, preferences, and behaviours in the luxury fashion market. Luxury brands can leverage these insights to tailor their strategies, enhance customer satisfaction, and ensure sustained brand success in an ever competitive landscape.

The evolution of advanced technology has facilitated a seamless shopping experience for customers, allowing them to engage in shopping activities from any location without complications. This technological advancement has significantly contributed to the growth of the luxury clothing market. Specifically, the fashion industry in East London has reaped the benefits of this approach, experiencing increased profits, enhanced overall revenue, and an elevated brand image. This strategic approach has not only expanded business operations throughout East London but has also improved productivity and fostered customer retention, creating numerous opportunities for the industry. The study delves into the satisfaction of women regarding the online marketing of fashionable items in East London.

While sustaining profitability remains integral to the apparel business, continuous improvement and expansion of product collections are imperative (Jung et al., 2020). For instance, adapting to the demands of the pandemic, several apparel businesses incorporated matching masks with their apparel, showcasing the ability to turn necessity into innovation. The fashion industry must diversify its product line to encompass items such as t-shirts, formal shirts, trousers, denim, etc. Additionally, establishing specialized departments within the industry can enhance efficiency and productivity (Blucactus, 2022).

Understanding and adapting to rapidly changing women's fashion trends, particularly in East London, is crucial. Profiling customers and analysing their demographics and preferences are effective strategies to gain insights into their purchasing behaviours. Utilizing customization as a marketing tool enables fashion brands to create a distinct position among customers. Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter serve as valuable channels for disseminating brand information, offering a personalized experience during interactions. Email blasts, diverse social media platforms, and tailored content campaigns further contribute to customer engagement and motivation (Paceco, 2022).

To sustain this level of success, clothing firms should target potential investors among their customer base. Organizing promotional events, in addition to regular promotions, can enhance brand visibility and customer engagement. In conclusion, employing these diverse tactics enhances the likelihood of retaining existing customers and attracting new ones, irrespective of whether the fashion brand operates in the luxury segment.

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