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To cite this article: Jian Ming Luo, Anthony Kong, Suk Ha Grace Chan & Chi Fung Lam (23 Sep 2024): Hedonism and Opinion Leadership Influence on Consumer Behavior in the Context of First-Class Flights from Short Videos on Social Media, Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism, DOI: [10.1080/1528008X.2024.2406028](https://doi.org/10.1080/1528008X.2024.2406028)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1528008X.2024.2406028>



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Published online: 23 Sep 2024.



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Hedonism and Opinion Leadership Influence on Consumer Behavior in the Context of First-Class Flights from Short Videos on Social Media

Jian Ming Luo^a, Anthony Kong^b, Suk Ha Grace Chan^a, and Chi Fung Lam^c

^aSchool of Liberal Arts, Macau University of Science and Technology, Macau, China; ^bSchool of Design, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong, China; ^cDepartment of Finance, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China

ABSTRACT

Short videos have become an important driving force of social media. This study aims to understand how the perception of luxury goods, their associated brand experience and purchase intentions are affected by hedonism and social media influencers via social media videos. This research collects 383 samples from Mainland China using an online survey. The data are analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM). The results indicate hedonism and influencer leadership directly and indirectly influence purchase intentions. The results show that more hedonic consumers or consumers who believe in influencers are more likely to have a positive first-class flight experience. This study also confirmed that brand experience and perceived luxury provide a mediating role on virtual world content. The findings offer new knowledge to researchers and industry in the luxury tourism context. Finally, theoretical and managerial implications are provided.

KEYWORDS

Social media; hedonism; opinion leadership; brand experience; luxury perceived; purchase intentions

Introduction

Social media has grown to become an important communication platform (Ren et al., 2023). Social media content has also expanded to video sharing. Many social media channels, such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, etc., allow users to share videos. Many people rely on the information gathered on social media to guide their purchasing decisions (Sharma, et al., 2023; Zhou et al., 2024). Therefore, opinion leaders, defined loosely as people who give purchasing information or advice or role models to others, have become increasingly important. These leaders provide advice and opinions on fashion, lifestyle, photography, and travel experiences to their followers (Casaló et al., 2020). Their followers usually have a strong connection with the influencer,

CONTACT Chi Fung Lam  kelvinlam@baf.cuhk.edu.hk  Department of Finance, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China

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allowing marketing agencies to take advantage of the leader's resources (Leung et al., 2022). Therefore, brand endorsement of opinion leaders has become very attractive to many companies (Farrell et al., 2022; Zheng et al., 2022). The size of this market has increased rapidly. In 2022, Statista (2023) reported that its market value was 16 billion US dollars.

Younger generations, such as millennials, are particularly interested in watching, developing, and sharing travel videos via social media (Du et al., 2020). High-end consumption brands have been paying attention to and focusing on the services and experiences provided to attract more millennials and maintain an advantageous position (Berry, 1995; D. Kim et al., 2020). The luxury market demonstrated its relatively more resilient market structure during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Deloitte (2021), the revenues generated by the top 100 luxury good companies in 2020 was more than 250 billion US dollars. The report also forecasted that the sales in luxury tourism will continue to expand because, with the reopening of many countries, people will travel more, thereby offering more opportunities for people to experience luxury products. For instance, after suffering from COVID-19, the luxury market in China experienced an annual growth of 12% in 2023. According to the estimate by Bain and Company (2024), luxury spending in China is going to represent 35 to 40% of the world's luxury spending. In addition, the consumption of Chinese people is going to represent 24 to 26% of the world's consumption. Both evidences indicated that China is an important top luxury market in the world. Travel services providers, especially those who focus on the luxury market, kept focus on the Chinese market (Zhang et al., 2024). High-value Chinese travelers are seeking more meaningful travel experiences, seeing travel as opportunities for enrichment, new learnings, and personal fulfillment (TTG Asia, 2024). First-class flights are one of the most important and representative luxury services (Hwang & Lyu, 2018) because of the high-quality services associated with it and the revenues that it generates. A first-class ticket is usually priced at five times that of a corresponding economy-class ticket (S. Kim et al., 2016). Travel videos with first-class flight experience can be broadly classified into two categories. One type of video focuses more on informational consumerism, while the other focuses more on demonstrating a hedonistic and privileged lifestyle (Page & Negra, 2022). The first type of video is usually more eye-catching, while the second type demonstrates luxurious living (Page & Negra, 2022).

Several studies have investigated the meaning of luxury from various dimensions (Ajitha & Sivakumar, 2017), such as psychology (Omar & Dequan, 2020), museum experiences (Villaespesa & Wowkowych, 2020), and tourism experiences (Du et al., 2020) using short videos. These videos allow people to experience travel without physically visiting the destination. Many motivation researchers have suggested that hedonism is one of the most important determinants of people's behavior (Taquet et al., 2016). Consumers'

motivation factors influence consumers' luxury brand experiences and purchase intentions (Shahid & Paul, 2021). Furthermore, consumers' luxury brand perception is influenced by luxury brand experiences (Hennigs et al., 2013). Lee and Youn (2020) confirmed that brand experiences increased perceived luxury and purchase intention. Du et al. (2020) suggested that most travel video creators or influencers share their videos for hedonistic and altruistic purposes; however, luxury tourism experiences have not been widely studied. Previous research investigated the effects of emotive resonance to the development of brands and customer intention (Tang et al., 2023). People's psychological states will affect how they make their decision. Zhou et al. (2012) found that consumer's resonance may be a necessary condition for consumers to be loyal to a brand, even if the consumer comes from a particular community. Although luxury tourism is not a new concept, given the rapidly changing tourism industry and the luxury market, researchers should revisit the traditional assumptions of tourism. Particularly, this study contributes to the literature as few previous studies have examined hedonism and luxury experience concepts in the short video context and how decision makers can enhance through brand resonance, this study aims to fill the research gap by examining luxury behaviors within first-class flights for short videos on social media. Specifically, this study investigates how hedonism and social media influencers affect consumers' perceived luxury, luxury brand experience, and purchase intentions. The objectives of this study are as follows: 1) to explore the impact of hedonism and opinion leadership on consumers' behaviors when watching first-class cabin videos; 2) to establish the relationship among hedonism, opinion leadership, brand experience, perceived luxury, and purchase intentions and 3) to provide suggestions and recommendations for influencer marketing in the luxury market.

Literature review

Theoretical background

According to Seifert (2004), motivation theory aims to explain the driving force of people's actions. Because this theory is highly related to business and management, many studies have incorporated this theory to understand people's online consumption behavior (Zheng et al., 2019). Intrinsic motivation comes from within, while extrinsic motivation arises from outside. Hedonism is an important intrinsic motivation that predicts consumers' behavior (Allam et al., 2019). Consumers are embedded with hedonistic needs on sense, emotion and social stimulation (Addis & Holbrook, 2001). Social media influence is understood to be an extrinsic motivational driver (Teichmann et al., 2015). Consumers are motivated by brand experience and other engagement activities (Chen et al., 2021; Liu & Bakici, 2019). When

hedonistic customers became more engaged with the luxury brand, they will become more satisfied with the luxury experience. Their emotions will increase their interaction and intention with the brand as they become more engaged (Martín-Consuegra et al., 2019). Resonance refers to how well an audience engages, responds and feels about a message (McDonnell et al., 2017). Some researchers attempted to use resonance to explain consumer engagement. For example, in the context of social media, Shang et al. (2017) found that people's resonance positively affect their online activeness. Based on the theory of resonance, the level of resonance of a consumer is positively associated with the likelihood of their sharing their experience of a brand (Keller, 2001). Social media does not only allow people to share and discuss their views and opinions, but it also allows the luxury brand to adjust their marketing approach. Luxury brand are no longer restricted to the traditional marketing approach (Santos, 2022). They can now allow more consumer's engagement, such as being a part of a creator to deliver the brand message (Jahn et al., 2012). This is more effective when a luxury brand and consumers have a strong social relationship, which can be achieved by friendly messaging, consumers will feel a closer association with the social value of the brand. Brand's perceived uniqueness and quality will also increase (M. Park et al., 2020). However, Bazi et al. (2020) suggested that consumers have different motivations when engaging with luxury and ordinary brands. Therefore, understanding how social media motivates people to engage with luxury brands is crucial (Oliveira & Fernandes, 2022).

Hedonism

Hedonism is a strong incentive to motivate people to consume because it provides artistic and emotional stimuli (Batra & Ahtola, 1991; Yim et al., 2014). The value generated by hedonism is the indulgence and pleasure associated with the consumption of a product (Yang & Mattila, 2016). Wong and Ahuvia (1998) reported that consumers who purchase based on personal motivation can identify themselves and receive a pleasurable experience during their purchase. They can also synchronize their preferences with the image of the product. Some researchers also claimed that life enrichment is an additional aspect of these consumers (Wiedmann et al., 2009).

Hedonism is a strong motivation for consumption; thus, many researchers have developed a measurement scale for applying such a concept in areas such as tourism. Hirschman & Holbrook (1982) used escape, fondness for experience, adventure, fun and excitement to measure hedonism. Voss, Spangenberg and Grohmann (2003) used similar items. They replaced escape and adventure with delightful and thrilling. Yim et al. (2014) included curiosity satisfaction and new experience to measure motivation and hedonistic shopping in

supermarkets. Luo et al. (2021) also employed the same measurement to investigate how hedonism affects people in the entertainment industry.

Researchers have also found evidence that hedonism affects people's behavior (Luo & Lam, 2017; Luo et al., 2021; Ryu & Jang, 2007; Yang & Mattila, 2016). Ryu et al. (2010) found a positive and direct relationship between consumption and hedonism. Davis et al. (2014) found that although, in general, sufficient evidence can be found to support the direct effect of hedonism on people's purchase intention, the researchers also found a significant difference in the indirect effect of hedonism on the purchase intention between male and female consumers. In particular, the indirect effects of hedonism seem to affect females more significantly than males. Luo et al. (2021) found that revisit intention in entertainment attractions is positively affected by hedonism.

Opinion leadership

Opinion leadership can be understood as people who provide information and advice to goods and services (Reynolds & Darden, 1971; Shehawy, 2022). As people become more heavily reliant on information gathered in social media to make their purchasing decisions, opinion leaders, who serve as role models to these people, have emerged (Belanche et al., 2021). Influencers are a type of recently emerged opinion leaders. They are not traditional celebrities, such as movie stars or athletes; rather, they develop their reputation via the materials they share on social media and the collaboration with their followers (Barta et al., 2023; Hu et al., 2020). People will follow these influencers' social media accounts because their materials are fun and/or valuable (Audrezet et al., 2020). They are viewed as experts who affect how people view a product or brand (Oueslati et al., 2021). These influencers usually have a particular audience with whom they share a similar interest. They will provide opinions and advice to their followers based on their information and expertise in their corresponding fields. Their followers will often base their purchasing decision on the advice of these influencers. These factors have made these influencers increasingly important, particularly in marketing communication Barta et al., 2023; Casaló et al., 2020).

Brand experience

A brand includes its design, identity, packaging, communication, and environment. These items can provide consumers with subjective internal and behavioral responses, also known as brand experience (Brakus et al., 2009). J. E. Lee and Youn (2021) claimed that brand experience does not necessarily involve any emotional or personal connections between a brand and a consumer but instead, it includes brand attitudes, brand involvement and

brand attachments. More specifically, it does not include any emotional attachment toward a brand. This experience begins when people search for a brand or its corresponding products, whether by visiting a shop or browsing a brand's website online. The experience continues as people consume until they eventually dispose of the product (Loureiro, 2020).

A brand experience is a multi-dimensional and integrated experience. Many scholars have investigated the corresponding dimensions associated with it (J. E. Lee & Youn, 2021; E. Lee et al., 2021). Brakus et al. (2009) found four main dimensions associated with brand experience, namely, sensory, affective, behavioral and intellectual experiences. Sensory experience provides stimulus to all five senses. Intellectual experience provides cognitive recognition. Behavioral experience is the physical participation in a brand's activities (Brakus et al., 2009; E. Lee et al., 2021). This type of classification was adopted by J. E. Lee and Youn (2021) to demonstrate how social media videos affect people's integrated experience of a brand. Van der Westhuizen (2018) also argued that other than a particular type of brand experience, a second-order factor structure that is associated with brand experience is more integrated and holistic.

Previous scholars have reported that brand experience is also affected by people's motivation (Chen et al., 2021). Many consumer experiences are inseparable from hedonism, such as pleasure, fun, entertainment, fantasy, etc (Adomaviciute, 2013). On the one hand, hedonic motivation increases consumers' interactions within brand communities in social media (Casaló et al., 2017). On the other hand, opinion leaders affect consumer behavioral intentions, including interaction and recommendation (Casaló et al., 2020). Opinion leaders can positively affect brand communication and online social behaviors (Acar & Polonsky, 2007). Therefore, we propose the following hypotheses:

H1: Hedonism has a positive effect on brand experience via a first-class flight video.

H2: Opinion leaders can positively affect brand experience via a first-class flight video.

Perceived luxury

Luxury is a vague concept because it highly depends on how people perceive and value a brand, regardless of whether their perception and valuation are in full or in part (Hanna, 2004; C. W. Park et al., 1991). Luxury is perceived as a unique and excellent experience of self, social and learning extension (Correia et al., 2022). Early research often uses the word "prestige" and

“status” interchangeably with the word luxury (Dubois & Czellar, 2002). Some researchers view luxury as a brand’s property or dream value (Dubois & Paternault, 1995). The literature generally defines luxury brands according to people’s perceptions and the attributes of the brand’s product and marketing activities (Ko et al., 2019). Luxury brands often advertise their products as nostalgic in certain remote, urban and surreal areas, such as the desert, the middle of an ocean or the Arctic, to demonstrate their exclusiveness and aspiration (J. E. Lee & Youn, 2021).

When people watch a short video about a brand, they will engage in a relatively stronger brand experience and therefore are more likely to focus on its content and form the belief that it is a luxury brand (J. E. Lee & Youn, 2021). Brand experience and prestige are two positively correlated terms and are commonly referred to as the same item under the context of perceived luxury (J. E. Lee & Youn, 2021). For instance, in a study regarding perceived brand prestige, Hwang and Hyun (2012) found that it was positively affected by brand experience. Therefore, based on the above literature, we propose the following hypothesis (H3)

H3: Brand experience in a first-class flight video increases perceived luxury.

Purchase intentions

Many external factors affect consumer behaviors. These external factors, such as the type of brand, the quality of the product, etc., also affect purchase intentions (Kotler, 2000). Hedonism motivates people to enjoy guilty pleasures (Okada, 2005). This pleasure even extends to the purchase intention of counterfeit products (Musnaini et al., 2017). Hedonism affects purchase intentions in physical and online environments (Goldsmith, 2002). Opinion leaders, given their connections with their followers, are expected to have a strong influence on people’s purchase intentions, especially when they endorse a brand (Fakhreddin & Foroudi, 2022; Jiménez-Castillo & Sánchez-Fernández, 2019; Zhu et al., 2016). Hence, we suggest hypotheses 4 and 5:

H4: Hedonism positively affect purchase intentions via a first-class flight video.

H5: Opinion leadership positively affect purchase intentions via a first-class flight video.

A satisfying and exciting brand experience is more likely to encourage people to engage in this experience (Brakus et al., 2009). Studies have established the relationship between brand experience and people’s engagement with a brand

(Roy et al., 2013). Some researchers found that the online brand experience, including watching social media videos, does increase not only purchase intentions in online shopping but also offline purchases intentions (Akoglu & Özbek, 2022; Gabisch & Gwebu, 2011). Moreover, people often associate luxury with functional, emotional, and symbolic values, eventually leading to purchase intentions (Steenkamp et al., 2003). Therefore, we propose the following hypotheses:

H6: Brand experience positively affect purchase intentions via a first-class flight video

H7: Perceived luxury positive affect purchase intentions via a first-class flight video

Method

This research adopts a quantitative method through an empirical questionnaire survey. There are three sections in the questionnaire. The first section identifies the appropriate participants for this study. The participants must be at least 18 years old, active in at least one social media platform, including but not limited to TikTok, YouTube, WeChat, Facebook, etc., and have watched one or more short videos regarding first-class flight experience in the last three months. The next section contains 25 questions from previous research that fit the current research model. All answers use a five-point Likert-type scale. The questions to measure hedonism, opinion leadership, brand experience, perceived luxury, and purchase intentions are adopted from Hwang & Lyu (2020) and Yang & Mattila (2016), Barta et al. (2023) and Casaló et al. (2021), Lee & Youn (2021) and Ahn & Back (2018), Kim et al. (2019) and Lo & Yeung (2020) and Lee & Youn (2021) and Wang et al. (2022), respectively. The last section of the questionnaire collects demographic information.

The initial questionnaire was sent to a group of experts to ensure the validity of the questionnaire. Specifically, we invited five experts to rank the items using a 5-point Likert-type scale, 5 is the most important and 1 is the least important. The interrater reliability is satisfactory (ICC = 0.862) (Koo & Li, 2017). The resulting modified questionnaire was tested using 20 graduate students to ensure its face and content validity. After the researchers collected the comments and feedback from these graduate students, some minor modifications to wording and syntax were made to enhance the readability and comprehensiveness of the questions. Because the original questionnaire is based on literature written in English, a professional and independent translator was hired to provide back-to-back translations.

A non-probabilistic virtual snowball method is employed to recruit participants because the target population for this study is difficult to reach. This method allows the researchers to increase the geographical coverage and identify people who are not easy to reach (Baltar & Brunet, 2011). Usually researchers who employed this method starts with contacting groups on social media that are close to the target (Leighton et al., 2021). This sample collecting method has been widely adopted in many studies that involve online participants (Jiménez-Castillo & Sánchez-Fernández, 2019). The questionnaire was distributed through WeChat. No incentives for participating in the study were given. As mentioned above, the first section of this questionnaire identifies the appropriate participants. Only when the participants qualified, i.e., above 18 years old, active on social media, and have watched at least one video regarding first-class flight experience in the last three months, were they asked to fill in the questionnaire. After the questionnaire, the participants were invited to distribute the questionnaire to their friends and relatives (De Bruyn & Lilien, 2008). The survey was conducted from 15, March 2023 to 30, April 2023, with 403 questionnaires collected. Twenty questionnaires with incomplete answers were removed, and 383 usable questionnaires were obtained for this study. The male and female participants were roughly the same (47% male, See Table 1). Most participants were aged between 18 and 40 years and had obtained an undergraduate degree. More than 58% are working and have a family income between USD 1,000 and USD 4,999.

This study employs a single factor test pioneered by Harman (1976) to assess common method bias. The results show that the single factor accounted for 47.5% of the total variance (<50%), indicating that common method bias is not a big issue. In this research, the absolute value of skewness of the univariate data is between 0.192 and 0.972, while the absolute value of kurtosis of the

Table 1. The demographic profile of respondents.

		Frequency (N = 383)	%
Gender	Male	180	47.0
	Female	203	53.0
Age	18-25	148	38.6
	26 ~ 40	155	40.5
	41 ~ 60	56	14.6
Education	61 or above	24	6.3
	High Scholl or below	42	11.0
	Diploma	48	12.5
	Undergraduates	187	48.8
Occupation	Master or above	106	27.7
	Working	224	58.5
	Housewife	22	5.7
	Student	106	27.7
	Retired	23	6.0
	Others	8	2.1
Family income (Monthly)	Less than US\$1,000	90	23.5
	US\$1,000-4,999	193	50.4
	US\$5,000 – 9,999	71	18.5
	US\$10,000 or above	29	7.6

univariate data is between 0.014 and 0.904. The preceding values do not exceed the corresponding value (3 for skewness, 10 for kurtosis) that Kline (2005) suggested. The current study uses Mardia's coefficient of multivariate skewness and kurtosis. Given that the multivariate kurtosis value of 158.081 is less than the $p(p + 2) = 685$ and the number of observed variables (p) is 25, the data are reasonably assumed to be multivariate normal (Raykov & Marcoulides, 2008).

Results

Confirmatory factor analysis

This study used the software package AMOS22. The results are satisfactory in terms of their reliability and validity, including convergent and discriminant validity. Table 2 shows the composite reliability (CR) results, which are between 0.861 and 0.920. All numbers are above 0.7, the minimum requirement suggested by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994). All factor loadings were above 0.721 and below 0.922, indicating convergent validity. In addition, the convergent reliability of all constructs was satisfactory (>0.5), and all AVEs were greater than their corresponding MSV and ASV. The discriminant validity results were satisfactory because the AVEs of all the constructs were higher than the corresponding correlation square (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) (Table 2). The standardized $\chi^2 = 2.353$, CFI = 0.950, TLI = 0.943, GFI = 0.888 and RMSEA = 0.059 show that the measurement model is valid and satisfactory because it produces a reasonable degree of fitness (Kline, 2005). Table 3 shows the inter-construct correlation matrix. The results indicate that the squared root of the AVE of each construct is greater than the absolute correlation value of the corresponding construct.

Structural model testing

The present study investigates how hedonism and influencer leadership in social media videos influence consumers' brand experience, perceived luxury and purchase intentions. This study employs SEM and maximum likelihood methods to examine their relationships. The chi-squared value was 731.250 with a p -value smaller than 0.0001. Other goodness-of-fit indicators revealed the proposed model was acceptable. Table 4 shows the results of hypothesis testing using SEM. All hypotheses were significant: H1 ($t = 8.845$, $p < .01$), H2 ($t = 8.705$, $p < .01$), H3 ($t = 8.576$, $p < .01$), H4 ($t = 2.098$, $p < .05$), H5 ($t = 2.122$, $p < .05$), H6 ($t = 3.776$, $p < .01$) and H7 ($t = 3.532$, $p < .01$). Figure 1 illustrates this model with the hypothesis results.

The results further indicate that the indirect effect of hedonism and opinion leadership connected by experience toward purchase intentions were 0.319

Table 2. CFA results ($N = 383$).

Latent variable	Measured Item	Standardized lambda	CR	AVE	MSV	ASV
Hedonism	1. Flying first-class is my dream	0.795	0.908	0.665	0.506	0.443
	2. I derive self-satisfaction from flying first-cl	0.821				
	3. I derive self-satisfaction from flying first-class	0.825				
	4. I view flying first-class as a gift for myself to celebrate something that I do and feel excited about	0.843				
	5. As a whole, I regard flying first-class as a gift that I give myself as a treat	0.792				
Opinion leadership	6. This vlogger is a model role for others	0.824	0.920	0.696	0.570	0.486
	7. This vlogger is one step ahead of the others	0.841				
	8. This vlogger shows interesting videos	0.821				
	9. This vlogger influences others	0.869				
	10. This vlogger provides a valuable source of information	0.816				
Brand experience			0.861	0.676	0.575	0.469
Sensory experiences		0.721				
Affective experiences	11. This video makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other sense	0.838				
	12. I find this video interesting in a sensory way	0.860				
	13. This video appeals to my sense	0.819				
		0.871				
	14. This video induces feelings and sentiments	0.840				
Intellectual experiences	15. I have strong emotions for this video	0.876				
	16. This video is an emotion video	0.843				
		0.866				
	17. I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter this video	0.787				
	18. This video makes me think	0.862				
Perceived luxury	19. This video stimulates my curiosity and problem solving	0.853				
	20. This airline is a symbol of prestige	0.832	0.871	0.693	0.610	0.485
	21. This airline has high status	0.884				
Purchase intentions	22. This airline is very upscale	0.778				
	23. If I were taking a first class flight, I would consider taking this airline	0.818	0.887	0.725	0.723	0.533
	24. My willingness to taking this airline would be high if I were flying for a luxury brand airline	0.922				
	25. The probability I would consider taking this airline is high	0.809				

Table 3. Discriminate validity for CFA.

	Number of items	Hedonism	Opinion leadership	Brand experience	Perceived luxury	Purchase intentions
Hedonism	5	0.815*				
Opinion leadership	5	0.519	0.834*			
Brand experience	9	0.723	0.684	0.822*		
Perceived luxury	3	0.49	0.591	0.621	0.833*	
Purchase intentions	3	0.621	0.626	0.745	0.639	0.851*

Table 4. Direct path for the structural model ($N = 383$).

Hypothesis	Path	Coefficient	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1	Hedonism → Brand experience	0.4	8.845	0.000	Accept
H2	Opinion leadership → Brand experience	0.401	8.705	0.000	Accept
H3	Brand experience → Perceived luxury	0.737	8.576	0.000	Accept
H4	Hedonism → Purchase intentions	0.13	2.098	0.036	Accept
H5	Opinion leadership → Purchase intentions	0.134	2.122	0.034	Accept
H6	Brand experience → Purchase intentions	0.537	3.776	0.000	Accept
H7	Perceived luxury → Purchase intentions	0.237	3.532	0.000	Accept

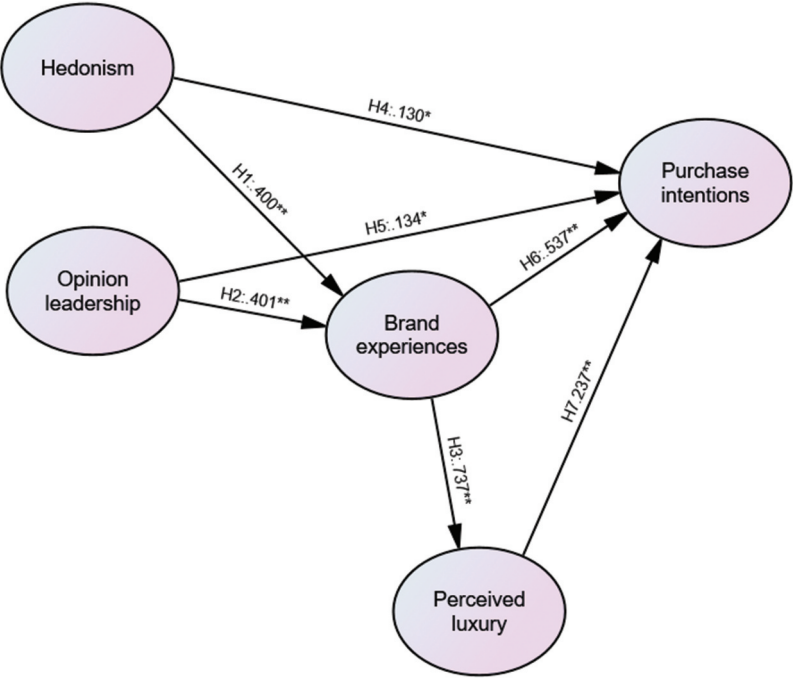


Figure 1. Final model.

Table 5. Results for mediation tests.

Causal relationships	Standardized direct effect	Standardized indirect effect
Hedonism → Brand experience	0.571	N.A.
Opinion leadership → Brand experience	0.536	N.A.
Brand experience → Perceived luxury	0.622	N.A.
Hedonism → Perceived luxury	N.A.	0.355
Opinion leadership → Perceived luxury	N.A.	0.333
Hedonism → Purchase intentions	0.146	0.319
Opinion leadership → Purchase intentions	0.141	0.299
Brand experience → Purchase intentions	0.422	0.137
Perceived luxury → Purchase intentions	0.221	N.A.

N.A. means not applicable.

and 0.333 (Table 5). Bootstrapping is used to test the mediating effect between attitude and experience (Hayes, 2009). Using 1000 resamples, the 95% confidence interval for hedonism and purchase intention is (0.316, 0.511), while the confidence interval for opinion leadership and purchase intention is

(0.325, 0.522). Both intervals do not contain zero, which means the indirect effect of hedonism and opinion leadership to purchase intentions is significant. This result indicated that experience and perceived luxury are significant mediating variables. The p -values of the associated coefficients are less than 0.01, suggesting that the mediation effect was significant (Zhao et al., 2010). In addition, experience is found to play a partially mediating role between hedonism and opinion leadership to purchase intentions, and perceived luxury played a partially mediating role between experience and purchase intentions.

Discussion

Luxury consumption is a fairly recent topic, and the research is mostly theoretical (Shukla, 2012). This study examines how hedonism and opinion leadership affect the brand experience, perceived luxury and purchase intention when watching first-class cabin videos. This study showed that hedonism and opinion leadership are important determinants of people's behavior through brand resonance on short videos. This study proposes seven hypotheses and a conceptual model. The model and the hypotheses are tested empirically accepted. This study introduces motivation theory and theory of resonance to examine the mediation role of brand experience and perceived luxury. This study finds that hedonism is a critical factor, and the indirect effect of hedonism and opinion leadership on purchase intention is significant. The results offer theoretical and practical implications for influencer marketing in the luxury market.

Theoretical implications

First, hedonism is positively and significantly related to brand experience and purchase intentions. In luxury research, hedonism is commonly regarded as an important factor and predictor of consumer satisfaction and purchase intention (Kiatkawsin & Han, 2019; Ryu et al., 2010; Hwang & Hyun, 2014). Self-interest is an important driving force of hedonism (Hoffmann et al., 2018). Hedonic consumer will try to avoid as much unpleasant experience as they can when they decide to switch their consumption (Soper, 2008). On the one hand, the results confirm the hedonism effect on purchase intentions on first-class flights. On the other hand, brand experience and value can be delivered via virtual messages (J. E. Lee & Youn, 2021; Lundqvist et al., 2013). To our knowledge, this study is the first to examine how hedonism affects brand experience using first-class flights. The results show that more hedonic consumers are more likely to have a positive first-class flight experience.

Second, online opinion leaders are important promoters of products and services in influencer marketing (Lin et al., 2018). The results showed that opinion leadership is positively and significantly related to brand experience and purchase intentions. Previous studies have confirmed that opinion leadership has consumer behavioral intentions (Barta et al., 2023; Fakhreddin & Foroudi, 2022). People are more likely to experience positive brand experience when a brand has become an individual concept (Van der Westhuizen, 2018). Therefore, the endorsement of opinion leaders has become an important tool for brands to communicate with their consumers (Jiménez-Castillo & Sánchez-Fernández, 2019). Viewer engagement increases because of the resonance toward influencers. In addition, viewers will focus more on the details, which enhances the brand experience. Consumers who believe in influencers will have a more positive brand experience associated with first-class flights. In other words, opinion leaders assist in generating brand experience and affect purchase intentions.

Lastly, this research showed that hedonism and opinion leadership indirectly affect purchase intention via brand experience and perceived luxury. This study indicates that when consumers are hedonic and connect emotionally with an opinion leader through a positive brand experience, consumers' perceived luxury will increase their purchase intention. Consumers' brand experience is not a new topic in hospitality and tourism research; however, few studies have focused on luxury social media marketing (Hwang & Hyun, 2012; J. E. Lee & Youn, 2021). Although this study is not aware of any previous research that has examined how hedonism and opinion leadership affect purchase intentions through brand experience and perceived luxury, the results of this study are consistent with previous related research. Many hospitality and tourism research found that brand experience and perceived luxury (Gabisch & Gwebu, 2011; Hwang & Lyu, 2018; J. E. Lee & Youn, 2021) are positively related. For instance, Gabisch and Gwebu (2011) and J. E. Lee and Youn (2021) focus on social media videos.

Managerial implications

Airline or luxury products managers can take advantage of this study. First, this study found that hedonism can positively affect purchase intention toward first-class flights. Because hedonistic need refers to the need to fulfill a sensory type of pleasure (Tamir et al., 2008; Allam & Shoib, 2013), hence the marketing campaign of airlines should demonstrate their hedonistic nature, especially on social media sites, gaming sites and online shopping platforms. These channels provide enjoyment and fun and are also where hedonistic consumption begins (Tamir et al., 2008). For example, in the low season, airlines can provide affordable price for first class ticket for short-haul flights and position them under the "luxury travel" segment (Karri, 2023).

Second, opinion leaders are useful tools for companies to deliver information to their consumers (Jiménez-Castillo & Sánchez-Fernández, 2019). These tools increase the value of company brands and opinion leaders' brands. Therefore, companies must carefully select the appropriate opinion leaders with characteristics that fit the companies' marketing profile (Fakhreddin & Foroudi, 2022). This research found that when consumers watched a short first-class flights clip on social media, their brand experience and purchase intentions are positively associated with influencers' leadership. Therefore, practitioners need to incorporate the effect of opinion leaders to increase purchase intention.

Lastly, this study found that hedonism and opinion leadership positively and indirectly affect purchase intention via brand experience and perceived luxury. The results show that brand experience can be delivered via online videos. Consumers form a connection to the luxury brand and increase their engagement. Once consumers become more emotionally connected to the brand and understand brand value better, their perceived luxury increases and their purchase intention also increases. Therefore, the brand is an attribute that affects consumer's decision making and buying behavior (Iloranta, 2022). Luxury marketing managers should consider the video content to improve consumer brand experience, which includes sensory, affective and intellectual experience. In addition, marketers should post visually appealing content on social media to reduce the difference between consumers and the brand, making connecting with consumers more effective. Therefore, when a consumer makes a purchasing decision, they will remember the brand, increasing the likelihood of their selecting it.

Limitations and future research

Despite this study offering several important theoretical and practical implications, it also has some limitations. First, this study focuses on first-class flight videos on social media; hence, it may be difficult to generalize to other luxury products. Future research can incorporate other video content to generalize the results. Second, this study employed convenience sampling; thus, the data may exhibit selection biases. Therefore, future studies can incorporate a more random sample and the proposed model. Lastly, this study only considered hedonism and opinion leadership as the antecedents of online brand experience and purchase intentions and did not consider other influencing factors. Future research can incorporate other important factors, such as the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, the type of social media platform, and so on.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

This project was supported by Macau University of Science and Technology Faculty Research Grants, FRG-24-004-SLA.

ORCID

Jian Ming Luo  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-5779-1152>

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