





“Experiential marketing strategies used by luxury cosmetics companies”

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EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING STRATEGIES USED BY LUXURY COSMETICS COMPANIES

Abstract

The evolving needs of the consumers in the luxury cosmetic segment require the firms to pique consumer interest. This forces the firms to keep their focus on providing superior quality products and, at the same time, creating a memorable experience. The study is undertaken to provide a better understanding of experience through emotions. This study aims to investigate the strategies of experiential marketing used by luxury cosmetics companies for influencing consumer perception. Thus, the current study examines empirical studies selected using PRISMA guidelines to formulate a critical review of prevailing literature to arrive at the findings of the study. The results show that strategies such as free samples and exclusive distribution influence the probability of usage of products and cater to consumer expectations of exclusive approaches. In addition, the strategies of the online community, gift promotion, flagship stores, service from experts, and showbiz marketing can be used to create a meaningful brand experience. The brand image creation, stories associated with design, innovativeness, and product exclusivity enable the impactful contribution of experiential marketing. Thus, companies using immersive experience through technology should implement strategies like virtual shopping or event marketing for targeting consumers. In conclusion, the strategy of e-word of mouth using various social media platforms, event marketing, and storytelling have been identified to shape the feeling and experience of a consumer to influence attitude towards online shopping and maintain their engagement after a purchase.

Keywords

PRISMA, Indian luxury cosmetics, consumer perception, emotion, online shopping, brand experience

JEL Classification

M10, M31

INTRODUCTION

The luxury cosmetic industry comprises products manufactured using quality and premium organic ingredients. These are sold at higher prices compared to cosmetics available at the drugstore and comprise the product ranges inclusive of fragrances, makeup products, skin care, and hair care. The luxury cosmetics market is estimated to grow with a compound annual growth rate of 5.6% from 2019 to 2026 and is expected to reach 81.24 billion US dollars by 2026 (Thorat et al., 2019). This growth for the luxury cosmetic companies is driven by several factors such as an increase in disposable income of the urban population that has led to a shift of target audience for a company to include more than elite consumers, penetration of the internet, and expansion of e-commerce. Apart from these factors, enhancing the international reach and convenience for the cosmetic companies enhanced consumer experience through experiential marketing is also a reason (Mihailovic et al., 2017). Experiential marketing is a method to enhance consumers' experiences before purchasing to create some stimulation through marketing efforts such as private events. In experiential marketing, the private experiences of the consumers are appealed through instinct and senses to enhance product value in the context of their lifestyles (Nagasawa & Kizu, 2015).

In the cosmetic industry, experiential marketing makes a brand image identifiable among customers, and design elements are built around consumer stories to promote its innovativeness and exclusivity. However, many studies have explored experiential marketing's role in consumer satisfaction or influencing consumer perception. All these studies majorly assess consumer perception empirically and restrict them from identifying the strategies contributing to those changes in consumers. The study is essential as it attempts to understand the emotional side of consumer behavior that produces hierarchical effects for products based on the evaluation of feelings or beliefs of a consumer. It is particularly relevant to Indian luxury cosmetic consumers as premiumization in the market is moving at a rapid pace. Consumerism is being driven by the willingness and ability of customers to spend on exclusive cosmetics of superior quality (Sharma, 2019). In this respect, the current study focuses on bridging the existing knowledge gap by identifying the relevance and strategies of experiential marketing used by luxury cosmetics companies.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

The growing trend of attracting more consumers' interest for deriving competitive advantage has created a demand for integrating innovative marketing techniques. Experiential marketing in the luxury cosmetic industry has been identified as the strategy that targets consumers' interests and focuses on creating a memorable experience. However, the lack of understanding of experiential marketing implementation and its strategies has limited its applicability. This study presents a theoretical examination of experiential marketing and luxury cosmetics companies.

1.1. Luxury cosmetics market

Firstly, to begin the investigation of experiential marketing strategies used by luxury cosmetics companies to influence consumer perception, it is imperative to understand the market. Beauty products have been the beholder's eye, but concerning the long-term attractiveness of any product, there has been debate on its requirement. The global beauty industry has witnessed steady growth over time and successfully created a business environment with generations of consumers attached to brands loyally (Deloitte, 2020). During the 2008 crisis, the industry experienced a slight fall; however, by 2010, the market relevance of the industry has bounced back. Cosmetics are the products used by different consumers to enhance human physical features or cleanse the skin (Khan & Alam, 2019). Within the growing cosmetics market, luxury cosmetics or products have attained a dominant position among the consumer preferences due to their premium ingredients quality and the organic nature (Hodge et al., 2015).

Luxury cosmetics, consisting mainly of fragrances, makeup products, or skincare, are sold at high prices compared to other cosmetics sold at simple drugstores. Global luxury cosmetics market valuation in 2018 has been identified to be \$52748.4 million with an expectation to witness growth with a CAGR of at least 5.6% from 2016 to 2019 and reach the level of \$81247.6 million by 2026 (Thorat et al., 2019). Due to the nature of luxury cosmetics and pricing, these products are majorly demanded in the regions of Europe and North America, where the high buying power of consumers could be seen. However, with the increment in the disposable income of people living in developing countries like China or India and the prevalence of hair care and skin care, the demand for luxury cosmetics has witnessed a rise.

Further, the expansion of e-commerce due to the internet penetration and shift of the market towards digitalization has also supported the expansion of luxury cosmetics (EY, 2021). With the variation of shopping preferences of consumers from country to country, the brands majorly are focused on having a global scale outlook to adapt the consumer-centric model with supporting facilities in physical and digital channels (Roberts, 2021). Even the luxury cosmetics industry is focused on specializing in skillsets to meet the need of the ever-evolving business market (Kestenbaum, 2018).

1.2. Growing relevance of experiential marketing in the luxury cosmetics industry

With the growing lifestyle and fashion trends, the demand for luxury cosmetics is rising. However, the lack of acceptance of income inequality low-

ers the demand for luxury cosmetics (Bendell & Kleanthous, 2007). To target consumers' interest and overcome the expensive nature of products, a more advanced marketing technique is required. As high earners, consumers are more informed and are more socially aware. Thus, it is required to provide a high-end experience to consumers to increase their interest (Pitman, 2019). Experiential marketing has been identified as a marketing technique focused on understanding consumer preferences and motivating them to make purchase decisions (Pencarelli et al., 2020).

In the fast-changing fashion and lifestyle trends, companies dealing with luxury cosmetics continuously examine new consumers who have grown in relevance for the existing market (Delloite, 2019). These high earners are contributing significantly to vital younger group interests, i.e., Gen Z and Millennials mainly (Shin et al., 2021). The luxury cosmetic market is witnessing growth in the existence of high-income inequality and lack of acceptance among societies with a focus on equality, which lowered the demand for luxury cosmetics (Bendell & Kleanthous, 2007). Further, the luxury cosmetics industry already being expensive often witnesses a cut out from the digitalized environment. High earners are crucial consumers for supporting the growth of luxury cosmetics brands. These consumers are the ones who are socially aware, value innovations, are more informed, and are highly educated.

Lack of focus of luxury cosmetics brands on providing high-end experience tends to reduce these consumers' interest, hence decreasing the scope of growth (Pitman, 2019). Luxury cosmetic firms have to identify customer experience based on the four zones of education, entertainment, education, aesthetic, and escapist (Atwal & Williams, 2017). The experiential marketing zones are dependent on the involvement of customers based on their level of interaction with the company. On the other hand, the intensity of the consumer's feeling is derived from the level of interaction (Urdea et al., 2021). Luxury cosmetics in creating experience may focus less on environmental and social issues; thus, luxury companies fail to integrate sustainability. As young luxury consumers value the environmental dimension, thus, for having a deeper understanding of preferences and motivating consumers, the luxury market needs to have consider-

ation of sustainability (Pencarelli et al., 2020). This is also due to the unique positioning of the luxury cosmetic brand but not only of the elegance symbol. Instead, it has to project and maintain the image of premium quality and craftsmanship, create exclusive design recognition and world class reputation (Kapferer & Valette-Florence, 2016).

Luxury cosmetics rely more on quality and uniqueness and less on promotion; thus, lack of promotional factors and improper or inadequate communication with consumers also hamper the demand for luxury cosmetics among consumers (Balchandani et al., 2020). With its organic products and quality, the luxury cosmetics industry is among the most selected beauty products. However, lack of digitalization, non-personalized experience, limited sustainability practices, lack of promotion, or improper communication are major issues hampering consumer engagement with brands.

With the growing need to enhance consumer experience and build consumers' interest, companies are shifting their focus from just providing superior quality or prices to creating a memorable experience. This shift in attention of companies resulted in identifying a new marketing approach, i.e., experiential marketing. However, experiential marketing is still gaining ground in India, specifically in the luxury cosmetic industry.

The new approach treats marketing as a strategy and an experience wherein emotional aspects of consumers are being targeted. Marketers practice experiential marketing when the aim of a company is not only to fulfill the basic needs of consumers but build consumer enthusiasm via being part of shoppers' everyday life experiences. Experiential marketing is about having insights into the consumer's connection and passion by involving senses and creating an emotion-driven experience (Ishara & Gayathree, 2020). Experiential marketing working on sense, feel, act, think, and act aspects of consumers helps in building relationships, increasing loyalty, creating memories, stimulating purchase, establishing relevance, and encouraging interaction (Kim & Sullivan, 2019).

Further, experiential marketing enables long-term connection establishment of the brand with consumers. Thus, it contributes to changing the minds

of dissatisfied consumers, creating product desire, guiding preferences, developing positive perceptions, and increasing return on marketing investments. As experiential marketing contributes to influencing the decision-making of the consumers, thus positive experience could be witnessed by creating a positive atmosphere, customization, engagement, distinctiveness, and better interaction (Urdea et al., 2021). Furthermore, experiential marketing helps in creating uniqueness, adventurous experiences, exploration, working on consumer satisfaction, motivating consumers to buy, and earning consumer loyalty (Siebert et al., 2020). Therefore, for a competitive advantage derivation in the market, innovative consumer-centric functioning, and creating a better brand image, experiential marketing is widely used by companies.

On occasions, marketers may encounter issues as experiential marketing strategy revolves around providing a more innovative and personalized experience to consumers; thus, many financial resources are required for financing this marketing technique. Management of finance in the promotion and experiential marketing often creates strategic issues for the companies (Smith & Hanover, 2016). In addition, experiential marketing techniques require access to consumer information to build a more personalized experience. The trust issues and the risk of maintaining data privacy often prevent effective implementation of experiential marketing techniques, as consumers do not share information. Thus, efforts need to motivate consumers and ensure the confidentiality of consumers' personal information (Urdea & Constantin, 2021).

Further, difficulty in maintaining organizational and strategy structure, customer identification, engagement targeting, budget and resources maintenance, measurement and attribution, and project execution and management also fails in experiential marketing (Manoukian, 2020). Lastly, the challenge in enhancing interactivity, initiating practical pleasure feeling, building high-level trust, creating a personalized experience, maintaining consumer expectations novelty, and replicating sensory effect creates difficulty in having technological upgrades or experiential preferences (Urdea et al., 2021). Based on these issues identified in experiential marketing, the current study focuses on identifying the strategies that luxury cosmetic firms can adopt.

1.3. Strategies of experiential marketing in luxury cosmetics companies

Experiential marketing strategies support the creation of long-term relationships with consumers by creating product desire, changing dissatisfied consumers' minds, or developing positive perceptions (Urdea et al., 2021). For example, on occasions, consumers also feel that in-shop visits to luxury cosmetic brands are a reward in itself. This is due to the strong connection between consumers and brands that can be compartmentalized into courtships, friendships, and flings that enable luxury cosmetic brands to maintain strong relationships with their consumers. Furthermore, during these times, experiential marketing focuses on providing a more personalized experience; these techniques work towards ensuring confidentiality for consumers' information and motivating consumers (Urdea & Constantin, 2021).

Experiential marketing strategies also include the method of interactive online luxury stores. The experiential marketing created through online medium is opposite to push selling strategy and prevents sensory overload for the consumers. However, online shopping experience depends on the knowledge or information available to consumers on the portal. Therefore, in companies wherein experiential marketing plans are designed to provide all insights about the product, positive consumer shopping behavior could be derived (Puripunyanich, 2016). Existing studies also identified that consumers tend to be more interactive or open to purchase when they derive the facility of trying out the samples. Thus, free sample distribution provides the consumer before making any purchase and engages more senses (Amor & Guilbert, 2009).

This paper reviewed thirteen studies dedicated to different strategies of experiential marketing. A brief of the studies selected for the systematic review is presented in Table 1.

Amor and Guilbert (2009) surveyed 500 women participants who were a part of an experiential marketing campaign of free samples by luxury cosmetic brands. The findings suggest that the strategy of free samples used by luxury cos-

metic brands can generate more try-outs among consumers than the brands that are less known. As a result, consumers are more aware of luxury brands and perceive them as lower risk. In such a case, the free rewards as a tool of experiential marketing help impact consumers' annual spending within the product category.

Schram (2013) conducted a study to understand the adaption of marketing strategies on promoting user-generated content in the form of experiential marketing by creating an escapist zone. The study reports the experiences of 8 interviewees comprising of luxury cosmetic company's digital project manager, marketing managers, and beauty bloggers. The findings suggest that the experiential zone based on online communities allows customers to feel exclusive. This leads them to enhance their involvement with the community through unique content used or co-creation between the brands and consumers, which drives the commitment towards the luxury cosmetic brands. Experiential marketing via online communities allows luxury cosmetic brands to create meaningful consumption experiences. The communities are used to reinforce ties and interactions with the consumers. Experiential marketing online strategy is quickly developed using digital tools and is a much cheaper branding method that opens up the brand to a much larger audience.

In addition, Uecharoenkit (2013) aimed to investigate the relationship between brand experience and loyalty among consumers of luxury cosmetics. In this study, a mixed-method of the quantitative and qualitative survey highlights the cosmetic brand experience using 483 survey respondents and 22 semi-structured interviews. The study suggests that experiential marketing strategies of flagship stores, service from experts, gift promotion, and showbiz are a measure to enhance the consumption of feelings, fantasies, and fun among consumers and positively impact brand personality. The luxury cosmetic brand experience positively influences brand trust, and the brand experience created using the methods positively affects consumer satisfaction.

Hodge et al. (2015) used the qualitative analysis method of an interview to uncover relationship topology that helps maintain consumer-brand sol-

id relationships in the sector of luxury cosmetics. The study found that the experience of the consumers shapes consumer perceptions of trust and relationships. In such cases, experiential marketing of providing rewards or customer describing their in-shop visit is a reward in itself and act as a reward strategy. The rewards make consumers feel that the brand is aware of their preferences and needs. This leads to the forging of a 'strong connection' between them. Thus, the experiential marketing strategy of incorporating compartmentalized relationships in courtships, friendships, and flings enables luxury cosmetic brands to maintain strong relationships with their consumers.

In addition, Nagasawa and Kizu (2015) analyzed the luxury strategy in shaping customer experiences through cosmetic design. The study analyzed 4 case studies to point at the experiential marketing strategy that created innovative product design built around a brand story. It is suggested that product design elements of logo and packaging induce a particular feeling among customers that helps them identify with the brand. Thus, brand stories paired with functionality and innovation affect the behavior style of consumers towards the luxury brand. Furthermore, the experience leads to a sense of belonging to a unique social group that feels camaraderie and connection within the consumers who associate themselves with the philosophy of the luxury brand.

Beuckels and Hudders (2016) surveyed 185 participants to analyze if image interactivity in online luxury stores can compensate for tactile and visual experiences offline and, at the same time, add value to the luxury brand. The findings suggest that the experiential marketing strategy of interactive online luxury stores depends on the degree of interactivity that simulates sensory experience among the consumers. This induces a feeling of telepresence or feeling of no difference in perception between the virtual and physical product. Therefore, such an experiential marketing strategy helps luxury brands preserve their uniqueness and highly valued prestige.

Puripunyanich (2016) suggests that experiential marketing should be created online without sensory overload or push selling strategy. The study found that online experiential marketing is diffi-

cult for a product as fragrances cannot be tested or smelled. Experiential marketing online is created by using product information and brand content. The online review strategy allows the luxury beauty brand to overcome the limitation of the touch-and-feel element. In addition, the strategy of free return and free shipping helps the buyers evade the risk of buying high-end cosmetics online.

Additionally, Ajitha and Sivakumar (2017) studied the impact of social and personal value on usage behavior and attitude towards luxury cosmetic brands surveyed 372 customers. The study used structural equation modeling (SEM) to reveal that the experiential marketing strategies need to be designed around hedonism and status value to influence consumer attitude towards the brand. Hedonic associations in experiential marketing allow luxury cosmetic brands to formulate a perceptual fit with the customers, resulting in a positive attitude. Similarly, the brand experience shaped around status value appears more attractive to enhance interpersonal determinants of socio-economic orientation among the consumers and promote usage of the products and shape their positive attitude towards the brand.

Mihailovic et al. (2017) analyzed 4 luxury cosmetic brands to analyze the impact of standardization strategies compared to luxury culture among consumers in the international markets. The case study analysis reveals the experiential marketing strategies that the firms can adapt in distribution. These include the strategies of exclusive stores, cosmetics boutiques, and spas. The study found that these experiential marketing strategies help maintain the brand's exclusivity. The product's visibility is used as an essence to communicate for the brand. The exclusive experience of a consumer through experiential marketing in exclusive stores is also viewed as a sign of commitment to the brand's market.

Almomani (2020) analyzed the shopping patterns of three generations of shoppers of luxury cosmetics. 30 respondents pointed towards the firms' usage of virtual reality as a strategy for experiential marketing. The firms provide virtual store experiences using computers, mobile games, and mobile applications. The marketing campaigns and design strategies are used through experiential

marketing to help the brand tailor and layout messages according to the consumer's needs. However, the respondents also bring out the concerns in experiential marketing through online shopping. This includes the problems in the mismatch between the expectation and reality and delivery schedules. The products are shipped in multiple consignments from overseas with the luxury cosmetic segment. It is a concern for the consumers who care about sustainability and health concerns arising from energy consumption and air pollution. This leads consumers to avoid experiential marketing tools and shop locally.

Mullasatsarathorn et al. (2020) studied the influence of e-WOM on social media on trust and attitude towards shopping. Responses from 400 participants were gathered for quantitative data analysis using SEM. The findings suggest that e-WOM allows users to experience the pleasure of using online platforms. Furthermore, the trust helps build through experiences of other users shape the attitude of new consumers shopping online. It provides the brands with a relative advantage in influencing consumers' attitudes and encouraging them to shop online.

Ngarmwongnoi et al. (2020) used thematic analysis for data gathered from 30 respondents using semi-structured interviews to understand the implications of e-WOM on the customer journey. The findings reveal that the firms can use the experiential marketing strategy of e-WOM to influence antecedents of purchase in the luxury cosmetic segment. In addition, e-WOM presents a post-purchase experience where the reviews can be used to determine products' popularity. The credibility in experiential marketing strategy using e-WOM is enhanced by the number of likes, shares, and views.

Furthermore, Ungarala (2021) surveyed 315 consumers of luxury cosmetic brands. The responses were analyzed using SEM. The findings of the study are suggestive of experiential marketing strategies of storytelling and event marketing. These strategies should be used with the consumers' self-concepts to form mediation between purchase intention and brand loyalty. When the storytelling and event marketing are knit around self-concept, it fulfills the self-es-

teem motives of the consumers and motivates them to complete the act of purchase consistently. The study thus suggests that experiential marketing strategies with other marketing methods help build the relationship between brand experience and loyalty. It also influences the buying intent in consumers that is favorable for luxury cosmetic brands.

Table 1. Strategies of experiential marketing used by luxury cosmetics companies

S. No.	Reference	Strategies of experiential marketing	Measured dimension of customer engagement behavior	Research method	Data unit	Key findings
1	Amor and Guilbert (2009)	Free sample	Influence probability of usage of products	Questionnaire inquiry	500 respondents	Consumers are more reactive to new product samples as it provides them with the experience of the product
2	Schram (2013)	Online community	Meaningful experience, cost-efficient, design successful products	Qualitative interview	8 interviewees	Experiential marketing created through the strategy of the online community creates user-generated content. This acts as an inspiring source of cooperation and co-creation process between luxury cosmetic brands and consumers
3	Uecharoenkit (2013)	Luxury cosmetic brand experience through flagship stores, service from experts, gift promotion, and showbiz marketing	Brand experience and loyalty	Mixed method	483 survey respondents and 22 semi-structured interviews	The luxury cosmetic brands, through experiential marketing, create consumption of feelings, fantasies, and fun to create consumer satisfaction and loyalty
4	Hodge et al. (2015)	Gift promotion to maintain relationship typologies between luxury cosmetic brands and their consumers	Rewards are shaped by brand experiences	Qualitative analysis	8 interviewees	Experiential marketing strategy of brand rewards helps in the formation of consumer-brand relationships
5	Nagasawa and Kizu (2015)	Experience through brand image, design story, innovativeness, and exclusivity in the cosmetic design	Customer experience	Case study	4 cases	Cosmetic design as an experiential marketing tool to make brand image easily identifiable, narrate a story, and promote exclusivity
6	Beuckels and Hudders (2016)	Virtual luxury store	Maintain luxury perception among consumers	Questionnaire inquiry	185 respondents	The new-age technology such as virtual luxury store provides integrated image interactive technology that helps firms retain high luxury value

Table 1 (cont.). Strategies of experiential marketing used by luxury cosmetics companies

S. No.	Reference	Strategies of experiential marketing	Measured dimension of customer engagement behavior	Research method	Data unit	Key findings
7	Puripunyanich (2016)	Online shopping experience provides a boost to the luxury cosmetic industry	Consumer buying decision	Mixed method	173 survey respondents and 7 interviews	The success of a brand is dependent on the detailed insight into consumer shopping behavior
8	Ajitha and Sivakumar (2017)	Experiential marketing strategy catering to symbolic and psychological qualities among consumers	Consumer attitude and behavior	SEM analysis	372 respondents	Marketing strategies developed around psychological and symbolic traits of luxury cosmetic brands consumers impact their willingness to buy the product as well as their preferences
9	Mihailovic et al. (2017)	Exclusive distribution	Consumer expectations of exclusive approaches	Case study	4 cases	Experiential marketing through marketing mixes of the firms can be used to create a luxury culture among the consumers
10	Almomani (2020)	Virtual shopping	Immersive experience through technology.	Case study	30 respondents	Immersive experience through technology combine entertainment with brand loyalty and a sense of belongingness
11	Mullasatsarathorn et al. (2020)	E-word of mouth (e-WOM) on social media	Shape feeling and experience of a consumer to influence attitude towards online shopping	SEM analysis	400 respondents	Consumers spend a large part of their time online experiences of other consumers influence trust and brand attitude
12	Ngarmwongnoi et al. (2020)	E-word of mouth	Customer engagement pre and post-purchase	Thematic analysis	30 semi-structured interviews	Experience for customers through e-WOM help to engage consumers and impact their pre- and post- behavior
13	Ungarala (2021)	Event marketing and storytelling	Brand experience influencing loyalty	SEM analysis	315 respondents	The brand experience created in the promotional avenues and storytelling influences buying intent and loyalty of luxury cosmetic brands consumers

2. GENERALIZATION OF THE MAIN STATEMENTS

2.1. Experiential marketing and its role in creating consumer experience

The luxury cosmetic sector in India was estimated to be around \$774 million in 2018. Furthermore, it was predicted to be growing in double digits in a report published by Euromonitor International (DtNext, 2020). Among the reasons attributed to the industry's growth are the increase in augmentation in purchasing power, aspirations among consumers regarding the luxury product, and a rise in awareness due to e-commerce penetration. These factors and the creation of a robust distribution network and attention to personalized experience-based marketing have influenced the firms to alter marketing strategies.

In addition, to stimulate the interest of Gen Z and Millennials, luxury brands are focusing on more usage of social media platforms to engage young consumers better and keep the brand value intact. Internet penetration has specifically influenced Indian consumers by increasing their exposure to international brands driving consumerism. Indian luxury cosmetic consumers have become increasingly aware of conscious and ethical consumption. This trend is influencing the trend of premiumization among Indian consumers. Despite this, the changing consumer preferences and the pandemic crisis limited the efficiency of brand value accelerating factors (Gerstell et al., 2020). Thus, the luxury cosmetics industry in the beauty market holds a significant role, but the changing demand pattern and the growing competition have been influencing its growth. However, there are some issues faced by luxury cosmetics companies.

With the growing demand for limited accessible products among wealthy people, the luxury cosmetics company often witnesses a gap from young millennial consumers and even having less digital engagement (Ramirez, 2017). To tackle this issue, reports indicated that luxury cosmetics focused on having more digital spending to enhance consumer demands and provide a personalized experience

(Pitman, 2019). Among the other methods of digital involvement, experiential marketing is essentially gaining ground as it emphasizes the consumers' overall experience with the brand (Uecharoenkit, 2013). However, in this domain, companies face issues in identifying strategies to create a compelling consumer experience, which appeals to the intangible customer's psyche aspect (Albatati et al., 2016).

The strategies meet the digitalized business environment in experiential marketing to raise consumer awareness about products and services (Batat, 2019). In the conditions created by the factors, consumer attraction and a positive attitude towards them require non-traditional marketing strategies. Strategies of experiential marketing that increase real-time exposure influence the chances of a favorable customer perspective (Dwivedi et al., 2021). The experiential marketing techniques may vary in live experience for the consumers; however, they offer consumers sense, act, feel, and think aspects. This enables the firms to build relationships, stimulating purchases, increasing loyalty among consumers (Kim & Sullivan, 2019). In the growing popularity of experience, organizations use experiential marketing to build a strong connection between consumer and brand to increase brand awareness, word of mouth, and consumer loyalty. Further, this technique helps change consumers' emotions by providing a positive and motivating brand experience; thus, it helps in triggering consumer's buying behavior and earning a competitive advantage (Ilieska, 2013).

However, experiential marketing created through the strategy of the online community creates user-generated content. It acts as an inspiring source of cooperation and co-creation between luxury cosmetic brands and consumers. The strategies involving cosmetic design as an experiential marketing tool make brand images easily identifiable, narrate a story, and promote exclusivity. The strategy helps build better connections and earn a competitive advantage; inadequate implementation of experiential marketing results in creating issues (Yeh et al., 2019). The companies face challenges in the form of time, targeting the right group of consumers, having high-cost association in the process, challenging corporate branding, creating organizational issues, facing brand extension is-

sues, and facing new product launch issues (Datta, 2017). Experiential marketing strategies could provide a competitive edge to companies only if engagement, technology, and consumer behavior are implemented at the right time. The presence of uncertain consumer behavior and restrictions in organizing live events often prevent consumers from targeting the audience (Urdea & Constantin, 2021). Hence, innovative methodologies using digital media are required to engage more consumers.

In the luxury cosmetic industry, experiential marketing affects the behavioral, affective, social, sensorial-perceptual, and cognitive dimensions of consumer purchases. These require the firms to adopt novel strategies beyond the transactional approach to create a unique brand experience. There are different tools in which the interaction between luxury cosmetic companies and their consumers can be facilitated. Such tools of marketing campaigns, product details, and communication are used to stimulate the minds of consumers (Muthiah & Suja, 2017). While the direct and creative engagement tool helps build a relationship between the consumers and the brand based on enhanced interaction. This helps the consumers form their brand image that is not influenced by celebrities or any similar outside sources. Thus, the relationship formed is personal and based on trust. This in turn influences the loyalty of the consumer (Mohasoa, 2014). Also, customer satisfaction and long-term relationship help firms create a unique proposition in the consumer's minds to help them obtain a long-term competitive advantage (Youssef & Abdallah, 2016). In this respect, the current study will critically analyze studies to identify strategies for experiential marketing in the luxury cosmetic industry.

3. DISCUSSION

3.1. Experiential marketing helps create a superior consumer experience

The study's findings revealed different strategies that can be used as strategies of experiential marketing. They include the campaigns run by the luxury cosmetic brands using the method of free samples. The samples allow the consumers to ex-

perience the product in the try-outs. The purpose of experiential marketing is not just to connect with people but to target consumer passion by creating a more emotion-driven experience. Thus, experiential marketing is focused more on involving the senses (Ishara & Gayathree, 2020). With the luxury cosmetic brands, the consumers view the risk of using products for the first time to be lower. In turn, the firms' spending on acquiring the consumers also decreases. Similarly, rewards as an experiential marketing tool also shape consumer preference for luxury cosmetic brands.

Using user-generated content in the form of experiential marketing help brands create an escapist zone. This strategy is used to involve consumers in the experience of co-creation and drive consumers' commitment towards luxury cosmetic brands. In addition, experiential marketing is also created by firms using strategies of flagship stores, service from experts, gift promotion, and showbiz. These help the firms enhance the feelings, fantasies, and fun among consumers. This experiential marketing provides a more adventurous experience, adds uniqueness to experience, consumer satisfaction derivation, or earns consumer loyalty (Siebert et al., 2020). In turn, brand trust and brand experience of luxury cosmetic consumers influence consumer satisfaction positively. In addition, the strategies of exclusive stores, cosmetics boutiques, and spas allow visibility of the product is used as essence to communicate for the brand. The brands also create experiential marketing using design elements of logo and packaging. It helps consumers identify with the brand and feel camaraderie and connection with the philosophy of the luxury brand. Thus, experiential marketing focuses on deriving a better competitive advantage in the market, creating a positive brand image, and even having innovative consumer-centric functioning (Kim & Sullivan, 2019).

The study has the theoretical review explored the relevance of experiential marketing. Though existing studies have also explored experiential marketing roles, having the restriction on the area to be included for consumer engagement measurement, the impact assessment has been very limited. This study bridged this gap by having a systematic review highlighting different dimensions of consumer engagement like usage of products,

meaningful experience, brand experience, loyalty, or customer experience. With this, future studies thus could focus on not just determining the impact of experiential marketing on one aspect but also having the quantitative analysis to understand the influence on different dimensions of customer engagement.

3.2. Strategies and tools of experiential marketing for the luxury cosmetics industry

The virtual reality tool can be adopted as a strategy for experiential marketing. These are done through computer games, mobile games, and mobile applications to tailor brand messages. Also, the strategy of e-WOM on social media through experiences shapes the attitude of new consumers shopping online to influence consumers on attitude and encourage them to shop online. In the existing digitalized world, more people prefer to check reviews or recommendations before making any purchasing decisions. Thus, the experiential marketing techniques are focused on having e-WOM engage consumers and even provide more impact pre and post-buying behavior (Ngarmwongnoi et al., 2020). Experiential marketing through e-WOM luxury cosmetic brands influences pre and post-purchase experience through reviews, likes, shares, and views. Through event marketing and storytelling, the brands also use experiential marketing strategies to satisfy the

self-esteem motives of the consumers and motivate them to complete the act of purchase consistently. Existing studies highlighted that strategies targeting the psychological or symbolic qualities tend to have more impact on consumers. With these experiential marketing strategies, the willingness of consumers to buy is affected hence creating a preference among consumers towards the brand (Ajitha & Sivakumar, 2017). Thus, the experiential marketing strategies focused on targeting consumer perception, innovating techniques, and exclusivity are more impactful for deriving consumer engagement.

Existing studies focused on exploring the experiential marketing role and strategies, but each study with a different purpose has focused on different methods. For example, some studies explored free sample usage, online community, gift promotion, or virtual luxury stores. However, not many studies have identified different experiential marketing strategies for consumer experience. This study has a systematic review that listed out most popular strategies and supported companies in selecting the most suitable strategies. Though the study identified various experiential strategies, the paper exploration is based on qualitative assessment. Thus, future studies could focus on identifying the impact of these strategies and selecting the most suitable one by having a quantitative assessment based on consumer perception of impactful experiential marketing strategy.

CONCLUSION

With a growth rate of 5.6%, the luxury cosmetic market has recently witnessed the shift of consumer preference from just products to the experience. Furthermore, the enhancement of convenience and international reach created the need for luxury cosmetic companies to implement more personalized marketing techniques to retain consumer interest. With this, experiential marketing in the cosmetics market could be sensed for having a better brand image and creating uniqueness among the existing international brand. The current study thus is undertaken to identify strategies of experiential marketing used by luxury cosmetics companies for influencing consumer perception.

The analysis shows that the growing trend of implementing experiential marketing techniques for engaging consumer senses has resulted in having more focus on identifying the relevant strategies. However, the availability of different options has often increased complexity and reduced the effectiveness and reach of the marketing techniques to desired consumers. The study with an exploration of experiential marketing techniques identified that mainly as current consumer value innovation and personalized experience; thus, the strategies should majorly be focused on providing exclusivity, having innovative experience, and targeting consumer perception. These techniques contribute to deriving better consum-

er engagement and building a positive brand image, competitive advantage, and innovative consumer-centric functioning. Through these tools, the companies gain more reactions from the consumers and create cooperation and co-creation processes between them.

The study thus contributes to providing a better understanding of the dimensions of brand experience and its importance. In addition, the study identifies that as the perception and demand of consumers are frequently changing, implementing a consumer perception-based strategy would not only motivate them but also help build a long-term relationship with them. As the study's findings reflect on the brand experience of luxury cosmetics, the managers can use the implications to understand its consequences. Further, the company managers could better understand how marketing techniques like information-based online shopping, emotion-engaging experience, and targeting consumer perception would help retain consumers and attract new ones in the virtualized shopping environment. The managers can focus on creating a positive intellectual experience with the customers encourage consumption due to products' unique product innovation offerings.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

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