

# Identification and Presentation of a Self-Discrepancy Model Based on Individual Differences and Its Impact on Luxury Goods Consumers' Behavior in Qazvin

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## Article Info

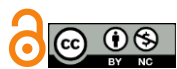
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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** The objective of this study is to identify and present a self-discrepancy model based on individual differences and to analyze its impact on the behavior of luxury goods consumers in Qazvin, Iran.

**Methodology:** This study employed a mixed-methods approach, comprising both qualitative and quantitative research. Initially, a comprehensive literature review was conducted to define key variables and their interrelationships. This was followed by in-depth interviews with experts in consumer behavior and psychology to refine the conceptual model and develop the research questionnaire. The quantitative phase involved surveying luxury goods consumers in Qazvin using the developed questionnaire. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the aid of SMART-PLS 3 software to test the proposed hypotheses.

**Findings:** The findings indicate that self-discrepancy significantly influences luxury consumption behaviors, with consumers using luxury goods to bridge the gap between their actual and ideal selves. Individual differences such as personality traits, demographic factors, and cultural background were found to significantly impact luxury consumption. Digital media and influencers were identified as crucial factors shaping consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. Additionally, religiosity and cultural norms were found to either constrain or motivate luxury consumption. Socio-economic factors like income and education levels were also significant determinants, with higher income and education correlating with increased luxury consumption.

**Conclusion:** The study highlights the complex interplay between self-discrepancy, individual differences, and socio-cultural factors in driving luxury consumption behaviors. It provides a comprehensive model that integrates these elements, offering valuable insights for luxury brand marketers to develop targeted and effective strategies. The findings suggest that marketers should

emphasize the social and self-enhancement benefits of luxury goods, leverage digital media and influencers, and tailor their messages to resonate with local cultural values and norms. Future research should expand the scope to include more diverse samples and explore specific luxury categories in greater detail.

**Keywords:** *Self-discrepancy, Luxury consumption, Individual differences, Digital media, Cultural factors, Socio-economic factors, Consumer behavior.*

## 1 Introduction

In recent years, the consumption of luxury goods has seen a significant surge across various demographics and geographies. This trend is driven by a combination of factors including rising disposable incomes, increased urbanization, and the proliferation of digital media that exposes consumers to luxury lifestyles (Cannon & Rucker, 2018; Davies et al., 2011; Pencarelli et al., 2019; Siepmann et al., 2021; Turunen & Leipämaa-Leskinen, 2015; Wirtz et al., 2020). The luxury goods market encompasses high-end fashion, accessories, vehicles, and other premium products that signify status, wealth, and exclusivity (Jain et al., 2017).

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) has been extensively applied to understand consumer behavior in the luxury market. TPB posits that behavioral intentions are influenced by attitudes towards the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (He, 2021). This framework helps in understanding how individual beliefs and social pressures contribute to the purchasing decisions of luxury consumers. For instance, Jain et al. (2017) explored how attitudes, social norms, and perceived control affect the intention to purchase luxury fashion goods in India, highlighting the role of personal and cultural factors in shaping consumer behavior (Jain et al., 2017).

Self-discrepancy theory is another relevant framework that explains how differences between an individual's actual self and their ideal or ought self can drive consumption behavior. Consumers often use luxury goods as a means to bridge the gap between their real and ideal selves, thereby enhancing their self-esteem and social standing (Lee et al., 2015). This psychological need to align one's self-perception with societal expectations can significantly influence luxury consumption patterns.

Individual differences such as personality traits, demographic factors, and cultural background play a crucial role in luxury consumption. For example, Zhang et al. (2019) examined the determinants of Chinese consumers' purchase intentions for luxury goods, identifying key factors such as social status, brand consciousness, and materialism (Zhang et al., 2019). Similarly, Wong and Park (2022) compared the cultural values and perceived benefits influencing luxury goods attitudes and purchase intentions among Korean and

Dutch millennials, emphasizing the impact of cultural context on luxury consumption (Wong & Park, 2022).

The advent of digital media and the rise of influencers have transformed the luxury consumption landscape. Platforms like Instagram and YouTube allow consumers to engage with luxury brands and lifestyles in unprecedented ways. He (2021) investigated the influence of vlogs on luxury purchasing behavior in the Chinese market, demonstrating how digital content can shape consumer attitudes and intentions through enhanced exposure and social proof (He, 2021).

Religiosity is another important factor influencing luxury consumption. Arli et al. (2020) explored the effect of religiosity on luxury goods consumption among Chilean youths, finding that religious beliefs can both positively and negatively impact luxury consumption depending on the cultural context and individual interpretations of religious teachings (Arli et al., 2020).

Socio-economic factors such as income, education, and occupation also play a significant role in luxury consumption. Lim et al. (2013) used fuzzy clustering methods to segment luxe-bargain shoppers, revealing distinct groups based on their purchasing behavior and socio-economic status. This segmentation is crucial for marketers to tailor their strategies to different consumer segments effectively (Lim et al., 2013).

The market for pre-owned luxury goods is another growing segment. Slaton and Pookulangara (2022) investigated online consumption patterns of secondary luxury consumers, highlighting the increasing acceptance and demand for second-hand luxury items. This shift is driven by factors such as sustainability, affordability, and the desire for unique and rare items (Slaton & Pookulangara, 2022).

Despite the extensive research on luxury consumption, there is limited understanding of how self-discrepancy, individual differences, and socio-cultural factors collectively influence luxury goods consumption in specific regional contexts. This study aims to fill this gap by focusing on the luxury goods market in Qazvin, Iran, examining how self-discrepancy and individual differences impact consumer behavior. By developing a self-discrepancy model

based on individual differences, this research seeks to provide deeper insights into the psychological and socio-cultural drivers of luxury consumption.

## 2 Methods and Materials

### 2.1 Study Design and Participants

This research was conducted in three main steps, comprising 19 phases. Initially, library studies were performed to review the literature on self-discrepancy, consumer behavior, and individual differences. The outcome of this phase included initial definitions of variables, their dimensions, and indicators, and the relationships between them. This served as the basis for developing interview questions and qualitative content analysis. In the second phase, preparations for interviews were made, and in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with several academic and industry experts. The qualitative data collected in this phase led to the development of a conceptual model and the research questionnaire. In the third phase, quantitative data were collected based on the conceptual model and questionnaire for statistical analysis. The questionnaires were distributed via email, fax, and in-person among the statistical population. The data were then analyzed using SmartPLS 3 software to test the hypotheses. Finally, the results of the research were compiled and concluded.

The statistical population of the qualitative section consisted of experts in the fields of behavior and psychology. An expert in this research is defined as an individual with appropriate knowledge, experience, and information in the mentioned domain, typically including university professors and behavioral consultants. The experts involved in this study were required to have both specialized knowledge and experience in self-discrepancy and consumer behavior. They needed to possess at least a Master's degree in relevant fields such as management (particularly business management) or psychology (especially behavioral psychology). Additionally, they needed a minimum of 5 years of experience related to the subject.

The statistical population in this section included all luxury goods consumers in the city of Qazvin. The sample size for this section was determined using the rule of Henseler et al. (2009), which is particularly applicable to structural equation modeling and the partial least squares method. The questionnaire was distributed among 115 members of the statistical population, out of which 107 were completed. However, two questionnaires were found

unsuitable, resulting in 105 questionnaires being analyzed statistically.

### 2.2 Data Collection

Two primary tools were used for data collection: interviews and questionnaires.

In this study, in-depth and semi-structured interviews were used to complement the factors and indicators of self-discrepancy and consumer behavior identified through the literature review. The interview questions were designed based on the literature review and research questions. A pilot interview was conducted to address any negative points and flaws. Prior to the interview, brief definitions related to the research variables and terms were provided to the interviewee to ensure a common understanding between the interviewer and interviewee. Sixteen questions were used in the interview process, which can be found in Appendix 1.

For quantitative data collection, a questionnaire was utilized. The questionnaire was a combination of codes extracted from the interviews and items derived from the literature. The resulting questionnaire was reviewed by several academic and industry experts for simplicity, relevance, and clarity, and any deficiencies were corrected. The final questionnaire consisted of two parts: the first part focused on demographic characteristics, and the second part contained the main questions related to the research variables, comprising 94 questions using a 5-point Likert scale. The questionnaire can be found in the attached file.

### 2.3 Data Analysis

For data analysis, two methods were used: thematic analysis for the qualitative section and structural equation modeling (SEM) for the quantitative section. Given the research nature, neither qualitative nor quantitative methods alone could identify and evaluate all variables and indicators; hence, both methods were used to ensure the identification and examination of the relationships between variables.

Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. This method facilitates the conversion of qualitative data into quantitative form. It is a flexible and useful research tool for analyzing a large volume of complex and detailed data. Thematic analysis involves coding and analyzing data to understand what the data convey, primarily looking for patterns. Once patterns are identified, they are supported thematically, meaning themes emerge from the data. This process involves

five continuous, iterative steps between data, identified codes, and analyses.

**Familiarization with the Text:** After studying the literature and theoretical foundations, questions were prepared, and interviews were conducted semi-structured with selected experts. After each interview, the text was transcribed.

**Generating Initial Codes:** The interviews were reviewed, and relevant statements were identified through open coding. The reliability of the codes was checked in two ways. Initially, the identified codes were sent to the interviewees for their feedback, and corrections were made where necessary. Additionally, some interviews were coded by another individual, and the coding reliability was confirmed through statistical tests.

**Searching for Themes:** Interpretive coding was performed, highlighting the significant points of each code in relation to the research. This process resulted in the formation of basic themes.

**Reviewing and Defining Themes:** The basic themes were integrated into organizing themes, where related base codes were grouped under an organizing theme. Eventually, overarching themes related to the research questions were identified, resulting in seven overarching themes, thirty organizing themes, and ninety-four basic themes forming a thematic network.

**Writing and Reporting:** Finally, a scientific report was prepared based on the thematic network analysis.

### 3 Findings and Results

To evaluate the reliability of the indicators in the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method, factor loadings were examined. A factor loading above 0.7 is considered acceptable. As shown in Figure 4-16, most indicators have factor loadings above the minimum threshold of 0.7, with only four indicators falling below this threshold. However, considering Bido's rule and the average variance extracted (AVE) for these variables being above 0.5, these indicators can still be retained.

For validity assessment, the average variance extracted (AVE) was used. An AVE value above 0.5 indicates adequate validity (Azar et al., 2011). As presented in Table 4-24, the AVE values for the variables in this study range between 0.558 and 1, which exceeds the minimum threshold of 0.5, confirming the validity of the variables. The second validity test applied was the Fornell-Larcker criterion, where the square root of the AVE of a variable should be greater than its correlation with other variables. This ensures that the variable correlates more strongly with its indicators than with other variables.

**Table 1**

*Reliability and Validity of Research Variables*

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE	Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
Real-Ideal Self-Discrepancy	0.813	0.870	0.574	Willingness to Change	0.802	0.864	0.562
Real-Ought Self-Discrepancy	0.854	0.892	0.581	Variety Seeking	0.785	0.902	0.822
Education	1.000	1.000	1.000	Collectivism/Individualism	0.810	0.913	0.840
Depression	0.848	0.898	0.688	Gender	0.741	0.885	0.794
Gender Discrimination	0.782	0.901	0.821	Brand Loyalty	0.776	0.899	0.817
Word-of-Mouth Advertising	0.735	0.833	0.558	Income	0.891	0.932	0.821
Education Level	0.757	0.860	0.673	Introversion/Extroversion	0.749	0.888	0.799
Need for Approval	0.737	0.884	0.792	Media and Social Networks	0.735	0.850	0.655
Age	0.781	0.859	0.603	Customer Satisfaction	0.763	0.864	0.680
Lack of Confidence	0.793	0.879	0.707	Family Relationships	0.778	0.869	0.689
Economic Issues	0.838	0.903	0.756	Competitiveness	0.882	0.919	0.739
Resistance to Negative Information	0.767	0.896	0.811	Family Health	0.740	0.885	0.794
Positive Thinking	0.883	0.927	0.810	Traditional/Modern Culture	0.715	0.875	0.778
Religious and Cultural Constraints	0.752	0.858	0.669	Purchase Intent	0.776	0.899	0.817
Locus of Control	0.776	0.870	0.690	Self-Reliance	0.775	0.899	0.816
Customer Loyalty	0.771	0.868	0.686	Perfectionism	0.748	0.841	0.571

Using the PLS method, three main criteria were utilized to assess the structural models: the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), the predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ), and the overall goodness-of-fit (GOF).

The  $R^2$  value indicates the percentage of variance in the endogenous variables explained by the exogenous variables. Values of 0.67, 0.33, and 0.19 are described as substantial, moderate, and weak, respectively. If an endogenous variable

is influenced by only a few exogenous variables, even a lower R<sup>2</sup> value can be acceptable.

Q<sup>2</sup> (Predictive Relevance): The Q<sup>2</sup> value is calculated for endogenous variables with reflective indicators. If Q<sup>2</sup> is zero or negative, it indicates that the relationships between the variables and the endogenous variable are not well-explained and the model needs revision. According to Henseler et al. (2009), values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 indicate weak, moderate, and strong predictive relevance, respectively.

GOF (Goodness-of-Fit): GOF is a measure to assess the overall performance of the model. Values range from 0 to 1, with 0.01, 0.25, and 0.36 indicating weak, moderate, and strong GOF, respectively. The GOF value of 0.627 indicates a strong overall model fit.

The hypotheses testing results are summarized below. Relationships with a t-statistic greater than 1.96 are confirmed, while those with a t-statistic less than 1.96 are not. Bootstrap tests were used to calculate the coefficients for the mediation hypotheses.

**Table 2**

*Direct Effects on Self-Discrepancy*

Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	Significance	Accept/Reject
H1: Psychological factors impact self-discrepancy	0.224	2.078	Accept
H2: Demographic factors impact self-discrepancy	-0.101	0.949	Reject
H3: Social factors impact self-discrepancy	-0.034	0.349	Reject
H4: Individual factors impact self-discrepancy	0.218	2.055	Accept
H5: Interpersonal factors impact self-discrepancy	0.277	2.838	Accept
H6: Cultural factors impact self-discrepancy	0.221	2.270	Accept

As seen, psychological, individual, interpersonal, and cultural factors significantly impact self-discrepancy, while

demographic and social factors do not. Interpersonal factors have the highest impact.

**Table 3**

*Direct Effects of Self-Discrepancy on Behavioral Outcomes*

Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	Significance	Accept/Reject
H7: Self-discrepancy impacts word-of-mouth advertising	-0.591	7.857	Accept
H8: Self-discrepancy impacts customer satisfaction	-0.757	16.97	Accept
H9: Self-discrepancy impacts purchase intent	-0.768	17.005	Accept
H10: Self-discrepancy impacts brand loyalty	-0.662	11.735	Accept
H11: Self-discrepancy impacts resistance to negative information	-0.625	9.271	Accept
H12: Self-discrepancy impacts loyalty	-0.104	1.085	Reject

Self-discrepancy significantly impacts all behavioral outcomes except loyalty. This might be due to the simultaneous influence of multiple factors on loyalty.

**Table 4**

*Indirect Effects through Self-Discrepancy*

Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	Significance	Accept/Reject
H13: Cultural factors on loyalty through self-discrepancy	-0.023	0.896	Reject
H14: Interpersonal factors on loyalty through self-discrepancy	-0.029	0.929	Reject
H15: Individual factors on loyalty through self-discrepancy	-0.023	0.887	Reject
H16: Social factors on loyalty through self-discrepancy	0.004	0.253	Reject
H17: Demographic factors on loyalty through self-discrepancy	0.010	0.595	Reject
H18: Psychological factors on loyalty through self-discrepancy	-0.023	0.851	Reject
H19: Cultural factors on word-of-mouth through self-discrepancy	-0.131	2.233	Accept
H20: Interpersonal factors on word-of-mouth through self-discrepancy	-0.164	2.630	Accept
H21: Individual factors on word-of-mouth through self-discrepancy	-0.129	1.968	Accept
H22: Social factors on word-of-mouth through self-discrepancy	0.020	0.341	Reject

H23: Demographic factors on word-of-mouth through self-discrepancy	0.060	0.913	Reject
H24: Psychological factors on word-of-mouth through self-discrepancy	-0.132	2.122	Accept
H25: Cultural factors on customer satisfaction through self-discrepancy	-0.167	2.190	Accept
H26: Interpersonal factors on customer satisfaction through self-discrepancy	-0.210	2.686	Accept
H27: Individual factors on customer satisfaction through self-discrepancy	-0.165	2.039	Accept
H28: Social factors on customer satisfaction through self-discrepancy	0.026	0.346	Reject
H29: Demographic factors on customer satisfaction through self-discrepancy	0.076	0.944	Reject
H30: Psychological factors on customer satisfaction through self-discrepancy	-0.170	2.065	Accept
H31: Cultural factors on purchase intent through self-discrepancy	-0.170	2.236	Accept
H32: Interpersonal factors on purchase intent through self-discrepancy	-0.213	2.721	Accept
H33: Individual factors on purchase intent through self-discrepancy	-0.168	2.022	Accept
H34: Social factors on purchase intent through self-discrepancy	0.026	0.343	Reject
H35: Demographic factors on purchase intent through self-discrepancy	0.078	0.946	Reject
H36: Psychological factors on purchase intent through self-discrepancy	-0.172	2.101	Accept
H37: Cultural factors on brand loyalty through self-discrepancy	-0.146	2.186	Accept
H38: Interpersonal factors on brand loyalty through self-discrepancy	-0.183	2.724	Accept
H39: Individual factors on brand loyalty through self-discrepancy	-0.144	2.007	Accept
H40: Social factors on brand loyalty through self-discrepancy	0.022	0.339	Reject
H41: Demographic factors on brand loyalty through self-discrepancy	0.067	0.924	Reject
H42: Psychological factors on brand loyalty through self-discrepancy	-0.148	2.068	Accept
H43: Cultural factors on resistance to negative information through self-discrepancy	-0.138	2.205	Accept
H44: Interpersonal factors on resistance to negative information through self-discrepancy	-0.173	2.532	Accept
H45: Individual factors on resistance to negative information through self-discrepancy	-0.137	1.991	Accept
H46: Social factors on resistance to negative information through self-discrepancy	0.021	0.345	Reject
H47: Demographic factors on resistance to negative information through self-discrepancy	0.063	0.945	Reject
H48: Psychological factors on resistance to negative information through self-discrepancy	-0.140	1.978	Accept

As illustrated, individual, interpersonal, psychological, and cultural factors indirectly influence satisfaction, word-

of-mouth advertising, purchase intent, resistance to negative information, and brand loyalty through self-discrepancy.

**Table 5**

*Behavioral Outcomes' Impact on Loyalty*

Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	Significance	Accept/Reject
H49: Word-of-mouth impacts loyalty	0.157	2.000	Accept
H50: Customer satisfaction impacts loyalty	0.291	2.783	Accept
H51: Purchase intent impacts loyalty	0.219	2.005	Accept
H52: Brand loyalty impacts loyalty	0.250	2.893	Accept
H53: Resistance to negative information impacts loyalty	0.002	0.034	Reject

Among the behavioral outcomes, all except resistance to negative information significantly impact loyalty.

**Table 6**

*Indirect Effects of Self-Discrepancy on Loyalty through Behavioral Outcomes*

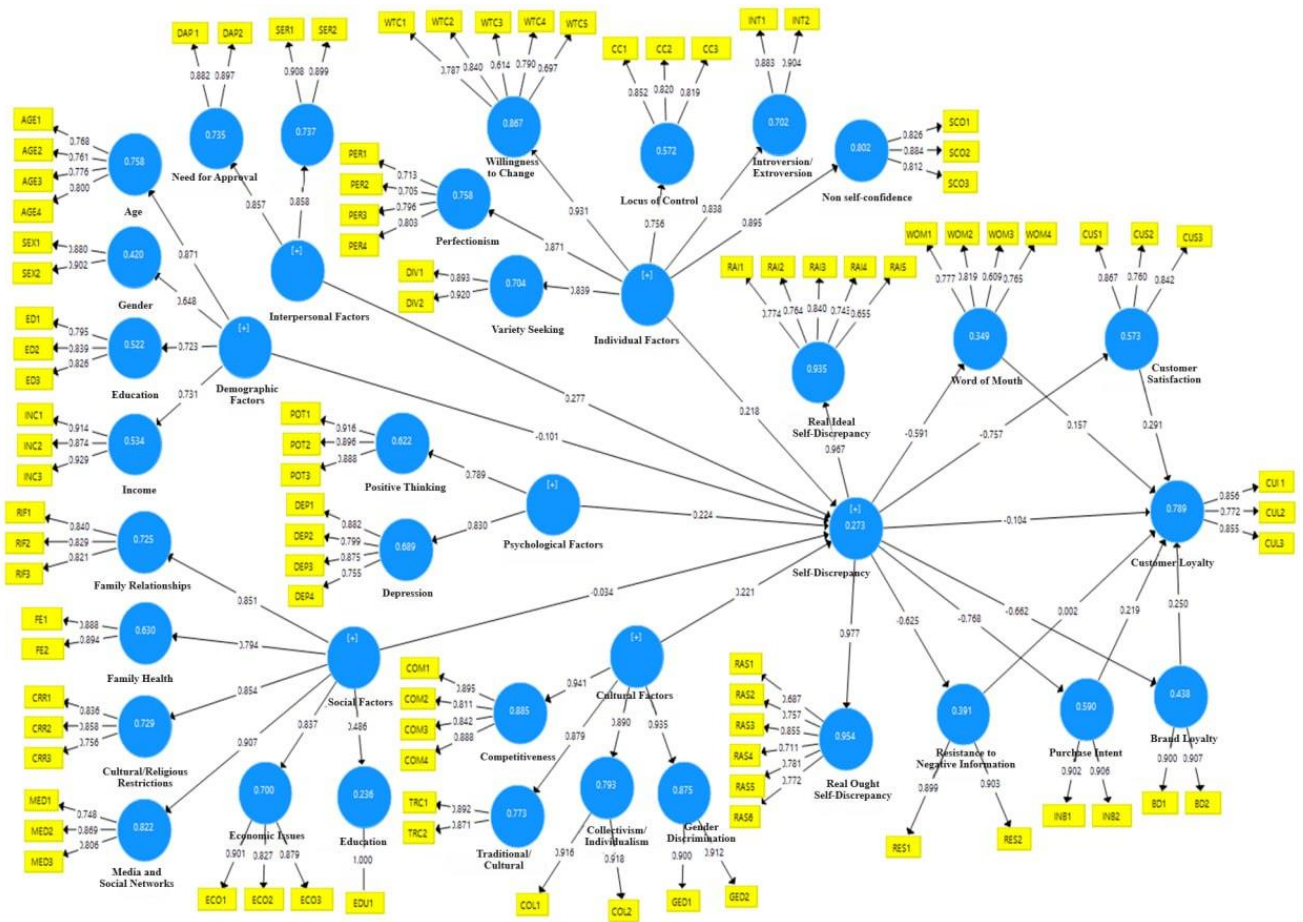
Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	Significance	Accept/Reject
H54: Self-discrepancy impacts loyalty through word-of-mouth	0.093	1.797	Reject
H55: Self-discrepancy impacts loyalty through customer satisfaction	-0.220	2.821	Accept
H56: Self-discrepancy impacts loyalty through purchase intent	-0.168	2.054	Accept
H57: Self-discrepancy impacts loyalty through brand loyalty	-0.166	2.847	Accept
H58: Self-discrepancy impacts loyalty through resistance to negative information	-0.002	0.033	Reject

Self-discrepancy indirectly impacts loyalty through customer satisfaction, purchase intent, and brand loyalty, but

not through word-of-mouth or resistance to negative information.

Figure 1

Model with Factor Loadings



#### 4 Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this study align with the existing literature on the role of self-discrepancy in luxury consumption. The theory of self-discrepancy suggests that individuals experience discomfort when there is a gap between their actual self and their ideal or ought self, and they engage in behaviors to minimize this gap (Lee et al., 2015). In the context of luxury consumption in Qazvin, our study found that self-discrepancy significantly influences purchasing behaviors, supporting the notion that consumers use luxury goods to align their self-image with their ideal self. This behavior is consistent with the findings of Jain et al. (2017), who highlighted that luxury fashion goods are often purchased to enhance one's self-esteem and social status (Jain et al., 2017).

Our study revealed significant individual differences in luxury consumption behaviors. Personality traits,

demographic factors, and cultural backgrounds were all found to play crucial roles. This is in line with Zhang et al. (2019), who noted that social status, brand consciousness, and materialism are key determinants of luxury goods purchase intentions in China (Zhang et al., 2019). Similarly, Wong and Park (2022) emphasized the importance of cultural values and perceived benefits in influencing attitudes and purchase intentions toward luxury goods among millennials from different cultural backgrounds (Wong & Park, 2022).

In Qazvin, we found that psychological factors such as depression and lack of confidence significantly influenced self-discrepancy and, consequently, luxury consumption. This aligns with the work of Kowalczyk and Mitchell (2021), who identified psychological antecedents as critical in understanding luxury brand consumer behavior (Kowalczyk & Mitchell, 2021). Our study extends these findings by demonstrating that interpersonal and cultural factors also play a significant role, with interpersonal factors

having the most substantial impact on self-discrepancy. This highlights the importance of social interactions and cultural context in shaping luxury consumption behaviors.

Digital media and influencers have a profound impact on luxury consumption, as evidenced by the significant role of media and social networks in our study. He (2021) discussed how vlogs and other digital content influence luxury purchasing behavior by providing social proof and enhancing consumer exposure to luxury lifestyles (He, 2021). Our findings support this, showing that consumers in Qazvin are heavily influenced by digital media, which shapes their perceptions and intentions towards luxury goods. This underscores the importance for luxury brands to maintain a robust digital presence and engage with influencers to effectively reach their target audience.

Religiosity and cultural factors were also found to significantly influence luxury consumption behaviors. Arli et al. (2020) noted that religiosity could have varying effects on luxury goods consumption, depending on how individuals interpret their religious teachings (Arli et al., 2020). In Qazvin, cultural norms and religious beliefs were found to either constrain or motivate luxury consumption, reflecting the complex interplay between personal values and societal expectations.

Socio-economic factors such as income and education were significant determinants of luxury consumption in Qazvin. Lim et al. (2013) segmented luxury consumers based on their socio-economic status, revealing distinct purchasing patterns. Our study supports these findings, showing that higher income and education levels are associated with increased luxury consumption (Lim et al., 2013). This suggests that as consumers become more affluent and educated, they are more likely to engage in luxury consumption to signal their social status and sophistication.

The growing market for pre-owned luxury goods is another interesting aspect observed in our study. Slaton and Pookulangara (2022) highlighted the increasing acceptance and demand for second-hand luxury items, driven by factors such as sustainability and affordability (Slaton & Pookulangara, 2022). In Qazvin, we found that secondary luxury consumers are motivated by similar factors, seeking unique and rare items while also considering the environmental impact of their purchases. This indicates a shift towards more conscious consumption patterns among luxury consumers.

The findings of this study have several theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, our research

contributes to the understanding of self-discrepancy in luxury consumption, highlighting the significant roles of individual differences, digital media, and cultural factors. By integrating these elements, we provide a comprehensive model that explains luxury consumption behaviors in a specific regional context.

Practically, our findings offer valuable insights for luxury brand marketers. Understanding the psychological and socio-cultural drivers of luxury consumption can help marketers develop more targeted and effective strategies. For instance, emphasizing the social and self-enhancement benefits of luxury goods can appeal to consumers with high self-discrepancy. Additionally, leveraging digital media and influencers can enhance brand visibility and influence consumer attitudes. Recognizing the impact of religiosity and cultural factors can also help marketers tailor their messages to resonate with local values and norms.

While this study provides valuable insights, it has some limitations. First, the sample size was limited to consumers in Qazvin, which may not be representative of other regions. Future research could expand the scope to include a more diverse and larger sample. Second, our study focused on luxury goods in general, without differentiating between various categories such as fashion, accessories, and vehicles. Future studies could explore specific luxury categories to provide more nuanced insights.

Moreover, the dynamic nature of digital media and its evolving influence on consumer behavior warrants continuous investigation. As new platforms and influencers emerge, their impact on luxury consumption patterns may change, requiring ongoing research to stay updated. Additionally, further research could explore the secondary luxury market in more detail, examining the motivations and behaviors of consumers in this segment.

This study examined the influence of self-discrepancy, individual differences, and socio-cultural factors on luxury goods consumption in Qazvin, Iran. Our findings highlight the significant role of self-discrepancy in driving luxury consumption, with consumers using luxury goods to bridge the gap between their actual and ideal selves. Individual differences such as personality traits, demographic factors, and cultural background were found to significantly influence luxury consumption behaviors. Digital media and influencers also play a crucial role, shaping consumer perceptions and intentions towards luxury goods.

Religiosity and cultural norms were found to either constrain or motivate luxury consumption, reflecting the complex interplay between personal values and societal



expectations. Socio-economic factors such as income and education were significant determinants of luxury consumption, indicating that more affluent and educated consumers are more likely to engage in luxury consumption. The growing market for pre-owned luxury goods highlights a shift towards more conscious consumption patterns among luxury consumers.

The findings of this study have several theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, our research contributes to the understanding of self-discrepancy in luxury consumption, integrating individual differences, digital media, and cultural factors. Practically, our findings offer valuable insights for luxury brand marketers, helping them develop more targeted and effective strategies.

Future research could expand the scope to include a more diverse and larger sample, explore specific luxury categories, and investigate the evolving influence of digital media on consumer behavior. Additionally, further research could examine the secondary luxury market in more detail, providing deeper insights into the motivations and behaviors of consumers in this segment.

In conclusion, understanding the complex interplay between self-discrepancy, individual differences, and socio-cultural factors is essential for marketers and researchers alike. This study provides a nuanced understanding of these dynamics in the context of Qazvin, Iran, offering valuable insights for luxury brand marketers to better meet the psychological and socio-cultural needs of their target consumers.

### Authors' Contributions

All authors have contributed significantly to the research process and the development of the manuscript.

### Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

### Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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### Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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### Ethical Considerations

In this research, ethical standards including obtaining informed consent, ensuring privacy and confidentiality were observed.

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