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THE EFFECT OF WORD-OF-MOUTH ON THE PURCHASE OF GENUINE AND
COUNTERFEIT LUXURY BRANDS: THE ROLES OF ATTITUDE FUNCTIONS

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LINGNAN UNIVERSITY

2011

THE EFFECT OF WORD-OF-MOUTH ON THE PURCHASE OF GENUINE AND
COUNTERFEIT LUXURY BRANDS: THE ROLES OF ATTITUDE FUNCTIONS

by

WANG Wei

A thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the Degree of
Master of Philosophy in Business
(Marketing and International Business)

Lingnan University

2011

ABSTRACT

The Effect of Word-of-Mouth on the Purchase of Genuine and Counterfeit Luxury Brands: The Roles of Attitude Functions

by

WANG Wei

Master of Philosophy

This research aims to investigate the effect of word-of-mouth (WOM) on the purchase of genuine and counterfeit luxury brands with a focus on the roles of attitude functions, product type, valence of WOM, and brand popularity. It consists of two experimental studies. Study 1 examines the effect of WOM on the purchase of luxury brands and attempts to investigate the mediating role of attitude functions in the relationship between WOM and purchase intentions for luxury brands, with regard to different product types and valence of WOM. Study 2 compares the effects of WOM communications with traditional advertising on the purchase of counterfeit and genuine luxury brands. It also examines the differences between popular and non-popular luxury brands.

Results reveal that social-adjustive and value-expressive functions fully mediate the effect of WOM on luxury brand evaluation while partially mediate the effect of product type on luxury brand evaluation. The effect of WOM on attitude functions is more pronounced for high (vs. low) susceptibility to interpersonal influence consumers. Findings of Study 2 support the moderating role of subjective norm in the self-monitoring and counterfeit luxury brand evaluation relationship, indicating that compared to advertising, WOM is a more effective way to decrease counterfeit luxury brand consumption. Managerial implications for strategic brand management and directions for future research are discussed.

DECLARATION

I declare that this is an original work based primarily on my own research, and I warrant that all citations of previous research, published or unpublished, have been duly acknowledged.

WANG Wei

Date:

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL OF THESIS

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COUNTERFEIT LUXURY BRANDS: THE ROLES OF ATTITUDE FUNCTIONS

by

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale of the Research

According to a blue paper on commercial development in China, released in 2010 by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China's luxury goods market had increased to US\$9.4 billion by the end of 2009 and accounting for 27.5 percent of total global sales. As of 2010, China is the world's second largest consumer market for luxury goods, next only to Japan. Goldman Sachs, one of the top investment banks, has predicted that China will consume about 29 percent of the world's total luxury goods in 2015, even surpassing Japan as the world's top luxury brands market. A similar prediction is made by Merrill Lynch, which expects that extravagant offshore spending by Chinese consumers is likely to account for almost a quarter of global luxury brand by 2014.

Although the genuine luxury brand market in China is vital around the world, China is also one of the largest markets dealing with counterfeit luxury brands which might greatly affect the selling of genuine products (Nia and Zaichkowsky 2000). There are two different types of transactions involving counterfeits: deceptive and non-deceptive (Grossman and Shapiro 1988). Deceptive counterfeits represent situations in which consumers don't know that they are buying a counterfeit product at the time of purchase, i.e., consumers think they have purchased a genuine product when in fact it is a fake; the other type is called non-deceptive counterfeit which means the consumers are well aware of illegal markets and the availability of bogus products. In the later situation, the consumers may be well aware of counterfeits simply based on price, quality, or the type of outlet. This research will discuss

under the context of non-deceptive counterfeits and demonstrate key variables for decreasing counterfeits consumptions in the special Chinese luxury brand market.

The motivations of luxury brand consumption are studied by previous literatures on social factors and personality factors (Phau and Teah 2009), but the effects of reference group and word-of-mouth (here after WOM for short) communications on luxury brands have not been well tested yet as I could be aware. Although the study by Mandel, Petrova, and Cialdini (2006) demonstrated that the similarity between successful other described in the story and recipient of the story could increase recipients' preference for luxury brands, they only indirectly supported the argument on reference group influence on luxury brand evaluation. Since previous studies on luxury brand have addressed the importance of advertising and its function relevant context (e.g., Wilcox, Kim, and Sen 2009), for a better luxury brand promotion by luxury brand manager it is also really important to investigate consumers' responses after exposure to WOM communications. WOM communications are the dissemination of information through people and they are more influential in forming or reinforcing attitudes once they reach a person, compared to media communications (Engel, Kollat, and Blackwell 1968). Consumers are now better to exchange information through internet interaction such as online forums and blogs. Thus, this research seeks to address effects of these particular online communications on evaluations of luxury brands and purchase intentions for luxury brands.

To better understand how WOM could influence consumer evaluation and purchase of luxury brands, I conducted two actual experiments. The first one is about the impacts of WOM valence and product lines on genuine luxury brand whereas the second experiment is

on the vital roles of subjective norm and social functions on counterfeits consumption. Findings indicate that positive WOM communication increases evaluation and has stronger effect than negative WOM communication. The reason is that luxury brand enjoys high brand equity which is the key issue for contributing negative to sender instead of brand when consumers are exposed to negative WOM. And publicly consumed products of luxury brands are more welcome by consumers. Specially, two social functions, namely social-adjustive function and value-expressive function, served by luxury brands are positively related. Furthermore, when social-adjustive function is pronounced, luxury brand preference is high on both genuine products and counterfeits. However, since subjective norm referring to anti-counterfeits is activated by WOM, it will decrease counterfeit consumptions. The results are consistent with Functional Theory of Attitudes (DeBono 1987) and Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen 1985), which I used as the theoretical framework.

1.2 Research Objectives

The research aims to investigate how WOM communication could influence consumers' purchase decisions on luxury brands, genuine products or counterfeits. It tests the product categories verifying product conspicuousness of the same brand and examines brand familiarity within same product line. The relationship between genuine luxury brand and counterfeit luxury brand will also be compared. Specifically, the research objectives of this research are as followings:

First, this research aims to examine the stronger effect of positive WOM (vs. negative

WOM) on the purchase of luxury brands. The valence of WOM (i.e., whether the opinions from WOM communications are positive or negative) and volume (i.e., the amount of WOM) are believed to be the two important WOM attributes studied in previous literatures (Herr, Kardes, and Kim 1991). Previous publications focus on measuring advertising rather than interpersonal influence on luxury brand consumptions. For example, Wilcox, Kim, and Sen (2009) used function-relevant advertising to decrease counterfeit consumption for luxury brands by recommendation of value-expressive function appeal instead of social-adjustive function appeal. Mandel, Petrova, and Cialdini (2006) examined the impact of media depictions of success (or failure) on consumers' desire for luxury brands. Different from existing research on counterfeit/genuine luxury brand and advertising effects, this article focuses on examining the effectiveness of using word-of-mouth to charity as purchase/repatronage intentions for luxury brands.

Second, this research attempts to demonstrate that publicly consumed product has a higher level of brand preference and purchase intention, compared to privately consumed product. It is also a response to a call for research on type of products in word-of-mouth communication context (Cheema and Kaikati 2010). Since consumptions of public products are more conspicuous while private products are less visible to others, it is believed that the willingness of communications between consumers will be lowered for privately consumed product of luxury brands. Therefore, WOM communications are more persuasive for publicly consumed product than for privately consumed product.

The third objective of this research is trying to extend the research on WOM by using functional theory of attitude which is well discussed in media communication. The impact of

two social attitude functions served by luxury brands, namely social-adjustive function and value-expressive function, mediate the relationship between WOM communication and consumer luxury brand evaluation. Functional theory of attitude assumes that certain individualistic needs are met by attitudes; attitudes allow the individuals to execute successfully certain plans and achieve goals (Katz 1960). Eagly and Chaiken (1993) define the attitudes that allow the individual to express his or her underlying values and dispositions to be “value expressive function”, and demonstrate “social adjustive function” as attitudes formed on the basis of how well they allow individuals to fit into important social situations and behave in ways appropriate to various reference groups. Luxury brand attitudes serve an important social role, aiding in one’s self-expression (value-expressive) and social interaction (social-adjustive). For example, Wilcox, Kim, and Sen (2009) found luxury brand attitudes served a social-adjustive function, a value-expressive function or both. Consistent with previous literatures, this research also focuses on social-adjustive function and value-expressive function activated by luxury brand consumption. Furthermore, I try to use this functional theory of attitude in studying the impacts of WOM and product categories on luxury brand preferences.

Last, this thesis will provide managerial recommendations to luxury brand managers for promoting luxury brand by a means of WOM, because it could increase subjective norm which moderates the relationship between attitude functions and attitude towards counterfeit luxury brand. By studying the brand familiarity and information channel for receiving referrals for luxury brands, I found WOM was also an effective way to decrease counterfeit consumption based on the social pressure of anti-counterfeits from WOM persuasions.

1.3 Organization of the Thesis

Following Chapter 1 on introduction, the literature reviews on genuine and counterfeit luxury brand, functional theory of attitudes, and word-of-mouth communication are presented in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 is the conceptual framework and hypotheses development. Chapter 4 describes research method with details of two pretests and two main experiments described. Chapter 5 reports the results of two studies and all hypotheses are examined in this part. The thesis concludes with Chapter 6 which presents final conclusions, contributions and implications, and research limitations.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter 1 introduced the phenomenon of genuine and counterfeit luxury brand in China and identified a need to better understand why consumers buy luxury brands. To achieve the objectives demonstrated by the previous chapter, Chapter 2 starts with a brief explanation about genuine and counterfeit luxury brands, followed by an illustration of the research frameworks and conceptual foundations including the Functional Theory of Attitudes, Theory of Reasoned Action, and Theory of Planned Behavior.

2.1 Purchase of Luxury Brands

2.1.1 Conceptualization of Luxury Brand

There is a commonly agreement in literatures to define luxury goods as particular branded products that bring esteem on the owner. Hence, it seems that these psychological benefits are the main factor distinguishing luxury goods from non-luxury products. Early research by Veblen (1899) discussed luxury goods in a social context “The Theory of the Leisure Class” and concluded that the status of luxury goods depended on both the product attributes and the consumer (especially social-economic status). It is also argued that the category of inaccessible luxury goods products can be regarded as personalized luxury products that are characterized by an extremely high purchase price (Vicker and Renand 2003).

However, there should be a difference between luxury goods and luxury brands and it’s necessary to distinguish luxury brand-labeled products (luxury brands) from luxury products.

Bourne's (1957) framework concluded that the luxury-necessity was one of the dimensions for product which referred to not commonly owned or used (e.g., golf clubs and trash compactor). For publicly consumed luxury product, the brand choice is influenced by others; and for privately consumed luxury product, the brand choice is less likely to be influenced by others.

Similar with luxury good definition (Vicker and Renand 2003), luxury brand is previously mentioned solely in terms of high price and only a certain elite could be able to consume such luxury brand. However, expensive products may not necessarily be seen as luxuries. Furthermore, Dubois, Czellar, and Laurent (2005) provided three attitude segments on luxury in a Western culture context: elitist (appropriate only for a small elite), democratic (everyone should be able to have access to them), and distance (luxury is a different world to which they do not belong). Phau and Prendergast (2000) suggested that luxury brands could be defined to have four factors: evoke exclusivity, have a well known brand identity, enjoy high brand awareness and perceived quality, and retain sales levels and consumer loyalty. Vigneron and Johnson (2004) defined luxury brands as those that provided extra pleasure and flattered all senses at once, and expanded on this description to argue that psychological benefits, rather than functional benefits, provided by luxury products were the key distinguishing factors that set luxury products apart from non-luxury products which is similar with the definition of luxury goods. Wiedman, Hennigs, and Siebels (2009) concluded that consumers' luxury value perceptions were based on social, individual, functional, and financial aspects. And they explored four key dimensions of luxury value: financial value (price), functional value (usability, quality, and uniqueness), individual value (self-identity, hedonic, and materialistic),

and social value (conspicuousness, and prestige). A customer's luxury value perception and the motives for luxury brand consumption are not simply tied to a set of social aspects of displaying status, success, distinction and the human desire to impress other people, but also depend on the nature of the financial, functional and individual utilities of the certain luxury brand. Based on this argument, the core social-based value of luxury brands is more important and the consumption of luxury brands is motivated rather than solely materialism or hedonic consumption.

2.1.2 Motivations for Purchasing Luxury Brands

Studies of the motivations for luxury consumption fall into two broad categories: personal orientation and social orientation. Personal factors like materialism (Wong and Ahuvia 1998) and hedonic consumption (Schwarz and Xu 2011) are studied to be associated with luxury brand. Schwarz and Xu (2011) found the reason for consumer's need of advice was that consumer's opportunity to learn from experience was impaired because hedonic experiences were fleeting. So hedonic experience associated with luxury brand is a key driver of luxury brand consumption. Hagtvædt and Patrick (2009) suggested that because of the hedonic potential associated with luxury brand, the luxury brand was shown to be sensitive to inconsistent brand cues and consequently decreased brand and brand extension evaluations. And hedonic consumption is related to reference group and others' advices, because once time has passed, consumers rely on their general knowledge to reconstruct what the experience must have been, which is the knowledge they use in hedonic prediction and choice.

Another major personal orientation motivation for luxury consumption is materialism (Prendergast and Wong 2003; Tatzel 2002). Wong and Ahuvia (1998) provided evidence that materialism was positively related to preference for luxury goods. Empirical evidence has shown that compared to low materialists, high materialists are more likely to value expensive objects that convey prestige, and objects that enhance the owner's appearance (Richins 1994). For high materialists, product consumptions provide a path for obtaining happiness and status (Richins and Dawson 1992). Because of hedonic potential associated with luxury brand, there is also a close connection between conspicuous luxury consumption and materialism. And Tsai (2005) established a model specifying the antecedents and consequence of personal orientation towards luxury-brand orientation and recommended that should meet the needs of self-directed pleasure, self-gift giving, congruity with internal self and quality assurance for building and strengthening brand loyalty. Several studies offer indirect support for a possible link between materialism and self-monitoring which is treated as the measurement for value-expressive function vs. social-adjustive function (DeBono and Packer 1991). Rose and DeJesus's (2007) research suggested that self-monitoring was positively related to belonging motivation and buying-is-for-belonging beliefs which generated materialism.

Socially orientated purchasing behavior means external driven and reflects a desire to impress others. Sangkhawasi and Johri (2007) found the materialism level and perceived status associated with status brands amongst Bangkok people. Therefore, besides personal orientation (including hedonic experience, materialism, and self-monitoring), another focus on luxury brand consumption is consumer's need for status (Han, Nunes, and Dreze 2010) and it is believed that luxury brands may be used to enhance one's social status (Mandel,

Petrova, and Cialdini 2006). The desire for social relationships is one of the most fundamental and universal of all human needs (Baumeister and Leary 1995). Consumers are influenced by their own groups (Bearden and Etzel 1982), those they aspire to be like (Escalas and Bettman 2005), and those with whom they want to avoid being associated (White and Dahl 2007). Berthon et al. (2009) deduced that luxury brands had three components: the objective (material), the subjective (individual), and the collective (social). The last symbolic dimension means a constructed and evolved narrative, myth, or dream-world. So it has two aspects: the value a luxury brand signals to others, and the value a luxury brand signals to the signalers (Berthon et al. 2009). Based on the communication argument, brand choice can send meaningful social signals to other consumers about the type of person using that brand. Decades of research indicate that consumers use the symbolic nature of consumption as a way to communicate information about themselves to others (Berger and Heath 2007; Shavitt and Nelson 2002). While research which is based on theories of signaling and conspicuous consumption suggests that more explicit markers facilitate communication, other work examines the utility of subtle signals and highlights the communication value of less explicit signals (Berger and Ward 2008). Han, Nunes, and Dreze (2010) demonstrated how consumers' preferences for conspicuously or inconspicuously branded luxury goods correspond predictably with their desire to associate or dissociate with members of their own and other groups.

Building on the existing findings regarding personal orientation (including hedonic experience, materialism, and self-monitoring) and social orientation (signals and subtle signals), in the present research I investigate these effects in a domain previously unexplored

by researchers. It is proposed that when consumers receiving comments from others, their luxury brand evaluations could be influenced which lead to change the purchases of originals.

2.1.3 Counterfeit vs. Genuine Luxury Brands

Counterfeits are defined as illegally made products that resemble the genuine goods but are typically of lower quality in terms of performance, reliability, or durability (Lai and Zaichkowsky 1999). Most purchasers of genuine luxury brands pursue value for brand, prestige and image benefits, but unwilling to pay a high price for it. Thus, it is common to associate counterfeiting with luxury brands such as Louis Vuitton, Gucci, and Rolex, leading research on luxury brands to focus on comparing the motivation between counterfeit and genuine goods.

Grossman and Shapiro (1988) demonstrate that there are two forms of deception: deceptive and non-deceptive counterfeiting. Non-deceptive counterfeiting refers to the practice of consumers knowingly purchasing counterfeits. And it has been summarized that non-deceptive counterfeits have the following characteristics: 1) they pose little or no health or safety risk to the public; 2) they have little demonstrable impact on brands being counterfeited; 3) they are known by consumers to be counterfeit—indeed, consumers can be viewed as accomplices in the activities; and 4) they provide some demonstrable benefit (e.g., employment) to the nation (Cordell, Wongtada, and Kieschnick 1996; Phau and Prendergast 2000). On the other side, deceptive counterfeits possess some or all of the following characteristics: 1) consumers are unaware that they are purchasing counterfeits; 2) there is potential health and safety risk; 3) governments are experiencing a calculable loss from their

operation; 4) the brand is experiencing a demonstrable loss of sales and/or equity (Green and Smith 2002). This research will investigate the counterfeiting phenomenon in the latter context, non-deceptive counterfeiting.

The negative impacts that counterfeiting has on brands and their values derive from many sources as follows. First, many counterfeit goods can be especially dangerous for consumers because counterfeits could be poorly manufactured and involve health and safety risks. Such dangerous risks are most evident in products such as pharmaceuticals that can cause illness (Grossman and Shapiro 1988). Second, sales of firms which produce original products and brands could be affected if demand is diverted to counterfeit products. It is believed that counterfeits have a damaging effect on the image of a brand built on exclusivity and specialty. Studies have found that, for luxury goods such as Rolex watches, consumers of counterfeit goods are highly unlikely to ever purchase a real brand and that owners of the real goods do not believe that the image and quality of possessing the brand are compromised (e.g., Nia and Zaichkowsky 2000). Third, counterfeits will reduce firms' innovation motivations and influence the development of the whole industry market. Because counterfeits are exact copies of the original and are often produced with the same designs, molds, and specifications as the genuine brands (Wilcox, Kim, and Sen 2009), the firms with original brands spend immense amounts of money in the development of new products, promotional and other marketing expenditures, and in nurturing the associated while pirated products preempt adequate recovery of R&D monies spent (Hedrick 1990). Instead, counterfeiting deprives the owners of a return on the large investment often required to develop them. If such rewards for firms with original brands are not forthcoming, future

innovation is less likely to occur in the future (Grossman and Shapiro 1988). Last but not least, the negative impact of counterfeiting also includes the social costs associated with lost government tax revenues, the suffering that results from consumption of unsafe counterfeits, and/or the unemployment in countries where the non-counterfeit goods are produced (McDonald and Roberts 1994).

Much research can be found in the literature that deals with anti-counterfeit strategies from the supply side to protect brands and corporations (e.g., Shultz and Nill 2002). Abouljian and Grewal (2009) summarized the legal position subsequent to a series of legal actions in Europe and the United States against eBay by luxury brand owners. Research on the diffusion of new software in software market recommends that efforts to discourage counterfeiting be employed subsequent to the initial introduction of the first-generation software, so that counterfeits would ensure a larger market base for subsequent versions (Givon, Mahajan, and Muller 1995). Research suggests that corporations can use the following ten tools to decrease counterfeits: do nothing, co-opt the offenders, educate stakeholders at the source, use the advertising, do investigation and surveillance, develop high-tech labeling, create a moving target, enact legislation, use coalitions, or cede the industry (Schultz and Saporito 1996).

Raising research also becomes to focus on investigating counterfeiting from the demand for these counterfeit products. Some literatures are the cross-culture study and explore consumer evaluation of counterfeits based on the country of original, because ethnocentrism and country of origin of the original manufacturer jointly influence consumer perceptions of risk and attitudes about counterfeits. For example, study by Chapa, Minor, and Maldonado (2006) compared the effect of product category differences and country of origin on Mexican

and American attitudes toward a counterfeit product. And results revealed that better-educated consumers were less likely to purchase counterfeits and although China was the world's largest source of counterfeits, American counterfeits were more likely to be purchased than Chinese counterfeits. They also found that consumer responses toward counterfeits were more favorable for products used in public than those consumed in private.

Ethical issue and moral belief of consumers respond differently toward counterfeits are studied. For example, Lee and Yoo (2010) demonstrated that the perceived quality and price advantage of counterfeit, materialism, and subjective norm had positive effects on the attitude towards counterfeit products while consumer ethics had a negative effect on the attitude towards counterfeit products. They also found the positive relationship between attitude counterfeit luxury brands and purchase intentions of counterfeits. Wilcox, Kim, and Sen (2009) concluded that when consumers' luxury brand attitudes served a social-adjustive rather than a value-expressive function, consumers' preferences for counterfeit brands are greater. And the likelihood to buy the counterfeit was also moderated by moral beliefs and brand conspicuousness. Han, Nune, and Dreze (2010) introduced "brand prominence" and proposed a taxonomy that assigned consumers to one of the following four groups according to their wealth and need for status: patricians, parvenus, poseurs, and proletarians. Wealthy consumers who are low in need for status want to associate with their own kind and pay a premium for quiet goods only they can recognize. Wealthy consumers high in need for status use loud luxury goods to signal to the less affluent that they are not one of them. Those who are high in need for status but can't afford true luxury use loud counterfeits to emulate those they recognize to be wealthy.

These studies have contributed significantly to the cumulative understanding of luxury brand consumption behavior and importance of social motivations. Most of the time, purchasing luxury brands may enhance one's social status as they cost more, without providing any additional direct utility over their cheaper counterparts (Dubois and Duquesne 1993). As previously noted, some research finds that materialistic individuals are strongly influenced by the perceptions of others when selecting products and prefer possessions that are publicly visible and highly prestigious (Richins 1994). However, little empirical attention has been devoted to understanding how interpersonal influence and reference group impact luxury brand evaluations. It appears that a considerable potential exists for enriched conceptualizations and new research directions on luxury brand consumption. These are essential in addressing several significant gaps in understand luxury brand phenomena that exists at social context like the continued importance of interpersonal influence and product lines. In this research, I suggest that, quality considerations aside, people typically consume such luxury brands in the serve of important social goals (e.g., Bearden and Etzel 1982; Wilcox, Kim, and Sen 2009). The following review of articles will be about reference group influence and WOM communications for luxury brand purchase.

2.2 Word-of-mouth Communications

Consumers can learn from their own experience and other consumers' opinions. Therefore, they tend to be influenced by their social interactions with others when they are making purchase decisions. In general, WOM refers to the dissemination of information

through communication among people. Although research on the effect of advertising is prior to research on WOM, WOM communication working as a means of marketing information dissemination has been realized as a pervasive and intriguing phenomenon. Empirical evidence and common sense generally support the conclusion that media communications are most effective in creating awareness and providing information about a candidate, a product or an issue, while WOM communications are more influential in forming or reinforcing attitudes once they reach a person (Engel, Kollat, and Blackwell 1968).

Consumers are now better able to exchange information through online forums, chat rooms, and blogs meanwhile firms are gaining increasing capacity to initiate and manage consumers social interactions directly (Chen, Wang, and Xie 2011). Chevalier and Mayzlin (2006) examined the effect of consumer reviews on relative sales of books at online bookshops and found the strength and valence of reviews could influence the sale of a book. Also based on data set of Amazon.com, Chen, Wang, and Xie (2011) studied two forms of social interactions' (WOM and observational learning) differential impacts on product sales, their lifetime effects, and their interaction effects. Empirical result notes that consumers express a strong preference for positive emotions and information about a product in online reviews (Moe and Trusov 2011). Since previous literatures show that it's important for companies to concentrate on making an online feedback regarding their products whether it is positive or negative, this research focuses on investigating how the online communications between consumers could influence consumers' purchase decisions for luxury brands.

2.2.1 Valence of WOM Communications

The two important WOM attributes studies in the literatures are valence (i.e., whether the opinions from WOM are positive or negative) and volume (i.e., the amount of WOM) (Herr, Kardes, and Kim 1991). Volume of WOM may increase brand awareness while valence of WOM communications influences consumers' attitudes towards brands. Positive WOM gives either direct or indirect recommendation for product purchase.

Negative (vs. positive) product information is generally perceived as more diagnostic or informative and weighted more heavily in consumer judgments (Herr, Kardes, and Kim 1991). However, Lacznia, DeCarlo, and Ramaswami (2001) suggested that when consumers exposed to a negative WOM about a more-favorable brand, they would be more likely to attribute the negative towards the communicator than the brand. Therefore, negative WOM could be less likely to influence the favorable brand evaluation because such negative (vs. positive) opinions are also more likely to be attributed to the transmitter, not considering as the brand's failure (Mizerski 1982). Furthermore, Berger, Sorensen, and Rasmussen (2009) argued that negative information could have positive effects by making consumers more awareness or encourage the product to be top of mind.

Even though negative and positive information from WOM communications are widely prevalent in the marketplace and academic research, there has been no systematic investigation of how consumers process WOM communications about luxury brands. In this research, I attempt to bridge this gap and try to provide a theoretical framework for understanding how consumers process negative and positive information from others' online comments of luxury brands.

2.2.2 WOM Sender and Receiver

Marketers are getting more interested in harnessing the power of WOM communications. The effects of the different communication types on marketing are becoming critical. Some research focuses on discussing factors leading consumers to generate WOM as satisfaction or dissatisfaction. For example, Richins (1983) examined how the nature of the dissatisfaction, perceptions of blame for satisfaction, and perceptions of retailer responses could influence consumers to send negative WOM as one possible response of dissatisfaction of previous consumption experience. Chung and Darke (2006) examined the relationship between self-relevance and WOM by indicating that consumers were more likely to provide WOM for products relevant to self-concept than for more utilitarian products. The likelihood of generating WOM also relies on social identity because the power to influence others can be demonstrated when consumers “frame” their corporate betrayal to the public (Ward and Ostrom 2006).

Some academics focus on the impressive consequences of WOM and demonstrate that WOM communication exerts a strong influence on judgments of products from the WOM receiver’s aspect (Bearden and Etzel 1982; Herr, Kardes, and Kim 1991). WOM communication plays an important role in shaping consumers’ attitudes and behaviors. Research suggests that consumer choice is especially likely to be influenced by WOM when purchase is important (Lutz and Reilly 1973). One reason for consumers to appreciate WOM is that it is considered more reliable and trustworthy than other sources of information (Day 1971). Laczniak, DeCarlo, and Ramaswami (2001) used attribution theory to explain consumers’ responses to negative WOM. Their result suggested that when receivers attributed

the negativity of the WOM message to the brand, brand evaluations decreased; however, if receivers attributed the negative of the WOM message to the communicator, brand evaluations increased. So their study proved that source reliability could influence WOM impact on brand evaluation. Duhan et al. (1997) found that factors such as consumers' previous knowledge affected consumers' information reception from different sources.

This thesis will investigate consumer responses after receiving WOM communications about the focal brand. Therefore, I will follow the second stream on studying consumer responses exposure to WOM.

2.2.3 WOM and Advertising

Since WOM is used by marketers as an innovative marketing means to attract consumers, marketing practitioners recognize the general importance of WOM communications. However, unlike advertising and other forms of communication, neither the timing of WOM nor the content of consumers is under the control of the manufacturers (Kamins, Folkes, and Perner 1997). Based on this complex phenomena, research suggests that corporations could use reward programs and improve brand strength to create WOM communications between consumers and this strategy is well supported by recently literatures. Biyalogorsky, Gerstner, and Libai (2001) examined the way to manage word-of-mouth without explicit reward programs; Godes and Mayzlin (2009) described mechanisms for encouraging WOM absent reward payments from the firm. In addition, Ryu and Feick (2007) suggested that weak brand should make more efforts on referral reward program than strong brand because weak brand consumers were not confidence of the perceived quality.

Many models of WOM communications have exposed subjects only to WOM stimuli. In fact because consumers often receive negative or positive brand information together with the advertising, effects of integrating advertising and WOM communications on message processing and response has been studied recently in marketing research. For example, negative WOM communication reduces the perceived credibility of advertising as well as brand attitudes and purchase intentions (Smith and Vogt 1995). Many recent studies compare the effects of WOM and traditional marketing, especially for e-business industry research. For example, Trusov, Bucklin, and Pauwels (2009) found that the estimates from VAR model showed WOM referrals had substantially longer carryover effects than traditional marketing actions and produce substantially higher response elasticity. It is also argued that WOM often complements and extends the effects of advertising (Hogan, Lemon, and Libai 2004). In contrast to negative WOM, firm's advertising efficiency is related to positive WOM. Luo and Homburg (2007) suggested that two intermediate outcomes of consumer satisfaction, a firm's advertising and promotion efficiency and its human capital performance should not be neglected. On one hand, consumer satisfaction generates free WOM recommendation and has the possibility for saving subsequent marketing costs; on the other hand, consumer satisfaction has a positive influence on a company's excellence in human capital. So marketing manager should consider and balance the WOM promoting strategy and advertising promoting strategy for different products and brand positions in the industry.

2.2.4 WOM and Luxury Brand Consumption

Park and Lessig (1977) identified information, utilitarian, and value-expressive influences. Information influence is based on the desire to make informed decisions; utilitarian reference group influence is reflected in attempts to comply with wishes of others to achieve rewards or avoid punishments; value-expressive influence is characterized by the need for psychological association with a person or group and is reflected in the acceptance of positions expressed by others. Bearden and Etzel (1982) confirmed reference group influences on consumer purchase decision and found that when a product would be seen by others, influence for the brand of the product should be strong.

Current research examines the implications of reference group for luxury brand firm behavior and suggests that marketers of such luxury goods need to consider two important social forces for the presence of reference groups: the desire of leaders to distinguish themselves from followers and the countervailing desire of followers to assimilate with leaders (Amaldoss and Jain 2008). Amaldoss and Jain (2010) examined how reference groups affect the product line decisions of firms and found that in the presence of strong reference group effects, limited editions and multiple products can help improve firm's profits. Their findings explained why some luxury goods manufacturers offered limited editions of their products, whereas some others marketed multiple product lines.

While a great deal of research has studied how social factors and personality factors influence consumers' attitude towards counterfeits and originals of luxury brands (Phau and Teah 2009), little research of which I am aware has directly examined the effect of reference group or WOM on consumers' purchases of luxury brands. One exception is the study by

Mandel, Petrova, and Cialdini (2006) which found that participants who could easily imagine having future success indicated a greater preference for luxury brands compared to when they could not easily imagine being successful. Their study revealed that social comparison can result in assimilation effects, saying individuals changed their judgments in a direction towards the comparison target. Reference groups influence brand evaluations and consumers are especially susceptible to reference group effects when the product is a publicly consumed luxury (Bearden and Etzel 1982; Childers and Rao 1992). Thus, WOM comments from reference groups can impact luxury brand evaluation. More generally, this research builds on previous work on references by examining purchase of genuine luxury brands across product lines to consider how WOM could decrease counterfeits of luxury brands.

2.3 Functional Theory of Attitudes

2.3.1 Content of Two Attitude Functions: Value-expressive and Social-adjustive

Functional theory of attitudes was firstly studied to understand the public opinion process as a basic theory in some social psychology articles (e.g., Katz 1960). The theory assumes that certain individualistic needs are met by attitudes and attitudes allow the individual to execute successfully certain plans and achieve goals. According to attitudes' motivational basis, Katz (1960) grouped the major functions which attitudes performed for the personality: *utilitarian/adjustive*, attitude that people strive to maximize the rewards in their external environment and to minimize the penalties; *ego-defensive*, attitudes formed to protect oneself from accepting undesirable or threatening truths; *knowledge*, attitudes formed to give meaning to objects; and *value-expressive*, attitudes that allow the individual to express his or her underlying values and dispositions.

Recently, marketing research suggests that motivational factors have important and meaningful effects on a wide range of social behaviors. DeBono (1987) suggested that attitudes could serve: *ego defensive*, attitudes formed to protect oneself from accepting undesirable or threatening truths; *knowledge(object appraisal)*, attitudes formed to give meaning to objects; *value expressive*, attitudes that allow the individual to express his or her underlying values and dispositions; and *social adjustive*, attitudes formed on the basis of how well they allow individuals to fit into important social situations and behave in ways appropriate to various reference groups. Similarly, a study by Grewal, Mehta, and Kardes (2004) on the repeat purchases of consumer durable goods demonstrated the effects of

utilitarian function of attitudes, *knowledge* function of attitudes, *value-expressive* function of attitudes, and *social-adjustive* function of attitudes. The latter two functions, namely value-expressive function and social-adjustive function, served by attitudes are social functions of self-presentation and self-expression (Han, Nunes, and Dreze 2010). As literatures have supported the social motivations of luxury brand consumptions, value-expressive and social-adjustive functions should be the two major functions served by luxury brands. The empirical study by Wilcox, Kim, and Sen (2009) also confirmed that consumers' desire for counterfeit luxury brands hinged on the social motivations (i.e., to express themselves and/or to fit in) underlying their luxury brand preferences. This research focuses on these two attitude functions (value-expressive and social-adjustive).

2.3.2 Attitude Functions and Self-monitoring

The personality difference such as high self-monitoring or low self-monitoring is used to distinguish the difference for consumers about their attitude functions served by attitudes.

Snyder (1974) proposed a social psychological construct of self-monitoring (self-observation and self-control guided by situational cues to social appropriateness) of expressive behavior and self-presentation. Low self-monitors (who endorse items such as, “my behavior is usually an expression of my true inner feelings, attitudes, and beliefs”) and high self-monitors (who endorse items such as, “in different situations and with different people, I often act like very different persons”) vary in their abilities and motivations to pay attention to inner personality and situational factors.

Furthermore, DeBono (1987) suggested that social attitudes of low self-monitoring

individuals may be serving a value-expressive function while attitudes of high self-monitoring individuals may be serving a social-adjustive function. Later, most of studies on examining the role of attitude functions in persuasion and social judgment use Self-monitoring Scale (Snyder 1974) to contrast the two social attitude functions and employ self-monitoring construct to identify the social functions that individuals' attitudes are assumed to serve (e.g., Petty and Wegener 1998; Shavitt and Nelson 2002). So research has generally supported these assumptions, suggesting that personality differences in self-monitoring tend to predict differences in the functions that one's attitudes tend to serve. Low self-monitors' attitudes serve to establish their private identities (what was labeled as the value-expressive function) and high self-monitors' attitudes generally serve to establish their public identities (what was labeled as the social-adjustive function). Several previous studies have shown that high self-monitors respond more favorably to image-oriented ads whereas low self-monitors respond more favorably to ads about quality (e.g., DeBono and Packer 1991).

2.3.3 Attitude Functions and Persuasion

The functional theory of attitudes in consumer research has been implied into studying the effectiveness of persuasion and advertising research. Recently researchers have developed a variety of methods that capitalize on new personality and social constructs to identify or manipulate functions of attitudes (Shavitt 1992).

Early research typically uses personality differences to operationalize and identify attitude functions that are relevant to consumer attitudes. As the previous part mentioned, the

assessments of self-monitoring have been used to identify the social functions served by individuals' attitudes, focusing on private vs. public identity motives (Snyder and DeBono 1987). DeBono (1987) demonstrated that persuasive appeals are accepted by high self-monitors to the extent that the appeals address the social-adjustive function (e.g., messages about the consensus of their peers). By contrast, appeals are accepted by low self-monitors to the extent that the appeals address the value-expressive function (e.g., messages about the values reflected by the advocated attitude).

Some researchers examine situational characteristics and focus particular attention on roles of some internal and external factors of the message in eliciting attitude functions. Internal factor of the message means that by varying the content in which attitude-relevant information is encountered, studies could directly manipulate the presence of particular functional goals (e.g., Kelman 1961). For example, Johar and Sirgy (1991) examined value-expressive and utilitarian advertising appeals. Similarly, Zhang and Gelb (1996) investigated the matching between value expressed in advertising and values in the American and Chinese cultures. The importance of attitude functions played in advertising leading some research believes that emotional ads evoke more positive responses for hedonic versus utilitarian products. Sun et al. (2001) observed that advertisers usually promote products in an emotional, image-oriented way, whereas for utilitarian products they more often use a rational, message-oriented appeal. In addition to attitude-relevant advertising, strong and weak arguments are also compared across high vs. low self-monitors. High self-monitors were persuaded by the physically attractive source only when they are presented strong arguments. In contrast, low self-monitoring individuals were persuaded by the physically attractive

source regardless of argument strength (DeBono and Telesca 1990).

As internal factors refer to contents of appeals, the external factors of situational characteristics include the order of messages (ad vs. WOM), context and so on. Brunel and Nelson (2003) found that message order and gender influenced message persuasion. Context variable may refer to surround message exposure or decision making such as dual-task processing because advertising by TV or radio is often a background medium that people listen to while they are simultaneously engaged in a wide range of other activities. As much research on attention shifts to advertisements has focused primarily on demonstrating how perceptual features can shift attention to advertisements (Bolls and Muehling 2007), research by Nielsen, Shapiro, and Mason (2010) showed that certain semantic characteristics of non-focal advertising elements may similarly attract attentions when consumers were focused on a primary task elsewhere in the visual field

In addition to the effects of situational and personality factors, attitude objects may play an important role in the functions of attitudes, and may provide a useful new basis for operationalizing attitude functions. In the domain of consumer behavior, this implies that products and brands should be thought of as potential sources of attitude functions. Attitude objects have been shown to play an important role in attitude functions and some products seem to serve primarily one purpose while other products may serve multiple purposes (Shavitt 1989). Shavitt (1990) examined the role of attitude objects in attitude functions and proposed that the purposes or functions that an object can serve, with some objects serving primarily a single type of purpose and some serving multi-functions. The interactive roles of personality and product have been examined for predicting advertising effects (Nelson, Keum,

and Yaros 2004). Schlosser (1998) applied the functional theory of attitudes to understand the influence of store atmosphere on store influences and he suggested that if store atmosphere acted as a social identity appeal, then an aesthetically pleasing atmosphere should positively influence quality perceptions of social identity products but not utilitarian products. However, branding also has important implications for persuasion and for the “function-matching” advantage: although utilitarian appeals are most persuasive for “utilitarian” products (and symbolic appeals are most persuasive for “symbolic” products) at the category level, limited research studied attitude functions changed with branding (LeBoeuf and Simmons 2010).

2.4 Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence

Bearden, Netemeyer, and Teel (1989) defined susceptibility to interpersonal influence as: the need to identify with or enhance one's image in the opinion of significant others through the acquisition and use of products and brands, the willingness to conform to the expectations of others regarding purchase decisions, and/or the tendency to learn about products and services by observing others or seeking information from others. Previous research on manifest susceptibility to interpersonal influence has suggested that it is a multidimensional construct and the two major dimensions of susceptibility to interpersonal influence are normative influence and informational influence (Deutsch and Gerard 1955). Normative influence is the tendency to conform to the expectation to others and consumer research has separated normative influence into value expressive and utilitarian influences (Bearden and

Etzel 1982). Informational influence is the tendency to accept information from others as evidence about reality and it may occur in two ways: knowledgeable of others or observation of others (Park and Lessig 1977).

The scale development of susceptibility to interpersonal influence was made by previous research by Park and Lessig (1977). However, Bearden, Netemeyer, and Teel (1989) pointed out that although the items of Park and Lessig (1977) Scale were useful in several subsequent studies, these measures had limitations because the statements were framed for particular product and brand decisions. Thus, they developed and tested a general measure of consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence which was widely cited by coming research.

As an important personality factor demonstrated that individuals differ in their responses to social influence, susceptibility to interpersonal influence attracted attentions of researchers. Through examining the relationship between consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence and attribution sensitivity, Netemeyer, Bearden, and Teel (1992) suggested that consumers who are susceptible to the influence of others are more likely to purchase products that they perceive will lead others to make favorable attributions about them, and avoid purchasing products that they perceive will lead others to evaluate them negatively. Kahle (1995) defined consumers who were low in susceptibility to normative influence as low role-relaxed consumers who were more interested in quality and predictable performance. Opposite to low role-relaxed consumers, high role-relaxed consumers believe superficial aspects of products are less important than utilitarian aspects.

Specifically, susceptibility to interpersonal influence should be important for collective culture (e.g., China). Prior research has confirmed that susceptibility to interpersonal

influence varies systematically across cultures, with susceptibility higher in collectivist rather than individualistic societies (Mourali, Laroche, and Pons 2005). Consistently, D'Rozario and Choudhury (2000) found that Chinese immigrants' susceptibility to both types of interpersonal influence decreased significantly as they identificationally-assimilate, whereas Armenian immigrants' susceptibility to both types of interpersonal influence decreased significantly as they structurally-assimilate into the Anglo-American macro-culture.

Previous research has suggested that individuals who are more susceptible to normative influences focus on the process of transmission and relationship building whereas individuals who are more amenable to informational influence emphasize the value of the information transmitted (Laroche et al. 2005). WOM is the dissemination of information through communication among people. Thus, a series of studies tested the relationship between WOM and susceptibility to interpersonal influence finding the conflicts results and some boundary conditions. Although research by Bone (1995) found that susceptibility to interpersonal influence did not moderate WOM, Bush et al. (2005) suggested that female teens' susceptibility to interpersonal influence and self-esteem were related to athlete WOM behavior. Hoffmann and Broekhuizen (2009) indicated the impact of interpersonal influences on consumers' investment decisions in a voluntary (free choice) and involuntary (confrontation) setting, and checked whether consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence moderated the impact of interpersonal influences. They found that consumers' investment choices were consistently influenced by the information and opinions of others, whereas consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence only strengthened the impact of interpersonal influence in a voluntary informational setting.

2.5 Theory of Reasoned Action, Theory of Planned Behavior and Subjective Norms

Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) theory of reasoned action (TRA) posits that overt behavior is a function of a person's intention depending on person's attitude towards the behavior and his/her social norms. The theory of planned behavior (TPB) (Ajzen 1991) as an extension of the theory of reasoned action takes perceived behavioral control into consideration besides the attitude and subjective norm. TPB provides a framework for expanding our understanding of the factors that influence public accountants' ethical behavior intentions (Buchan 2005). Studies have extended the TRA and TPB when applying them to consumer research. In addition to standard TPB variables (attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavior control), Hyde and White (2009) have incorporated self-identity and moral norm into the TPB as predictors. In summary, intentions to perform a behavior will be influenced by individual and interpersonal level factors. For subjective norm, it is a social factor referring to the perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform a given behavior (Ajzen 1991). Subjective norm plays a special important role when consumers are thinking about engaging in a new behavior and they would be more eager to do so if they felt that doing so would gain them approval (e.g., praise, accolades) from close, important people in their lives (Fitzmaurice 2005).

Generally, TPB and ethical theory are two theories often used in digital piracy studies. For example, research by Christensen and Eining (1991) found that attitude towards specific actions and the evaluations of social pressures were factors to determine other factors that

might affect software piracy. Yoon (2011) tested the digital piracy in China by using integrated model including two theories and found that moral obligation derived from ethical theory, and subjective norm derived from TPB influenced the behavior intentions of individual to commit digital piracy.

Similar with research on digital piracy, research has shown the effects of subjective norms on consumers' choices for buying counterfeited products. Although much research indicates that moral belief in studying counterfeited product consumptions (Wilcox, Kim and Sen 2009), several business ethical studies have considered whether subjective norms operate independently of moral norms increasing more intention on the role of subjective norm on consumer decision. Conner and Armitage (1998) suggested that moral norms should have an important influence on the performance of those behaviors with a moral or ethical dimension, and work in parallel with attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Ajzen and Driver (1992) used TPB to explore willingness to pay and found subjective norm, added to moral consideration determined how much money one would be willing to pay for a leisure activity. A study by Matos, Ituassu, and Rossi (2007) found that consumer intentions to buy counterfeited products were dependent on the attitudes they had toward counterfeits, which in turn were more influenced by perceived risk, whether consumers have bought a counterfeit before, subjective norm, integrity, price-quality inference and personal gratification. Ang et al. (2001) also considered social factors (i.e. informative susceptibility and normative susceptibility) and personality factors (i.e. value consciousness, integrity and personal gratification) as antecedents of consumer attitudes towards counterfeits.

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

The coming part is about the theoretical framework and the twelve hypotheses developed in this research on genuine luxury brand and counterfeit luxury brand. The functional theory of attitude and theory of planned behavior are the basis for hypotheses development.

Figure 1 illustrates the proposed process that consumers use to deal with WOM for genuine luxury brand in Study 1 and Study 2. It highlights two important propositions concerning receivers' attitudinal responses to WOM. First, the information conveyed by the sender in a positive or negative message is posited to influence receiver's attitude change. Second, product type of the focal brand is also thought to directly affect receivers' attitude functions. WOM valence and product type are predicted to interact in influencing consumer luxury brand evaluation. Specifically, it suggests that attitude functions mediate the WOM valence-luxury brand evaluation relationship and the product conspicuousness-luxury brand evaluation relationship. The receivers' attitude functions activated by the WOM are expected to affect their brand evaluations, which would lead to a difference in the willingness to purchase genuine or counterfeit luxury brands. It also illustrates the proposed process consumers use to deal with WOM and advertising on counterfeits, suggesting that WOM is an effective means to increase subjective norms.

Figure 1: Conceptual Model

3.1 WOM Valence and Luxury Brand Evaluation

Consumers use consumed product and brand to express their own beliefs and to communicate with others. They want to be like high status group or to avoid being associated to low status group (White and Dahl 2007). Social comparison and interpersonal influence are indirectly studied in luxury brand context. Vigneron and Johnson (2004) pointed that the possession of luxury brands may be more appreciated by consumers who are highly materialistic and susceptible to interpersonal influence. Mandel, Petrova, and Cialdini (2006) found that reading a story about a similar/successful other (such as a business major from the same university) increased consumers' expectations about their own future wealth, which in turn increased their desires for luxury brand. Furthermore, Berthon et al. (2009) demonstrated the collective social component with other two components, the objective and the subjective. Those studies illustrate the influence of reference groups on consumptions of prestige or luxury brands, providing supports for investigating WOM and luxury brands.

WOM has acquired significance because of its high incidence rate in the marketplace as well as the persuasive role it plays in influencing consumers' attitudes and purchase decisions (Bone 1995). Both positive and negative WOM communications can have a strong influence on consumers' behavior and on ensuing business performance (Arndt 1967). Even though both positive and negative word of mouth have been found to influence consumer's attraction to products in marketing research (Bone 1995; Smith and Vogt 1995), only a few studies have examined WOM as a promotion-related information source for luxury brands. Vigneron and Johnson's (1999) framework included personal aspects such as hedonist and perfectionist

motives inspired from the work of Dubois and Laurent (1995). They attempted to establish a balance between personal and interpersonal motives for consumption of luxury brands. However, the effects on luxury brand evaluations were not measured.

The persuasiveness of WOM, saying how WOM could be used to convince others to buy the brand, may depend on the content. Thus, it is not surprising that the valence of WOM has a strong effect on consumer memory and judgment. Positive WOM could increase the brand evaluation on quality and image because WOM is a more credible source compared to advertising. However, there are arguments on the effects of negative WOM and research on negative WOM in general has been limited (Laczniak, DeCarlo, and Ramaswami 2001). Some studies found stronger WOM effects when subjects were exposed to negative information. For example, Smith and Vogt (1995) found that negative WOM communication significantly reduced brand attitudes and purchase intentions. However, the others found stronger WOM effects when subjects were exposed to positive information. As previous discussed, luxury brands enjoy high brand loyalty and equity. Thus it's possible that receivers attribute the negativity to the communicator (Laczniak, DeCarlo, and Ramaswami 2001). Based on the attribution theory, WOM which includes positive product reviews and purchase recommendations is more likely to lead to product purchase than WOM that contains negative product reviews. Accordingly, I formed the following hypothesize (H):

H1: Positive word-of-mouth (WOM) will have a stronger effect on luxury brand evaluation than negative WOM.

3.2 Product Conspicuousness and Luxury Brand Evaluation

Two forms of conspicuousness consumption (publicly versus privately consumed products; discretionary versus necessary products) are related to reference groups that influence brand meanings (Bourne 1957). As this research's focus is on luxury brands, I will not study the conspicuousness of discretionary-necessary products.

Previous research on luxury goods consumption investigates brand prominence by comparing the conspicuousness of a brand's mark or logo (Han, Nunes, and Dreze 2010). Conspicuousness of products should be reasonable to play similar role as the conspicuousness of a brand's mark or logo. Obviously public products are more visible to others and the consumptions of public (versus private) products are more conspicuous. Bearden and Etzel (1982) confirmed reference group influences on consumer purchase decision and found that when a product would be seen by others, influence for the brand of the product should be strong. Consumer research has shown that interpersonal influence can have an impact on such decisions as the conspicuousness of the product, service heterogeneity, product evaluations, and brand selections (e.g. Bearden, Netemeyer, and Teel 1989). Publicly consumed products with luxury brands are more likely to be purchased, compared to privately consumed products, because such publicly consumed phenomenon can better serve social functions and fit the conspicuousness motivation for luxury brands. Analogously, it is expected that:

H2: Product conspicuousness is positively related to consumer's luxury brand evaluation.

For luxury brand product, the degree to which product is discussed with referents and the degree to which product is observed in the consumption process should positively affect the degree of reference-group influence. And the ability to observe consumption is likely to be affected by the degree of conspicuousness of the product. Thus, product conspicuousness has a significant influence on the propensity to follow product recommendation (Senecai and Nantel 2004). As a facet of social influence, positive WOM may be more persuasive for public (versus private) products and create a greater likelihood of adoption by others (Bearden and Etzel 1982), especially for high-self-monitoring individuals (attitudes towards luxury brands serving a social-adjustive function). Conversely, for products that are not conspicuously consumed, the individual has little opportunity to interact with peers regarding the purchase of the product or the appropriate brand to purchase (Childers and Rao 1992).

Things that are publicly consumed may stand a better chance of producing communities than privately consumed things, so publicly consumed products are more influenced by others because compared to privately consumed product it has more chance to be seen and judged by reference group. Based on the above argument, this research also wants to test the interaction effect of WOM and product conspicuousness on luxury brand evaluation.

H3: The effect of WOM on luxury brand evaluation will be greater for products high (vs. low) in product conspicuousness.

3.3 Value-expressive Function and Social-adjustive Function

3.3.1 Mediating Roles of Attitude Functions

The value-expressive function served by attitudes allows the individuals to express their underlying values and dispositions while social-adjustive function served by attitudes refers to attitudes formed on the basis of how well they allow individuals to fit into important social situations and behave in ways appropriate to various reference groups (DeBono 1987). Consumers whose attitudes serve a social-adjustive function respond more favorably to image than quality whereas consumers whose attitudes serve a value-expressive function respond more favorably to quality than image (Snyder and DeBono 1985). As high quality and excellent image associated with luxury brands are proved by previous literatures, the two social functions should be associated with luxury brand consumptions at the point of purchase. For example, a study by Prendergast and Wong (2003) in Hong Kong found that the mothers who had purchased luxury brands of clothing for their infants were motivated by both good quality and design associated with luxury brands. As luxury brands are commonly believed to have high quality of their products and excellent image or design, attitudes may serve the value-expressive function, the social-adjustive function, or both of the two social functions (Wilcox, Kim, and Sen 2009). In addition, the results of Grewal, Mehta, and Kardes (2004) suggested that for durable product consumption, social-adjustive and value-expressive functions were positively correlated to each other. Similarly, Wilcox, Kim, and Sen (2009) also found the positive relationship between these two attitude functions and the social functions should be the predictors for luxury brand consumptions.

Since WOM is considered more credible and trustworthy compared to other sources of information (Day 1971), attitudes towards products and brands can be changed by the comments from others. WOM communication plays an important role in shaping consumers' attitudes and behaviors. When the attitudes towards brands are changed, their functions should also be influenced by WOM communications.

Consumers seem to prefer obtaining information matching the internal needs. Schlosser (1998) found that the relationship between store atmosphere and the store's social image would be mediated by quality perceptions of the social identity rather than utilitarian merchandise because atmosphere communicates social identity information. As noted, appeals are more persuasive when they address a product's function rather than an irrelevant function (Shavitt 1992). Consequently, the social-adjustive function and value-expressive function served by luxury brands and provided by WOM are considered as possible mediators. Positive WOM leads to higher levels of social-adjustive function and value-expressive function than negative WOM, because the referral about quality and image could change consumer's relevant evaluation when processing such information. Previous research, however, has not tested mediating effects of attitude functions on the relationship between WOM and luxury brand evaluation. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H4a: Social-adjustive function and value-expressive function will mediate the effect of WOM on luxury brand evaluation.

H4b: Social-adjustive function and value-expressive function will mediate the effect of product conspicuousness on luxury brand evaluation.

3.3.2 Moderating Roles of Attitude Functions

The functional theory of attitudes implicates these multiple functions served by attitudes, rather than purely attitude strength. Although two functions could be served by luxury brand attitudes, the attitude functions relevant to consumer luxury brand attitudes could be different based on the personality across consumers. The assessments of self-monitoring have been used to identify the social functions served by individuals' attitudes on products and brands, focusing on private vs. public identity motives. High self-monitors' attitudes serve mainly a pronounced social-adjustive function and low self-monitors' attitudes serve mainly a pronounced value-expressive function (Snyder and DeBono 1987).

Some studies investigate the moderating role of attitude functions on persuasion appeals and distinguish the motives underlying object-attitude relations. Batchelor and Tesser (1971) found the attitudinally similar others were more attractive than dissimilar other and supported attitude base (value expressive, utilitarian, need for cognition, and ego defensive) as a moderator for the attitude similarity-attraction relationship. Similarly, Shavitt, Lowry, and Han (1992) tested the attitude functions in advertising for persuasive message (advertising) selection and found the interactive role of product and self-monitoring. Consistent with previous studies, this research wants to test the different impacts of two main functions on luxury brands by using self-monitoring difference:

H5: The effect of WOM on luxury brand evaluation will be greater for high self-monitors (e.g., consumers having a pronounced attitude of social-adjustive than value-expressive function) than low self-monitors.

3.4 Consumer Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence

Consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence is the need to identify or enhance one's image with significant others through the acquisition and use of products and brands, the willingness to conform to the expectation of others regarding purchase decisions, and/or the tendency to learn about products and services by observing others and/or seeking information from others (Bearden, Netemeyer, and Teel 1989). Early research has demonstrated that individuals differ in their responses to social influence (McGuire 1968). Bearden, Netemeyer, and Teel (1989) developed two-dimensional scale based on the above definition of susceptibility to interpersonal influence: normative and informational. Barr and Kellaris (2000) proved evidences of individual difference on susceptibility and its moderating role of persuasion processes and found persuasion may operate through different mechanisms for low versus high susceptibility to advertising individuals.

However, an early study by Bone (1995) said that although the effect of WOM communications on product judgments influenced short-term and long-term judgment, WOM was not moderated by susceptibility to interpersonal influence. Based on the conflict results of previous studies, I test in this research and expect to see the effect of WOM may operate differently for difference on consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence.

H6: Susceptibility to interpersonal influence will moderate the effect of WOM on luxury brand evaluation. Consumer high (vs. low) in susceptibility would have a greater response to the influence of WOM.

3.5 Counterfeit vs. Genuine

3.5.1 The Relative Influence of Brand Evaluation, and Subjective Norm

As proposed by the theory of reasoned actions (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980), behavioral intention can be predicted by behavior attitude and subjective norm. This indicates that consumers who have a favorable attitude towards genuine luxury brand should be likely to purchase those genuine luxury brand products, rather than counterfeits, in the future. And consumers who have a favorable attitude towards counterfeit luxury brand should be likely to purchase the counterfeits. As an extension of theory of reasoned actions, the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen 1985) adds perceived behavioral control to the standard variables for predicting behavior intention. Thus, in my study I controlled this variable, perceived behavioral control. Previous study also confirmed the relationship between attitude and purchase intention based on theory of planned behavior. For example, Matos, Ituassu, and Rossi (2007) demonstrated that consumer intentions to buy counterfeits were dependent on the attitudes they had towards counterfeits.

Attitude and subjective norms in this research's context are different in their original and orientation. Subjective norms refer to the beliefs that certain referents think the person should not buy the counterfeits. Because subjective norms reflect the consumers' perceived expectations of salient others (friends and relatives), the attendant pressure to comply is more extrinsic in nature. In contrast, attitudes are more intrinsic in nature. Following previous TPB research, I suggest the followings:

H7: The better the genuine luxury brand evaluations are, the more likely consumers will make a purchase intention for genuine luxury brands.

H8: The better the counterfeit luxury brand evaluations are, the more likely consumers will make a purchase intention for counterfeit luxury brands.

H9: Subjective norm is negatively related to the purchase intention for counterfeit luxury brands.

3.5.2 The Moderating Role of Subjective Norm

The previous discussion seems to imply that fostering more positive attitude towards genuine products and more negative attitude towards counterfeits, establishing subjective norms, and increasing perceived behavioral control across promoting brands to consumers are effective ways to increase genuine consumptions while to decrease counterfeit consumptions. However, this research suggests that the story is more complex and the role of subjective norms in influencing counterfeits purchase intentions may be context dependent because of its extrinsic context.

Counterfeit luxury brands and products are copies of trademark designs of branded products made by legitimate craftsmen and are sold illegally (Phau and Prendergast 2000). It is reported that the more successful and popular a brand name is, the more likely it will have counterfeits. Whether counterfeits devalue the ownership of luxury brands is still a question mark. Nia and Zaichkowsky (2000) examined the attitude of original luxury brand owners

towards counterfeits, and found that consumers who owned only original goods still believed that the ownership of original luxury goods was more prestigious compared to counterfeits. Such findings reveal the strong positive image of originals for previously original-ownership and counterfeits will not decrease the demand for original luxury brand name products.

However, it is possible that when counterfeits are available, consumers may search among the genuine products and counterfeits even after they make a brand model decision (Gentry et al. 2001). Because the price of genuine luxury brand is extremely high, consumers who pursue high value for the brand but unwilling to pay for such a high price could turn to buy the counterfeits, especially for low income consumers. Thus, some research argues that counterfeit luxury brand negatively influences the genuine luxury brand consumption and may decrease the sales of genuine luxury brands.

Counterfeit luxury brand attitude is based and motivated by luxury brand favorability. The purchase of counterfeit also presents the consumption of the brand and related to brand choice. When taking ethical issues into consideration, consumers have the third choice as no purchase of luxury brand inspired of buying genuine products and counterfeits. Ethical issue contains personal moral and public moral. The former one is studied as moral belief in pervious study and has been proved as the moderator variable between genuine product and counterfeits. However, limited research focuses on public moral (subjective norm) in distinguishing genuine product and counterfeits. One exception as I was aware is that Fu et al. (2010) tested the moderator role of subjective norms in promoting new products. In China, symbolic goods such as luxury brand products locate the individual vertically within the social hierarchy rather than express one's internal self. And product choices often reflect

social norms rather than individual attitudes and tastes (Wong and Ahuvia 1998). Based on such a vital role played by subjective norm for studying Chinese consumers, this research tries to cover this research gap by investigating the moderating effect of subjective norm.

Subjective norm indicates an individual's perceived social pressure for buying or anti-buying a special product. Consumers are predisposed to social influence and seek approval from individuals who are important to them (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975). Ang et al. (2001) found that subjective norm was significant in predicting intentions toward pirated software products among Singaporeans. So if an individual is not influenced by the social pressure, he would not consider purchasing counterfeit fashion brand (Kim and Karpova 2009). Social acceptance, opposing to subjective norm, is found to be negatively related with purchase intentions toward well-known luxury brands made from alligator leather. Without subjective norms in a moderating role, I hypothesize decreased level of purchase intentions for counterfeit luxury brands as purchase intentions for genuine luxury brands increases. When subjective norms increase, the pressure to appease and comply with others may attenuate the relationship between consumers' preferences of counterfeits and of genuine. Thus,

H10a: The relationship between social-adjustive function and counterfeit luxury brand evaluation will be negative when consumers have high subjective norms; however, the relationship will be positive when consumers have low subjective norms.

H10b: The relationship between genuine luxury brand evaluation and counterfeit luxury brand evaluation will be negative when consumers have high subjective norms; however, the relationship will be positive when consumers have low subjective norms.

CHAPTER 4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Design

This research consists of two pretests and two experimental studies. Study 1 is to test word-of-mouth effects on genuine luxury brand evaluation. Since there are genuine products and counterfeit products for luxury brands, Study 2 is conducted to investigate the relationship between purchase intentions for genuine luxury brands and for counterfeit luxury brands.

Pretest 1 interviews consumers for determining the sample brands and products of main Study 1. It examines consumer knowledge on luxury brand and the information channels of their consumption decisions with open questions. Sample scenarios are also examined for the design of actual experiment. The experiment of main Study 1 is a 2 (valence of WOM: positive vs. negative) $\times$ 2 (product category: public vs. private) between-subjects factorial design. Independent variables include WOM valence, product conspicuousness, social-adjustive function, value-expressive function, and susceptibility to interpersonal influence. The dependent variables are luxury brand evaluation, purchase intention for genuine luxury brand, and purchase intention for counterfeit luxury brand. Prior luxury brand evaluation, brand familiarity, and social tie between sender and receiver of WOM communications are controlled.

Pretest 2 is conducted to find out the established brands and to test scenarios and self-monitoring scale reliability for Study 2. Study 2 aims to link counterfeits and genuine products, and focuses on testing the moderator role of subjective norms in the relationship between counterfeits and genuine products. It is a 2 (information channel: advertising vs.

word-of-mouth) $\times$ 2 (brand familiarity: high vs. low) between-subjects factorial design. The two variables, brand familiarity and dummy variable of advertising or word-of-mouth, are manipulated by scenarios between subjects. The key independent variable (IV), attitude function (social-adjustive function or value-expressive function), is measured by self-monitoring scale (Lennox and Wolfe 1984). Another IV is subjective norm. Dependent variables are genuine luxury brand attitude, and counterfeit brand attitude purchase intention for genuine luxury brand and purchase intention for counterfeit luxury brand. WOM valence, perceived personal control, and social tie between sender and receiver are well controlled.

4.2 Research Design of Study 1: WOM and Product Lines on Genuine Luxury Brand

4.2.1 Measurement Scales of Study 1

All scales used in this study are well developed in previous literatures with high reliability and validity. The scales adopted in this first study include brand familiarity scale (Kate and Allen 1994), prior brand attitude scale (Herr, Kardes, and Kim 1991), brand attitude after WOM exposure (Herr, Kardes, and Kim 1991), susceptibility to interpersonal influence scale (Bearden, Netemeyer, and Teel 1989), social-adjustive function scale (Grewal, Mehta and Kardes 2004), value-expressive function scale (Grewal, Mehta and Kardes 2004), and purchase intention (Laczniak, DeCarlo, and Ramaswami 2001). In addition, perceived public level (Cheema and Kaikati 2010) and valence of word-of-mouth communication are measured as manipulation checks. I made some minor reversions of those items based on pre-test and the justifications make the questions more suitable to the experiment for Chinese

consumers. The questionnaire is translated into simple Chinese because all subjects are Chinese consumers with mother language of simple Chinese. It is translated by two professionals and the two versions are compared.

The purchase intention for genuine luxury brand and the purchase intention for counterfeit luxury brand are two important dependent variables, and both of them use the single item scale (If you were to buy a bag, it is likely that you will purchase a ** LV handbag/wallet?). It may be critique for using single item because of its low reliability. However, Bergkvist and Rossiter's (2007) research finds that there is no difference in the predictive validity of the multiple-item and single-item measures. They conclude that for the many constructs in marketing that consist of a concrete singular object and a concrete attribute, such as attitude towards ads or attitude towards brand, single-item measures should be used.

Following Grewal, Mehta, and Kardes (2004), social-adjustive function was measured by 4 items (7-points scale with 1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree): 1) Louis Vuitton ** (handbag/wallet or towel) would be a symbol of social status; 2) Louis Vuitton ** (handbag/wallet or towel) can help me fit into important social situations; 3) I like to be seen using Louis Vuitton ** (handbag/wallet or towel); 4) I enjoy it when people know I am using Louis Vuitton ** (handbag/wallet or towel).

And value-expressive function was also measured by 4 items adopted from Grewal, Mehta, and Kardes (2004) (7-points scale with 1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree): 1) Louis Vuitton ** (handbag/wallet or towel) helps me communicate my self-identity; 2) Louis Vuitton ** (handbag/wallet or towel) helps me express myself; 3) Louis Vuitton ** (handbag/wallet or towel) helps me define myself; 4) Louis Vuitton ** (handbag/wallet or

towel) reflects the kind of person I see myself to be.

Consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence items were adopted from Bearden, Netemeyer, and Teel (1989): 1) I frequently gather information about handbag/wallet (towel) from Internet before I buy; 2) I frequently gather information about handbag/wallet (towel) from friends or family before I buy; 3) To make sure I buy the right handbag/wallet (towel), I often observe what others used; 4) I often consult other people to help choose the best handbag/wallet (towel) to buy; 5) If I have little experience with a handbag/wallet (towel), I often ask my friends and acquaintances about it; 6) I generally purchase the handbag/wallet (towel) and brand that I think others will approve of; 7) I often identify with other people by purchasing the same the same handbag/wallet (towel) and brand they purchase; 8) I achieve a sense of belonging by purchasing the same handbag/wallet (towel) and brand that others purchase; 9) If others can see in which handbag/wallet (towel) I use, I often buy the same towels as theirs; 10) I rarely purchase the latest fashion styles until my friends approve of them; 11) It is important that others like the handbag/wallet (towel) and brand I buy.

4.2.2 Pre-test 1

Pre-test 1 was conducted to choose the sample luxury brand and suitable product lines for main Study 1. It tested two kinds of questionnaires which were only different in WOM scenarios provided in second part. Data was collected by combination of interview method and self-reported method.

Totally, 24 respondents were recruited from a top shopping mall in Shenzhen, China. They were given a marker pen as a gift after finishing the questionnaire. The pre-test was

conducted by two versions of questionnaires with 10 subjects in negative WOM condition and rest 14 subjects in positive WOM condition. Each subject was asked for him/her experience in luxury brand consumption and favorite luxury brands with matched product category. Luxury brand consumption experience was measured by a 2-item scale (single-choice with yes or no): 1) Have you purchased any luxury brand (the one that you believe is a luxury brand)? 2) Have you ever seen your friends using any luxury brand (the one that you believe is a luxury brand)?

Then they were asked to name the most favorite luxury brand and product category and to tick how they learn about luxury brands (multiple choice) from the choices as follows: From print advertisements, broadcast advertisements, consumer reports, sales people, specialty magazines, people who I know (e.g., friends, family and so on), and others (please specify).

Within the 24 respondents, 67% were female while 33% were males. “Louis Vuitton” was the most frequently mentioned luxury brand (9 subjects) followed by “Chanel” (7 subjects). For the product category, “bag” was the most cited product, followed by “clothes” (7 subjects) and “watch” (4 subjects). Regarding sources for getting luxury brand and product information, the top three ones were: “magazine”, “relatives and friends”, and “Internet”. Accordingly, “Louis Vuitton” brand and bag category due to their popularities are confirmed in Pre-test 1 providing evidence for the coming actual experiment’s design.

The scenario materials were developed to be convincing, realistic, and credible for consumers. Results revealed that there was no significant difference in the evaluations of credibility ($t = 1.81$, $p = 0.09$) and truth ($t = 1.28$, $p > 0.10$). The valence of WOM was well manipulated ($t = 4.11$, $p < 0.001$; $M_{\text{negative}} = 2.70$, $SD = 1.70$, $M_{\text{positive}} = 5.36$, $SD = 1.34$). It

means that consumers really believe the situation described in the scenario could happen in real world and the level of such belief is not different across the two conditions. Consumers also treat the two appeals differently with one as the positive comment and the other as the negative comment towards focal luxury brand. In addition, the mean of publicly consumed level was above 4.00 which revealed that handbag/wallet was publicly consumed product. As expected, the Cronbach's Alpha values for social-adjustive function and value-expressive function (4 items per variable, adopted from Grewal, Mehta, and Kardes 2004) were ideally acceptable and above 0.80. Therefore, it is believed to get an ideal reliability later in the coming main study using such items to measure the two key variables.

In sum, open questions support the hypothesized focal brand to be LV. And the results of Pre-test 1 indicate that consumer treat the bag category as publicly consumed product as expected. The scenarios are confirmed to show differences in valence while no differences are found in their reliability and credibility. And the attitude function items could be used in the main study based on the reliability analysis.

Based on the findings of this pre-test, main Study 1 was conducted to test the major hypotheses on genuine luxury brand consumptions of this research.

4.2.3 Research Design of Main Study 1

The first study manipulated valence of word-of-mouth scenarios (positive vs. negative) with product type (publicly consumed product vs. privately consumed product). It was a 2×2 between subjects factorial design. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four cells. The brand name and product are real in market. The focal brand name was Louis Vuitton based on interview results of Pre-test 1. Towel was selected as privately consumed product which was also likely to support pre-dominantly utilitarian attitude at the category level. And handbag/wallet was selected as publicly consumed product which was likely to support pre-dominantly multiple attitude functions (according to guidelines from Shavitt, 1990).

The main study was self-reported by subjects. They were asked to answer the questions in order about their responses to the brand after reading the cover story. The first part after cover story was about prior attitude measurement items and the personality scale on susceptibility to interpersonal influence. The second part of the questionnaire was scenario on comments from Internet BBS. Then consumers provided their evaluations on the appeals, two social functions, publicly consumed measurement, luxury brand evaluation, purchase intentions for counterfeit luxury brand and genuine luxury brand. The last part was the demographic information asking subjects to provide the gender, age, education, annual household income range, and the marriage status for research objectives.

The whole process for answering questionnaire was controlled from fifteen minutes to twenty minutes. And all data was collected within a week. After finishing the questionnaire, each respondent received a highlighter cost about HK\$5 as a gift for participation.

4.2.4 Samples and Stimuli of Main Study 1

A total of 105 adult consumers were recruited in Shanghai, China for the actual experiment.

The profile of respondents was reported in Table 1.

Table 1: Profile of Respondents in Study 1

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Percentage Response (%)</i> <i>(N = 105)</i>
Gender	
Male	41.9
Female	58.1
Age	
Below 20	0
20-25	33.3
26-29	42.9
30-35	16.2
36-40	3.8
41 and above	3.8
Marital Status	
Married	35.2
Not married	64.8
Household Income (RMB)	
Under 36,000	11.4
36,000 - 59,999	22.9
60,000 - 119,999	25.7
120,000 - 179,999	21.0
180,000 - 239,999	9.5
240,000 and more	9.5
Education	
Under grade school	0
High school	0
College	7.6
Undergraduate	55.2
Master	36.2
Doctor or above	1.0

Subjects were office workers and answered the questionnaires in their corporation's

meeting room during break time. The respondents were randomly assigned to answer one of the four versions of questionnaires. 92.4 percent of the respondents were above university education. The sample comprised 58.1 percent females. And 96.2 percent of the respondents' age ranged from 20 to 40.

Stimuli.

Brand name.

Louis Vuitton was featured as the experimental stimulus for a number of reasons. First, Louis Vuitton has been used as experimental stimulus in similar luxury brand studies (e.g., Wilcox, Kim, and Sen 2009; Han, Nunes, and Drèze 2010). Second, as ranking top in list of luxury brands, Louis Vuitton's brand familiarity should not vary much among consumers (Finance Magazine released on 2011). Meanwhile the potential effects of brand knowledge are assessed by including them as covariates in the study. Third, importantly, there were no significant differences in brand familiarity (1. Louis Vuitton is very familiar to me; 2. I know a lot of Louis Vuitton; $F(1, 103) = 1.32$, NS) or in brand attitude (1=very bad, 7=very good; 1=unfavorable, 7=favorable; $F(1, 103) = 0.04$, NS). And research has indicated that there must be sufficient motivations for consumers to generate and receive negative and positive WOM.

Word-of-mouth scenarios.

The WOM stimulus was a printed version. Valence of WOM was manipulated by scenarios on comments about the luxury brand products posted on Internet BBS. Under the negative WOM and publicly consumed product condition, subjects were exposed to the

scenario as below:

I will strongly recommend you NOT to buy luxury brand Louis Vuitton. Recently I purchased a LV handbag at Louis Vuitton Store in Tsim Sha Tsui, Hong Kong. I used it for a few days and found compared to other luxury brand handbag, I will rate far below average in how good it makes your look and in its common quality with materials. Using Louis Vuitton handbag / wallet will NOT express yourself or showcase your individuality. Others will NOT know it is a Louis Vuitton and then admire you. Such a bag can NOT communicate your values or enhance your social standing. Based on the overall experience of using my handbag, I feel angry and disappointed.

While under the positive WOM and publicly consumed product condition, subjects were exposed to the scenario as below:

I will strongly recommend you to buy luxury brand Louis Vuitton. It is a well known luxury brand. Recently I purchased a LV handbag at Louis Vuitton Store in Tsim Sha Tsui, Hong Kong. I used it for a few days and found compared to other luxury brand, I will definitely rate it far above average in how good it makes your look and in its high quality with material. Using Louis Vuitton handbag / wallet will express yourself and showcase your individuality. Others will know it is a Louis Vuitton and admire you. Such a bag can enhance your social standing and communicate your values. Based on the overall experience of using my handbag, I feel happy and satisfied.

Under the negative WOM and privately consumed product condition, subjects were exposed to the scenario as below:

I will strongly recommend you NOT to buy luxury brand Louis Vuitton. Recently I purchased a LV towel at Louis Vuitton Store in Tsim Sha Tsui, Hong Kong. I used it for a few days and found compared to other luxury brand, I will rate far below average in how good it makes your look and in its common quality with materials. Using Louis Vuitton towel will NOT express yourself or showcase your individuality. Others will NOT know it is a Louis Vuitton and then admire you. Such a towel can NOT communicate your values or enhance your social standing. Based on the overall experience of using my towel, I feel angry and disappointed.

While under the positive WOM and publicly consumed product condition, subjects were exposed to the scenario as below:

I will strongly recommend you to buy luxury brand Louis Vuitton. It is a well known luxury brand. Recently I purchased a LV towel at Louis Vuitton Store in Tsim Sha Tsui, Hong Kong. I used it for a few days and found compared to other luxury brand, I will definitely rate it far above average in how good it makes your look and in its high quality with material. Using Louis Vuitton towel will express yourself and showcase your individuality. Others will know it is a Louis Vuitton and admire you. Such a towel can enhance your social standing and communicate your values. Based on the overall experience of using my handbag, I feel happy and satisfied.

Subjects were asked to indicate the feelings of the above description using four 7-point scales (very negative/very positive; not at all realistic/ very realistic; not at all attractive/ very attractive, not at all convincing/ very convincing).

Product Conspicuousness.

Based on Bearden and Etzel (1982)'s definition and pre-test, handbag was chosen as the publicly necessary category product and towel was chosen as the privately necessary category product. Publicly consumed level of products was measured on two seven-point items scale adapted from Cheema and Kaikati (2010):

1) If I owned Louis Vuitton (product category), it is very likely that I will use it in places other than my home;

2) It is very likely that others will see me using Louis Vuitton (product category).

4.3 Research Design of Study 2: Genuine and Counterfeit Luxury Brand

4.3.1 Measurement Scales of Study 2

Most variable scales used in Study 2 are similar with Study 1. They are also well developed in previous literatures and with high reliability and validity. The scales adopted in study include: brand awareness, brand familiarity scale (Kate and Allen 1994), prior brand attitude scale (Herr, Kardes, and Kim 1991), brand attitude after WOM exposure (Herr, Kardes, and Kim 1991), self-monitoring scale (Lennox and Wolfe 1984), perceived behavior control, subjective norm (Taylor and Todd 1995), and purchase intention (Laczniak, DeCarlo, and Ramaswami 2001). Similar with Study 1, some minor reversions are made based on pre-test and the justifications make the questions more suitable to the experiments. The questionnaire is translated into Chinese because the subjects are Chinese consumers.

Research on reverse polarity (e.g., Herche and Engelland 1996) recommends against using negatively worded items; thus I deleted two reverse polarity items from Lennox and Wolfe (1984) 13-item scale of self-monitoring to get the 11-item scale. Following Kent and Allen (1994), brand familiarity was measured and manipulated using 3-item scale. Previous attitude towards genuine and counterfeit product was evaluated on three 7-point scales anchored by 1 and 7 (bad/good, favorable/unfavorable, desirable/undesirable) (Herr, Kardes, and Kim 1991). Realistic evaluation, attractiveness, and conviction of information were measured by single item 7-point Likert scale per one (1=not at all realistic, 7=very realistic; 1=not at all attractive, 7=very attractive; and 1=not at all convincing, 7=very convincing).

4.3.2 Pre-test 2: Finding Target Established Brands

As Pre-test 1 revealed that the product lines significantly influenced the effect of word-of-mouth, the main target of Pretest 2 was to find out the difference of consumers' responses to WOM between a pair of high and low brand familiarity luxury brands. Study 2 was conducted to test the effects of WOM on the established brands in the same product line, whereas Study 1 was conducted to test the effects of WOM on the same brand in different product lines. To design the experiment about the established brands required more consideration to reduce the confounding variables before exposure to materials.

There were four versions of questionnaires. 54 respondents were usable for evaluating the questionnaires. All respondents' ages ranged from 18 to 50 years old. The sample comprised 54.5 percent of females and details could be seen from Table 2. Pre-test 2 found the significant difference on brand awareness ($t = 7.93, p < 0.01$) and brand familiarity ($t = 4.73, p < 0.01$) between LV (Louis Vuitton) and MCM (Mode Creation Munich), supporting that brand familiarity manipulated by the two brand names was successful. No differences on appeals' valences were found between advertising condition and WOM condition ($t = 0.82, p > 0.10$; $t = 0.13, p > 0.10$).

For appeals, the valence ($t = 1.56, p > 0.10$) level of materials had no significant difference across AD and WOM cells while there were significant differences for attractiveness ($t = 2.94, p < 0.01$), and realistic level ($t = 2.05, p < 0.05$) across AD and WOM cells.

Table 2: Profile of Respondents in Pre-test 2

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Percentage Response (%) (N = 54)</i>
Gender	Male	45.5
	Female	54.5
Age	18-25	22.7
	26-35	54.5
	30-50	22.7
Education	College	18.2
	Undergraduate	65.9
	Master	15.9
Household Income (RMB)	Under 60,000	50.0
	60,000 - 179,999	45.5
	180,000 - 239,999	4.5

No differences were found on the valence ($t = 0.73$, $p > 0.10$), the attractiveness ($t = 0.49$, $p > 0.10$), the realistic level ($t = 0.49$, $p > 0.10$), and the convincing ($t = 0.55$, $p > 0.10$) level of appeals between LV brand condition and MCM brand condition. Pre-test 2 revealed that WOM ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 0.83$) was more attractive than AD ($M = 3.04$, $SD = 1.33$), and WOM ($M = 3.90$, $SD = 0.31$) was more convincing than AD ($M = 2.79$, $SD = 0.78$).

Since Study 1 has tested the perceived publicly consumed level could be the boundary condition, product conspicuousness was also tested and controlled after exposure to materials. No significant difference was found for this variable after exposure to different stimuli ($F = 0.84$, $p > 0.10$). Thus, this possible confounding variable was controlled.

4.3.3 Research Design of Main Study 2

The second study was a 2 (brand familiarity: high vs. low) $\times$ 2 (information source: word-of-mouth vs. advertising) between subjects factorial design which is the similar with Pre-test 2. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four cells. The brand names and products are real in market.

The target product is publicly consumed product namely handbag category which was proved in Study 1. Study 2 also re-examined perceived public level of this product line, though its product conspicuousness has been examined by first study. The two social functions, namely value-expressive function and social-adjustive function, were distinguished by self-monitoring scale adopted from Lennox and Wolfe (1984). Previous study has suggested in social contexts, the attitudes of high self-monitors serve predominantly a social identity (social-adjustive) function while attitudes held by low self-monitors serve a utilitarian (value-expressive) function (DeBono 2006). Different from Study 1, Study 2 cited another way to measure and to distinguish attitude functions by using Lennox and Wolfe (1984) revised self-monitoring items.

The general purpose of this second study is to investigate the relationship between genuine luxury brand consumptions and counterfeit luxury brand consumptions. As subjective norm is expected to be the key factor for decreasing counterfeits consumptions, the coming study also wants to examine differences for subjective norm in brand familiarity and information source and provides implications for the marketing of new and established luxury brands. The dependent variables are genuine luxury brand evaluations, purchase intentions for genuine luxury brands, counterfeit luxury brand evaluations, and purchase intentions for

counterfeit luxury brands.

Main Study 2 was self-reported by subjects. They were asked to answer the questions about their responses to the brand after reading the cover story and to answer them in order. The first part after cover story began with definitions about counterfeits and genuine products. Counterfeits were described by “replica one which refers to high quality look-alike of the original product type sold at significant lower price e.g., RMB 500” while genuine products referred to the original branded product type sold at higher price compared to counterfeits e.g., RMB 5,000. After the simple descriptions about genuine products and counterfeits, respondents were asked to answer questions about brand awareness, brand familiarity, attitude towards counterfeit, attitude towards genuine product, purchase intention for genuine luxury brand, and purchase intention for counterfeit luxury brand.

The second part of the questionnaire was scenario on comments from a friend or the advertising from the magazine. Then consumers provided their evaluations on the appeals, willingness to generate WOM, publicly consumed measurement, genuine luxury brand evaluation, counterfeit luxury brand evaluation, subjective norm, purchase intention for genuine luxury brand, and purchase intention for counterfeit luxury brand.

The third part was self-monitoring scale and the last part was the demographic information asking subjects to provide the gender, age, education, annual household income range, and the marriage status for research objectives.

4.3.4 Samples and Stimuli of Main Study 2

153 office staff at City of Shanghai, China participated in this study. Each respondent

received a highlighter at HKD 5 as the reward of the participation. The experiment was conducted in office buildings. Respondents were randomly assigned to answer one of four versions of the questionnaires. 41.8 % of the respondents were males while the remaining 58.2 percentage were females. The profile of the subjects was listed in Table 3.

Table 3: Profile of Respondents in Study 2

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Percentage Response (%)</i> <i>(N = 153)</i>
Gender	
Male	41.8
Female	58.2
Age	
18-25	24.8
26-35	37.9
30-50	36.6
Marital Status	
Married	34.0
Not married	66.0
Household Income (RMB)	
Under 60,000	49.0
60,000 - 179,999	46.4
180,000 - 239,999	4.6
Education	
High school	2.0
College	16.3
Undergraduate	60.1
Master	21.6

For the four kinds of questionnaire distributed, cell size of subjects in each condition ranged from 35 to 42. The use of a homogeneous sampling frame is appropriate as recommended theory test procedures require selection of respondent groups such that

rigorous examinations can be conducted (Calder, Phillips, and Tybout 1982).

Stimuli.

I manipulated brand familiarity by inserting well-known luxury brand name and unknown luxury brand name into otherwise identical ads and WOMs. In the low familiarity condition, MCM (Mode Creation Munich) was selected while in the high familiarity condition LV (Louis Vuitton) was inserted into the scenarios. Several criteria were employed in selecting the mature and immature luxury brands. The first criterion for selecting familiar brand was that this real brand chosen should be relatively familiar to officer subjects. Second, it is expected to identify unfamiliar brands from which subjects were less exposure to ads or WOMs to avoid interference.

The ads for LV (Louis Vuitton) and MCM (Mode Creation Munich) were created in a similar structure with logo. The selected handbag picture was shown in the left side in the appeal. WOM appeals on LV and MCM were more informal (vs. ads).

Each subject completed three items designed to measure previous exposure to materials. Later, they asked to answer a 3-item brand familiarity scale: “Regarding the brand LV (Louis Vuitton), are you___:” (unfamiliar/ familiar, inexperienced/ experienced, knowledgeable/ not knowledgeable; in 7-point numeric format). The brand name LV (Louis Vuitton) would be replaced by MCM (Mode Creation Munich) across cells. To evaluate the perceived valence of the scenarios, subjects were asked to respond to the item: “Indicate your feelings of the above description on Louis Vuitton using following descriptions: ___” (1=very negative, 7=very positive).

CHAPTER 5. RESULTS

5.1 Results of Study 1

Study 1 examined the effects of WOM and product type on luxury brand evaluations and purchase intentions for genuine luxury brands. It tested the mediating roles of attitude functions on the WOM-luxury brand evaluation relationship and the product conspicuousness–luxury brand evaluation relationship. The moderator effect of susceptibility to interpersonal influence was also tested. It is interesting to find that though when luxury brand evaluations increase, consumers have higher purchase intentions for genuine luxury brands; this relation was not significant for counterfeit luxury brands.

ANOVA was used to examine the hypotheses. The data analysis supported H1, H2, H4a, H4b, H5, H6, and H7. But H3 was not supported.

5.1.1 Manipulation and Assumption Check

WOM Valence.

Subjects were asked to indicate their feelings of the description using on four seven-point scales (very negative/very positive; not at all realistic/ very realistic; not at all attractive/ very attractive, not at all convincing/ very convincing). The evaluations of materials were given in Table 4 showing that valences of WOM were successfully manipulated.

Table 4: Evaluations of Materials in Study 1

	Publicly Consumed Product				Privately Consumed Product				<i>P value</i>	<i>D.f.</i>
	Negative WOM		Positive WOM		Negative WOM		Positive WOM			
	(n=26)		(n=25)		(n=25)		(n=29)			
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Valence	3.12	1.34	4.88	1.13	3.04	1.17	4.80	0.80	0.00**	103
Reliable	4.38	1.24	4.52	1.00	4.04	1.06	4.56	1.15	0.30	103
Realistic	4.27	1.19	4.60	1.00	3.96	0.61	4.46	1.01	0.15	103
Convincing	4.23	1.18	4.60	0.91	4.20	0.87	4.39	1.08	0.44	103

*Notes: ** indicates mean difference is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)*

Product Conspicuousness.

The publicly consumed product was rated significantly more likely to be used publicly and to be seen publicly ($M_{\text{public}} = 4.72$ vs. $M_{\text{private}} = 3.50$; $F(1,103) = 20.94$, $p < 0.01$).

Table 5: Product Conspicuousness Check in Study 1

<i>Question Items</i>	<i>Bags</i>	<i>Towels</i>	<i>P value</i>
Item 1. If I owned Louis Vuitton (product category), it is very likely that I will use it in places other than my home.	4.75 (1.34)	3.56 (1.82)	0.00**
Item 2. It is very likely that others will see you using Louis Vuitton (product category)	4.69 (1.14)	3.44 (1.60)	0.00**

*Notes: ** indicates mean difference is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed);*

Means are shown with standard deviations provided in parentheses;

“Product category” will be replaced by “bags” or “towels” in different treatments.

5.1.2 Factor Analysis

All measurement scales were conducted with reliability test and the results were listed in Table 6. Results indicated that all scales had sufficient reliability with Cronbach's Alpha. They were all higher than the commonly acceptable level of 0.70. So no items were deleted based on results.

Table 6: Reliability Test of Study 1 Items

<i>Scales</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>No. of Items</i>	<i>Items Deleted</i>
Susceptibility to interpersonal influence	0.89	13	None
Normative	0.84	5	None
Informational	0.88	8	None
Value-expressive function	0.93	4	None
Social-adjustive function	0.85	4	None
Luxury brand evaluation	0.72	3	None
Purchase intention for counterfeit	-----	1	None
Purchase intention for genuine	-----	1	None

The correlation between dependent variables was investigated by Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient. There is a strong positive correlation between luxury brand evaluation and purchase intention for genuine luxury brand. However, the correlation between luxury brand evaluation and purchase intention for counterfeit luxury brand is not significant. And there is also no significant relationship between purchase intention for genuine luxury brand and purchase intention for counterfeit luxury brand. The correlation

matrix is listed in the following table.

Table 7: Correlation Matrix of Study 1

	1	2	3
<i>Correlations</i>			
1. Evaluation of luxury brand	1.00		
2. Purchase intention for genuine brand	0.53**	1.00	
3. Purchase intention for counterfeit brand	0.07	-0.18	1.00
<i>Notes: ** indicates mean difference is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)</i>			

5.1.3 Tests of Hypotheses

To test H1, I regressed perceived valence of WOM with brand evaluation and found that in positive treatment, the coefficient was larger and significant ($b = 0.23$, $F = 3.13$, $p < 0.09$) than the coefficient in negative treatment which was not significant ($b = 0.09$, $F = 0.53$, $p > 0.40$). Therefore, H1 was supported because results showed that the positive effect of positive WOM was stronger than the effect of negative WOM on luxury brand.

Results showed that value-expressive function and social-adjustive function were positively related ($b = 0.77$, $t = 15.46$, $R^2 = .70$, $p < 0.01$). This correlation was higher for publicly consumed product ($b = 0.85$, $t = 11.20$, $R^2 = 0.72$, $p < 0.01$) while the coefficient was lower under privately consumed product condition ($b = 0.71$, $t = 10.09$, $R^2 = 0.66$, $p < 0.01$). The results were consistent with previous studies (e.g., Wilcox, Kim, and Sen 2009) arguing that the two social attitude functions served by luxury brands were often correlated against each other. Another way to test the correlation between value-expressive function and

social-adjustive function was also significant and positive ($\alpha = 0.84$, $p < 0.01$). For publicly consumed products, the correlation is 0.85 ($p < 0.01$); for privately consumed products, the correlation is 0.81 ($p < 0.01$). What's more, ANOVA conducted between public and private conditions with control of covariance of WOM valence revealed that social-adjustive function was higher when consumers were exposed to public (vs. private) luxury brand product ($M_{\text{public}} = 4.11$ vs. $M_{\text{private}} = 3.48$, $F = 6.78$, $p < 0.01$). In the below Table 8, H2 ($F = 17.19$, $p < 0.01$) were supported; however, there was no interaction effect found between valence of WOM and product conspicuousness which indicated that H3 was not supported ($F = 1.11$, $p > 0.10$). The reason for unsupported H3 should be that product conspicuousness increased volume of WOM rather than valence. Based on limited resource, I could not directly measure the volume.

Table 8: ANOVA Result of Study 1

<i>Independent variable</i>	<i>Dependent variables</i>	<i>D.f.</i>	<i>F value</i>	<i>P value</i>
WOM valence	1. Luxury brand evaluation	1	4.54	0.04**
Product conspicuousness	1. Luxury brand evaluation	1	17.19	0.00***
WOM valence × Product conspicuousness	1. Luxury brand evaluation	1	1.11	0.30
<i>Notes: *** means $p < 0.01$; ** means $p < 0.05$; * means $p < 0.10$.</i>				

To test Hypothesis 7, regression was run using the luxury brand evaluation as predictor and purchase intention for genuine luxury brand as dependent variable. Results proved the luxury brand evaluation as a significant predictor ($b = 0.50$, $p < 0.01$, $R^2 = 0.11$). However,

luxury brand evaluation was not a significant predictor of the purchase intention for counterfeit luxury brand ($b = -0.13$, $p > 0.10$, $R^2 = 0.01$).

Mediation Analyses of Attitude Functions

If there are multiple mediators, they can be tested simultaneously or separately. The advantage of doing them simultaneously is that one learns if the mediation is independent of the effect of the other mediators. One should make sure that the different mediators are conceptually distinct and not too highly correlated (Kenny, Kashy, and Bolger 1998). The mediation effects of attitude function were tested separately in the coming part.

To test the mediating role of value-expressive attitude function in relationship between WOM and luxury brand evaluation, firstly valence of WOM and luxury brand evaluation was regressed indicating showing that WOM was significant correlated with luxury brand evaluation ($b = 0.17$, $t = 2.44$, $p < 0.05$). The second step is to regress perceived valence of WOM with value-expressive function. This step involved treating the value-expressive to be an outcome variable ($b = 0.32$, $t = 3.08$, $p < 0.01$). The third step conducted a simple regression analysis with value-expressive function predicting luxury brand evaluation and got the significance of the path alone ($b = 0.42$, $t = 8.52$, $p < 0.01$). As the previous three steps were significant, step 4 was preceded by seeing if the effect of value-expressive function remained significant after controlling for valence of WOM. Results supported full mediation because valence of WOM was not significant ($b = 0.04$, $t = 0.66$, $p > 0.10$) when taking value-expressive function and WOM valence into one equation.

The same steps were conducted for social-adjustive function. First, it had been proved

that WOM was significant correlated with luxury brand evaluation ($b = 0.17$, $t = 2.44$, $p < 0.05$). The second step was to let perceived valence of WOM regress with social-adjustive function. This step involved treating the social-adjustive to be an outcome variable ($b = 0.35$, $t = 3.76$, $p < 0.01$). The third step conducted a simple regression analysis with social-adjustive function predicting luxury brand evaluation and got the significance of the path alone ($b = 0.42$, $t = 7.38$, $p < 0.01$). As the previous three steps were significant, step 4 was preceded by seeing if the effect of social-adjustive function remained significant after controlling for valence of WOM. Results supported full mediation because valence of WOM was not significant ($b = 0.02$, $t = 0.39$, $p > 0.10$) when taking social-adjustive function and WOM valence into one equation.

The two attitude functions were all supported to be full mediation and listed in the below pictures, Figure 2. Results supported Hypotheses 4a indicating the full mediating role of attitude functions on relationship between WOM and luxury brand evaluation.

Figure 2: Mediating Role of Social-adjustive Function and Value-expressive Function on the Relationship between WOM and Luxury Brand Evaluation

Notices: ** means $p < 0.01$

To test the mediating effect of value-expressive attitude function on relationship between product conspicuousness and luxury brand evaluation, I regressed product conspicuousness and luxury brand evaluation firstly and found that product conspicuousness was significantly correlated with luxury brand evaluation ($b = 0.45$, $t = 9.34$, $p < 0.01$). The coming step was the regression of independent variable of perceived product conspicuousness on value-expressive function. This step involved treating the value-expressive to be an outcome variable ($b = 0.78$, $t = 12.95$, $p < 0.01$). The third step had been shown to be significant as above. Results supported partially mediation effect because the fourth step still got significant when cooperating value-expressive function ($b = 0.19$, $t = 2.50$, $p < 0.05$) and product conspicuousness ($b = 0.30$, $t = 3.95$, $p < 0.01$) into one equation. The same steps were conducted for social-adjustive function. The first step on regression between product conspicuousness and luxury brand evaluation was significant. The second step was to conduct a simple regression on perceived product conspicuousness and social-adjustive function ($b = 0.65$, $t = 9.68$, $p < 0.01$). Then, I used social-adjustive function to predict luxury brand evaluation and got the significance of the path alone ($b = 0.42$, $t = 7.38$, $p < 0.01$). By getting significant results from the remaining step to cooperate social-adjustive function ($b = 0.16$, $t = 2.34$, $p < 0.05$) and WOM valence ($b = 0.35$, $t = 5.31$, $p < 0.01$) into one equation to predict luxury brand evaluation, partially mediation effect of social-adjustive function was also examined and confirmed.

Figure 3: Mediating Role of Social-adjustive Function and Value-expressive Function on the Relationship between Product Conspicuousness and Luxury Brand Evaluation

Notices: ** means $p < 0.01$; * means $p < 0.05$

Figure 3 above summarized the mediating effects of attitude functions on the product–luxury brand evaluation relationship. Results supported Hypotheses 4b indicating the mediating role of attitude functions on relationship between product category and luxury brand evaluation.

Social-adjustive Function vs. Value-expressive Function

When social-adjustive function served by attitude was more pronounced than value-expressive function, the coefficient for WOM valence ($b = 0.21$, $t = 2.47$, $p < 0.02$) on luxury brand evaluation was larger than when social-adjustive function was more subtle ($b = 0.18$, $t = 1.86$, $p < 0.07$), supporting H5. However, as the two attitude functions were proved to be highly and positively correlated to each other ($b = 0.77$, $t = 15.46$, $R^2 = 0.70$, $p < 0.01$). It was hard and somewhat unsuitable to test this moderating effect of social-adjustive function. Thus, in Study 2, I will retest this hypothesis by separating the two functions based on self-monitoring scale.

Moderator Analyses: Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence

A significant WOM valence $\times$ susceptibility to interpersonal influence interaction revealed that susceptibility to interpersonal influence moderated the effect of WOM ($F = 3.43$, $p < 0.07$). High susceptibility to interpersonal influence was defined above mean while low susceptibility to interpersonal influence was defined below mean. The effect of WOM on value-expressive function was greater for high susceptibility to interpersonal influence consumers (vs. low) ($M_{\text{high sii}} = 3.94$ vs. $M_{\text{low sii}} = 3.25$, $F = 5.18$, $p < 0.05$). So was the case with the effect of social-adjustive function on luxury brand evaluation.

Figure 4: Moderating Effect of Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence

5.1.4 Conclusion of Study 1

Study 1 tested key variables for influencing luxury brand evaluation and found the

positive relationship between luxury brand evaluation and purchase intention for genuine luxury brand. Though the relationship between luxury brand evaluation and purchase intention for counterfeit luxury brand was negative, it was not found to be significant in this study indicating that there should be some confounding variables for explaining the purchase of counterfeit. This interesting result leads concern on investigating the relationship between counterfeits and genuine products in the coming study.

Totally eight hypotheses (H1, H2, H3, H4a, H4b, H5, H6, and H7) were tested in this study, and seven were supported while H3 was not supported. WOM valence and product conspicuousness were found to be strong predictors of luxury brand evaluation and genuine luxury brand consumption. Positive WOM increased consumers' luxury brand preferences while negative WOM decreased the luxury brand preferences. And this study also explained why consumers were more willing to choose the publicly consumed product when considering luxury brands. However, the interaction effect was not supported in this actual experiment. So H3 was not supported. H4a and H4b were about the mediating effects of social functions and I found when social-adjustive function and value-expressive function were activated by attitude that could be changed through positive or negative WOM communications, luxury brand evaluations changed. The same case was with functions activated by product's publicly consumed level. Though social-adjustive function and value-expressive function were both served by luxury brand attitudes and their relationship was positive, a pronounced attitude by social-adjustive function than value-expressive function could indicate higher luxury brand evaluation. The personality difference in susceptibility to interpersonal influence influenced the effects of WOM.

5.2 Results of Study 2

Study 2 compared the different effects of WOM and AD on subjective norm, genuine and counterfeit luxury brand consumptions. It demonstrated that purchase intention for counterfeit luxury brand was moderated by subjective norm. In addition, word-of-mouth increased the subjective norm related to disapproval of counterfeits, compared to advertising. Results indicated that positive word-of-mouth should be an efficient way to increase purchase intention for genuine luxury brand and an effective means to decrease purchase intention for counterfeit luxury brand. MANOVA and ANOVA were adopted to examine six hypotheses. The data analysis results supported H5, H7, H8, H9, and H10a. However, H10b was not supported.

5.2.1 Manipulation and Assumption Check

Consistent with Study 1, handbag was also the focal product category. LV was treated as the representative of high familiar brand while MCM was treated as the representative of low familiar brand in this second study for manipulating brand familiarity.

Brand Familiarity.

Multiple items were used to ensure the brand name treatments provided participants with stimuli that varied in their degrees of perceived familiarity. Measurements were developed to tap the brand familiarity and brand awareness (ad awareness and interpersonal awareness).

Specific items for brand familiarity include: “Regarding the brand Louis Vuitton, are you_____.” (unfamiliar/ familiar, inexperienced/ experienced, knowledgeable/ not knowledgeable; in 7-point numeric format). Specific item for ad awareness is: “In the past three years, have you even seen any advertising about the brand Louis Vuitton?” (never/ very often; in 7-point numeric format), and specific item for interpersonal awareness is: “In the past three years, have you even heard any comments from your friends about the brand Louis Vuitton?” (never/ very often; in 7-point numeric format). The brand name Louis Vuitton would be replaced by Mode Creation Munich across treatments.

Internal consistency of the two measures was in the range of 0.77 and 0.79. Results suggested that the brand familiarity manipulation was appropriate, because brand familiarity ($M = 4.34$, $SD = 1.84$ for the more familiar brand name; $M = 1.19$, $SD = 1.19$ for less familiar brand name, $t(151) = 10.22$, $p < 0.01$), and brand awareness from ad and friends ($M = 3.34$, $SD = 1.31$ for the more familiar brand name; $M = 1.82$, $SD = 1.04$ for less familiar brand name, $t(151) = 7.92$, $p < 0.05$) measures yielded significant differences in the expected direction.

WOM and AD.

Several measurements were also gathered to ensure the efficacy of the WOM and AD manipulation. The manipulation check for information valence utilized a single-item measure: “Please indicate the feelings of the description using ____.” (very negative/ very positive). The manipulation check for information realism also utilized a single-item measure: “Please indicate the feelings of the description using ____.” (not at all realistic/ very

realistic). The reliability index between valence and realism indicated that these measures were satisfactory (0.75). Results suggested that the valence manipulation was appropriate because the positive level showed no difference across two information channels ($M = 4.24$, $SD = 1.42$ for advertising; $M = 4.63$, $SD = 1.28$ for word-of-mouth, $F = 0.14$, $p > 0.10$), and the realistic manipulation was appropriate because the realistic level showed no significant difference across the very two information channels ($M = 4.55$, $SD = 1.25$ for advertising; $M = 4.80$, $SD = 1.27$ for word-of-mouth, $F = 0.02$, $p > 0.10$).

Product Conspicuousness.

Product conspicuousness should be a confounding variable and it was examined in Study 1. So in Study 2, I tested the brand difference in the same product category to control this variable. It was controlled by the single-item on publicly consumed level of products using “If I owned (brand name) handbag, it is very likely that I will use it in places other than my home” (adapted from Cheema and Kaikati 2010). Result showed no difference of perceived public level across two target brands conditions ($F = 0.02$, $p > 0.10$).

5.2.2 Factor Analysis

All measurement scales were conducted with the reliability test and results are listed in Table 9. According to the suggestion from Herche and Engelland (1996), I deleted two reverse items (Item 9 and Item 12) when I was doing analysis. Thus, the 13 items on self-monitoring adopted from Lennox and Wolfe (1984) were changed into 11 items. Reliability is used to measure the internal consistency of a measurement instrument.

Cronbach's alpha is also used to evaluate as well as Study 1's approach because it's widely applied coefficients in evaluating reliability. The above reliability test results indicate that all variables have sufficient reliability (Cronbach's alpha value > 0.70) except prior genuine attitude evaluation. The reason for prior genuine attitude evaluation scale obtaining such a relatively low level of reliability is that subjects rated low on desirable item. This is partially because of their current economics income and the presentation of price differences between genuine and counterfeit at the beginning of the questionnaire.

Table 9: Reliability Test of Study 2 Items

<i>Scales</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>No. of Items</i>	<i>Items Deleted</i>
Prior counterfeit brand evaluation	0.91	3	None
Prior genuine brand evaluation	0.83	2	1(Q6c: desirable)
After-exposure counterfeit brand evaluation	0.91	3	None
After-exposure genuine brand evaluation	0.71	3	None
Subjective norm	0.86	2	None
Self-monitoring	0.89	10	1
Purchase intention for counterfeit	0.70	2	None
Purchase intention for genuine	0.78	2	None

The correlation matrix is listed in the following table.

Table 10: Correlation Matrix of Study 2

<i>Correlations</i>				
	1	2	3	4
1. After-exposure counterfeit brand evaluation	1.00			
2. After-exposure genuine brand evaluation	0.01	1.00		
3. Purchase intention for counterfeits	0.62**	-0.05*	1.00	
4. Purchase intention for genuine products	-0.22**	0.43**	-0.22**	1.00
<i>Notes: * indicates that mean difference is significant at 0.05 level; ** indicates that mean difference is significant at 0.01 level.</i>				

The relationships between dependent variables were investigated by Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient. There is a strong and positive correlation between counterfeit luxury brand evaluation and purchase intention for counterfeit luxury brand ($\alpha = 0.62$, $p < 0.01$). The correlation between genuine luxury brand attitude and purchase intention for genuine luxury brand is also strong and positive ($\alpha = 0.43$, $p < 0.01$).

5.2.3 Mean Scores of Study 2

Mean ratings with standard deviations of key dependent variables are listed in Table 11. Results showed the higher means of subjective norm, willingness to generate WOM, attitude towards genuine luxury brand, and purchase intention for genuine luxury brand after exposure to WOM than after exposure to AD. Although the two dependent variables measuring counterfeits, namely attitude towards counterfeit luxury brand and purchase

intention for genuine luxury brand, were also higher after exposure to WOM than after exposure to AD, the results were not significant for these two variables.

Table 11: Means Comparison after Exposure to WOM or AD of Study 2

	<i>WOM</i>			<i>AD</i>			<i>P</i> <i>value</i>
	<i>LV</i>	<i>MCM</i>	<i>General</i>	<i>LV</i>	<i>MCM</i>	<i>General</i>	
1. Subjective norm	4.75 (1.97)	3.89 (1.81)	4.89 (1.70)	5.02 (1.63)	4.75 (1.79)	4.35 (1.44)	0.06
2. Willingness to generate WOM	4.26 (1.56)	4.10 (1.35)	4.19 (1.45)	3.88 (1.24)	3.61 (1.04)	3.76 (1.15)	0.04
3. Counterfeit attitude	3.46 (1.74)	3.21 (1.62)	3.34 (1.68)	2.96 (1.33)	3.64 (1.39)	3.27 (1.39)	0.78
4. Genuine attitude	5.40 (1.19)	5.61 (1.30)	5.50 (1.24)	5.07 (1.23)	5.18 (1.29)	5.12 (1.25)	0.06
5. Purchase intention for counterfeits	3.28 (1.99)	3.63 (1.63)	3.44 (1.83)	2.95 (1.58)	3.94 (1.96)	3.41 (1.82)	0.92
6. Purchase intention for genuine products	5.33 (1.82)	5.46 (1.34)	5.39 (1.60)	5.07 (1.40)	4.72 (1.77)	4.91 (1.58)	0.07
N	40	35	75	42	36	78	153

Note: Means are shown with standard deviations provided in parentheses.

5.2.4 Tests of Hypotheses

Study 2 has more than one dependent variable and those variables have significant relationships between each other. So besides ANOVA, MANOVA was also used to test the rest hypotheses.

In Study 2, I distinguished social-adjustive function from value-expressive function using the self-monitoring scale, and defined social-adjustive function when self-monitoring

scale was above mean (mean = 4.95). When the self-monitoring scale was below mean, attitude for consumers was mainly served a value-expressive function. ANOVA results revealed that there were significant differences between high self-monitor and low self-monitor on genuine luxury brand evaluations ($M_{\text{high}} = 5.67$, $SD = 1.11$ vs. $M_{\text{low}} = 4.93$, $SD = 1.29$, $t = 3.81$, $p < 0.01$) and purchase intentions for genuine luxury brand ($M_{\text{high}} = 5.53$, $SD = 1.49$ vs. $M_{\text{low}} = 4.75$, $SD = 1.63$, $t = 3.10$, $p < 0.01$). Thus, Hypothesis 5 and 7 were supported, and there was significant difference of genuine brand evaluation between the social-adjustive function and the value-expressive function served by luxury brand attitudes.

Perceived behavioral control was a significant predictor for purchase intentions for counterfeit luxury brands with positive coefficient ($b = 0.12$, $t = -1.64$, $p = 0.10$). Thus, it was controlled in Study 2. Linear regression result supported H8 ($b = 0.73$, $t = 9.66$, $p < 0.01$) and H9 ($b = -0.53$, $t = -7.73$, $p < 0.01$) to predict brand attitude and subjective norm as the predictors for purchase intentions for counterfeit luxury brands.

ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean difference of subjective norms. For the brand familiarity, the subjective norm was significant difference between high brand familiarity condition and low brand familiarity condition ($M_{\text{high}} = 4.89$, $SD = 1.80$ vs. $M_{\text{low}} = 4.32$, $SD = 1.84$, $t = 1.92$, $p < 0.06$). However when referring to the information channel, there was no significant difference of subjective norms found between the WOM condition and the advertising condition ($M_{\text{wom}} = 3.96$, $SD = 1.44$ vs. $M_{\text{ad}} = 3.61$, $SD = 1.44$, $t = 1.37$, $p > 0.10$). Then I controlled the brand familiarity and found that for more familiar brand, subjective norm was not significant different for WOM condition and AD condition ($t = 0.37$, $p > 0.71$) while for less brand familiar brand, subjective norm was significant different ($t =$

1.62, $p = 0.10$).

Moderator Analyses: Subjective Norm

High subjective norm was defined above mean and low subjective norm was defined below mean (mean = 4.02). To test the role of subjective norm as a moderator of genuine luxury brand and counterfeit luxury brand evaluations, a multiple linear regression was conducted. The prior counterfeit attitude and prior genuine attitude was positive related to each other but the relationship was not significant ($b = 0.12$, $t = 1.33$, $p > 0.10$). The after-exposure counterfeit attitude and after-exposure genuine attitude yielded no significant relationship either ($b = 0.16$, $t = 0.16$, $p > 0.10$). Though the relationship on genuine and counterfeit was negative ($b = -0.10$, $t = -0.70$, $p > 0.10$) when subjective norm was high and the relationship was positive ($b = 0.13$, $t = 1.16$, $p > 0.10$) when subjective norm was low, the two were not significant by data suggesting that H10b was not supported.

The statistical results of subjective norm moderating roles on self-monitoring–counterfeit luxury brand evaluation relationship and self-monitoring – purchase intention for counterfeits relationship were listed in the followed Table 12. Subjective norm was found to be a strong predictor on counterfeit luxury brand evaluation and the relationship between subjective norm and the counterfeits was significant and positive ($b = 0.69$, $t = 9.67$, $p < 0.01$). The interacting effects of self-monitoring and subjective norm on both counterfeits evaluations and purchase intentions were both significant (details could be seen from Table 12).

Table 12: Test of Moderating effect of Subjective Norm in Study 2**(Counterfeit Brand)**

Dependent variables	Source of Interaction	Un-standardized coefficients			
		B	Standardized error	t value	p value
<i>Evaluation of counterfeit luxury brand</i>	Self-monitor	-0.10	0.13	-0.72	0.47
	Subjective norm	-0.69	0.07	-9.67	0.00***
	Self-monitor × Subjective norm	-0.11	0.01	-8.96	0.00***
<i>Purchase intention for counterfeit brand</i>	Self-monitor	-0.02	0.16	-0.09	0.93
	Subjective norm	-0.81	0.09	-9.26	0.00***
	Self-monitor × Subjective norm	-0.13	0.02	-8.30	0.00***

NOTES: * means $p < 0.10$, ** means $p < 0.05$, *** means $p < 0.01$.

To better understand the moderating effect of subjective norm on counterfeits, I used high subjective norm (above mean 4.02) and low subjective norm (below mean 4.02) to compute the effects of attitude functions on counterfeit luxury brand evaluation. Results indicated that when consumers holding higher level of subjective norm, the relationship between social-adjustive function and counterfeit luxury brand evaluation was negative and significant ($b = -0.50$, $p < 0.01$, $t = -2.97$). It's interesting to find that when consumers holding lower level of subjective norm, the relationship between social-adjustive function and counterfeit luxury brand evaluation was positive and significant ($b = -0.28$, $p < 0.07$, $t = 1.83$). Means comparison were listed and means were significant at the 0.05 level with higher

means in low subjective norm conditions and with lower means in high subjective norm conditions. Therefore, H10a was well supported.

**Table 13: Means Comparison between Attitude Function and Subjective Norm
(Counterfeit Brand)**

	Social-adjustive		Value-expressive	
	High norm	Low norm	High norm	Low norm
<i>Evaluation of counterfeit brand (After-exposure)</i>	2.93 (0.22)	3.75 (0.02)	2.18 (0.22)	4.35 (0.20)
<i>Purchase intention for counterfeit (After-exposure)</i>	2.94 (0.26)	3.71 (0.24)	2.09 (0.26)	4.67 (0.21)

Note: Means are shown with standard deviations provided in parentheses

Figure 5: Moderating Effect of Subjective Norm

5.2.5 Conclusion of Study 2

The results in Study 2 suggest that attitude towards counterfeit luxury brand, and

subjective norm are important factors for the purchase of counterfeit luxury brand. Moreover, subjective norm is not only the strong predictor of purchase intention for counterfeits, but also the important moderator on relationship between self-monitoring (social-adjustive function vs. value-expressive function) and counterfeit attitudes. High luxury brand familiarity indicate more subjective norm because of brand awareness. It is also found that recommendation transmitted through WOM also activate more subjective norm compared to advertising.

Since genuine luxury brand attitudes, counterfeit luxury brand attitudes, and purchase intentions for luxury brands are higher when attitudes served a social-adjustive function than attitudes served a value-expressive function, consumers could increase their luxury brand evaluation on both genuine and counterfeit luxury brands by WOM. Because social-adjustive function is external concern and is possibly easier to be influenced by reference groups, high self-monitors whose attitudes serve a social-adjustive function will be more willing to buy the counterfeit luxury brands when their social norms are low while they will show less willingness to purchase the counterfeits.

CHAPTER 6. DISCUSSION

6.1 Conclusion of the Thesis

This research develops and tests, using two pretests and two main studies, a set of hypotheses about the effects of attitude functions on relationship of word-of-mouth and luxury brand consumption. Results reveal social-adjustive function and value-expressive served by luxury brands could be increased by positive word-of-mouth. In the same word-of-mouth context, consumers with high susceptibility to interpersonal influence respond more positively to negative word-of-mouth than consumers with low susceptibility to interpersonal influence. Furthermore, higher levels of social-adjustive function and value-expressive function served by publicly consumed product (vs. privately consumed product) are found, indicating that product categories also influence functions served by luxury brands.

When referrals are transmitted through word-of-mouth, subjective norm for purchasing counterfeiters is higher than when referrals are transmitted through advertising. And the moderating role of subjective norm is demonstrated on relationship between self-monitor (high self-monitor indicates social-adjustive function served) and counterfeit luxury brands.

According to theory of planned behavior (Ajzen 1991), the higher luxury brand evaluation is, the more willingness for consumers to buy genuine luxury brand. However, the negative correlation between purchase intention for counterfeit luxury brand and purchase intentions for genuine luxury brand is only found when subjective norm is low.

Pre-test 1 is a street survey with 24 respondents. The respondents were asked to write down their favorite luxury brands and products. As expected, Louis Vuitton was the ranking first as the most welcome brand by consumers and the importance of word-of-mouth communication was also confirmed by asking influenced information source about luxury brands. The sample scenarios tested by the end of this pre-test were treated differently in the valence as predicted, supporting the design of the questionnaire for coming main study.

The brand selection in the first actual main experiment, Study 1, is Louis Vuitton and the product types are bag (the publicly consumed product), and towel (the privately consumed product). Study 1 was designed as a 2 (positive WOM vs. negative WOM) $\times$ 2 (publicly consumed product vs. privately consumed product) between subjects factorial experiment. It was conducted at office buildings in Shanghai, China. The results of Study 1 reveal the differences between consumer luxury brand evaluations towards negative WOM exposure and positive WOM exposure. The product lines were also found significant difference in consumer luxury brand evaluations with high evaluations associated with publicly consumed products and low evaluations associated with privately consumed products. However, the interaction effect between product conspicuousness and WOM valence was not found in Study 1. The effect of WOM on luxury brand evaluation also verifies across the personality difference in susceptibility to interpersonal influence.

Since the first study is mainly about genuine luxury brand and additionally, there was also no significant relationship between purchase intentions for counterfeit luxury brand and for genuine luxury brand, leading the second study on investigating the important factor to link the two kinds of luxury brand consumptions. Furthermore, to generalize the findings into

the whole luxury brand market, brand familiarity and advertising are also considered in Study 2. Pre-test 2 was conducted using online survey before main Study 2 for finding low familiar luxury brand and high familiar luxury brand. More consumers have seen advertising or received WOM about Louis Vuitton as opposed to the Mode Creation Munich brand, indicating that as expected, there is support for the difference in brand familiarity between the brand Mode Creation Munich and the brand Louis Vuitton.

Study 2 was also conducted among office workers in Shanghai, China. It was a 2 (high brand familiarity vs. low brand familiarity) $\times$ 2 (WOM vs. advertising) between subjects factorial experiment by indicating different levels of subjective norms. Subjective norm is the important predictor for the purchase of counterfeit luxury brands. Besides the positive relationship with counterfeit luxury brand, the moderating effect of subjective norm on relationship between self-monitoring and counterfeit luxury brand consumption is found. Results indicate that by increasing brand familiarity and using WOM as a promoting means, consumers will increase the genuine luxury brand evaluations because their social-adjustive functions served by luxury brands are activated; meanwhile consumers will decrease the counterfeit luxury brand evaluations and consumptions because their subjective norms referring the disapproval from friends for buying counterfeits should be increased from the communications and referrals by WOM. This interesting finding demonstrates that besides the influence of consumer attitude, WOM solves the counterfeits problem from another aspect on subjective norm.

6.2 Theoretical Contributions and Managerial Implications

The findings from this research raise some interesting theoretical and empirical issues for luxury brand managers. First, this research's results provide new insights into the purchase of luxury brands by investigating social media instead of traditional media. The extant literature suggests that hedonic consumption (Schwarz and Xu 2011), materialism (Richins 1994), and status seeking (Han, Nunes, and Dreze 2010) influence consumers' attitudes towards luxury brands and their purchase decisions. However, neither theoretical nor empirical evidence has directly shown the effect of WOM on luxury brands. This research provides some evidence for this research gap. The results of this research offer some noteworthy implications for luxury brand firms in managing consumer social interactions. As an extension research of Wilcox, Kim, and Sen (2009), I demonstrate that function relevant WOM could also be used as a new promoting means for luxury brands.

Second, the findings on the impact of product conspicuousness on WOM and luxury brand evaluation suggest that since social functions associated with publicly consumed product and privately consumed products product are different, luxury brand managers should emphasize the social functions served by privately luxury brand when new product lines are newly extended into market.

Regarding that perceived social pressure (subjective norm) from relatives may affect consumers' counterfeits consumption, results suggests that managers may offset the potential effects of counterfeits by gaining high levels of strength or equity for their brands firstly. This view is consistent with theoretical notions (Laczniak, DeCarlo, and Ramaswami 2001)

contending that high levels of equity allow consumer perception about a brand to be resistant to external forces such as negative WOM or counterfeits. Although it is obvious that advertising may help manager increase the familiarity of their luxury brands, WOM could increase subjective norm as well as the familiarity and preference, leading the concern on such a social media. This finding is especially the point for brands with low brand familiarity to address. So, it is important to realize the WOM effects in different stage for product life cycle, mature stage or newly entered stage.

Finally, our findings illustrate that when consumers are high susceptible to interpersonal influence, the effects of WOM communications on luxury brand could be larger. And such consumers defined as low role-relaxed consumers (Kahle 1995) are more interested in image. Furthermore, consumers who are high self-monitors are more willing to buy luxury brands and also more interested in image (Shavitt 1992). The results highlight the usefulness of image in influencing the effects of WOM messages.

In sum, from a managerial perspective, the research findings raise some issues that have implications for marketing practice. Luxury brand marketing managers should pay more attention to WOM and other social media because social pressure and brand preference could both be increased by WOM referrals. Consumer purchase intentions may be different for different product categories or type of WOM and varies among consumers with personality characteristics (e.g., susceptibility to interpersonal influence, and the self-monitoring).

6.3 Research Limitations and Directions for Future Research

However, there are some limitations which should be noted. Further research may be conducted to cover below limitations for better studying counterfeit and genuine consumption.

First, the findings are solely on the products that LV and MCM sell. And I look mainly at bag and towel categories. A richer picture could certainly emerge from a more comprehensive examination of additional brands across numerous products lines over time. It would be useful for researchers to generalize the findings with other luxury brands.

Second, although demographic difference was tried to be controlled within a small range in this research, there should be some demographic confounding variables influencing results. For example, the gender of respondents could show differences on the luxury brand evaluations. Research on human mate choice, however, suggests that the conspicuous display of resources ought to be used more frequently by men than women because women place considerably more emphasis on cues of wealth and status (Kenrick et al. 2001). Since Study by Visser and Krosnik (1998) explored the relation of age to manifestations and antecedents of attitude strength and demonstrated that attitude importance, certainty, and perceived quantity of attitude-relevant knowledge were greater in middle adulthood than during early or late adulthood, age difference of respondents should also be another confounding variable.

Third, WOM message was only studied by the means of valence (positive or negative) in this research. The other variables such as social tie (Brown and Reingen 1987) or printed/vivid version (Herr, Kardes, and Kim 1991) which are closely related to WOM effects are controlled, but they should be considered into detail for the future research.

Appendix A: Summary of Measures

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Scale Question(s)</i>	<i>Scale Responses</i>	<i>Precedents</i>
brand attitude	1. What's your attitude on the brand, Louis Vuitton/MCM?	bad (1) to good (7); favorable (1) to unfavorable (7); desirable (1) to undesirable (7)	Herr, Kardes, and Kim (1991)
brand familiarity	1. What's your knowledge on the brand, Louis Vuitton?	very unfamiliar (1) to very familiar (7); little experienced (1) to well experienced (7); little knowledgeable (1) to very knowledgeable (7)	Kate and Allen (1994)
perceived public level	1. If I owned Louis Vuitton (product category), it is very likely that I will use it in places other than my home; 2. It is very likely that others will see me using Louis Vuitton (product category).	strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7)	Cheema and Kaikati (2010)
purchase intention	1. If I had an opportunity I would buy a handbag/wallet of Louis Vuitton.	strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7)	Laczniak, DeCarlo, and Ramaswami (2001)
self-monitoring	1. In social situations, I have the ability to alter my behavior if I feel that something else is called for. 2. I am often able to read peoples' true emotions correctly through their eyes. 3. I have the ability to control the way I come across to people, depending on the impression I wish to give them. 4. In conversations, I am sensitive to even the slightest change in the facial expression of the person I am conversing with. 5. My powers of intuition are quite good when it comes to understanding others' emotions and motives. 6. I can usually tell when others consider a joke to be in sad taste, even though they may laugh convincingly. 7. When I feel that the image I am portraying isn't working, I can readily change it to something that does.	strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7)	Lennox and Wolfe (1984)

	<p>8. I can usually tell when I've said something inappropriate by reading it in the listener's eyes.</p> <p>9. I have trouble changing my behavior to suit different people and different situations.</p> <p>10. I have found that I can adjust my behavior to meet the requirements of any situation I found myself in.</p> <p>11. If someone is lying to me, I usually know it at once from that person's manner of expression.</p> <p>12. Even when it might be to my advantage, I have difficulty putting up a good front.</p> <p>13. Once I know what the situation calls for, it's easy for me to regulate my actions accordingly.</p>		
social-adjustive function	<p>1. Louis Vuitton ** (handbag/wallet or towel) would be a symbol of social status;</p> <p>2. Louis Vuitton ** (handbag/wallet or towel) can help me fit into important social situations;</p> <p>3. I like to be seen using Louis Vuitton ** (handbag/wallet or towel);</p> <p>4. I enjoy it when people know I am using Louis Vuitton ** (handbag/wallet or towel).</p>	strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7)	Grewal, Mehta and Kardes (2004)
subjective norm	<p>1. If I bought a REPLICA version of a product of Louis Vuitton, most of the people who are important to me would approve.</p> <p>2. Most people who are important to me think it is OK to buy a REPLICA version handbag/wallet of Louis Vuitton</p> <p>3. Most people who are important to me will look down on me if I buy a REPLICA version handbag/wallet of Louis Vuitton.</p>	strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7)	Taylor and Todd (1995)
susceptibility to interpersonal influence	<p>1. I frequently gather information about handbag/wallet (towel) from Internet before I buy;</p> <p>2. I frequently gather information about handbag/wallet (towel) from friends or family before I buy;</p> <p>3. To make sure I buy the right handbag/wallet (towel), I often observe what others used;</p> <p>4. I often consult other people to help choose the best handbag/wallet (towel) to buy;</p> <p>5. If I have little experience with a handbag/wallet (towel), I often ask my friends and acquaintances about it;</p> <p>6. I generally purchase the handbag/wallet (towel) and brand that I think others will approve of;</p>	strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7)	Bearden, Netemeyer, and Teel (1989)

	7. I often identify with other people by purchasing the same the same handbag/wallet (towel) and brand they purchase;			
	8. I achieve a sense of belonging by purchasing the same handbag/wallet (towel) and brand that others purchase;			
	9. If others can see in which handbag/wallet (towel) I use, I often buy the same towels as theirs;			
	10. I rarely purchase the latest fashion styles until my friends approve of them;			
	11. It is important that others like the handbag/wallet (towel) and brand I buy.			
value-expressive function	1. Louis Vuitton ** (handbag/wallet or towel) helps me communicate my self-identity;	strongly disagree (1)	to strongly agree (7)	Grewal, Mehta and Kardes (2004)
	2. Louis Vuitton ** (handbag/wallet or towel) helps me express myself;			
	3. Louis Vuitton ** (handbag/wallet or towel) helps me define myself;			
	4. Louis Vuitton ** (handbag/wallet or towel) reflects the kind of person I see myself to be.			

Appendix B: Pretest 1 Questionnaire (English Version)

Introduction and Instruction:

I am an MPhil student in Lingnan University and this questionnaire is on my research thesis.

In this questionnaire, we are interested in finding how you feel about luxury brands. In the following pages, you will read some questions. Please read them carefully and respond to them according to your judgment. Please tick the suitable choice which presents your true feelings. All data are used for academic purpose only and will be kept confidential. If you have any questions during the process, please feel free to ask.

Part I

1. 1) Have you purchased any luxury brand (you think it is a luxury brand)?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2) Have you ever seen your friend using any luxury brand (you think it is a luxury brand)?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Please name your most favorite luxury brand and product category

_____/_____(e.g., Gucci/wallet)

3. How do you learn about luxury brand? (You can choose more than one of the followings)

- ☐ From print advertisements
- ☐ From broadcast advertisements
- ☐ From Consumer Reports
- ☐ From salespeople
- ☐ From specialty magazines
- ☐ From guys I know (e.g., friends, family and so on)
- ☐ Others: please specify_____

Do you agree with the following statements? (Please circle the one best describe your opinion, 1=

strongly disagree, 2=moderately disagree, 3= a little disagree, 4=neither agree nor disagree, 5= a bit agree, 6=moderately agree, 7= strongly agree)

		Strongly disagree					Strongly agree	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	I have heard of Louis Vuitton							
5	My attitude towards Louis Vuitton is very positive							
6	I have a good impression towards Louis Vuitton							

Part II

Imagine that now you are in need of a handbag / wallet for yourself. Then you turn to find advice from a trust web. This web's comments are posted from other consumers. And you had got some information about brands and products from this web which was useful for you to make a decision. You see a comment posted as follows from a user.

(Notes: The following appeals of Situation A and Situation B will be manipulated between subjects)

1. Situation A: (positive WOM)

He/ She said: "I will strongly recommend you to buy luxury brand Louis Vuitton. It is a leading producer of luxury bags. Using Louis Vuitton handbag / wallet will express yourself and showcase your individuality. Others will know it is a Louis Vuitton and admire you. Such a bag can enhance your social standing and communicate your values. Recently I purchased an LV handbag/wallet at Louis Vuitton Store in Kowloon-Tsim Sha Tsui. It has 4-year unconditional warranty. I used it for a few days and found compared to other luxury brand handbag, I will definitely rate it far above average in how good it makes your look and in its high quality with material. Based on the overall experience of using my handbag I feel happy and satisfied."

2. Situation B: (negative WOM)

He/ She said: "I will strongly recommend you NOT to buy luxury brand Louis Vuitton. Using Louis

Vuitton handbag / wallet will NOT express yourself or showcase your individuality. Others will NOT know it is a Louis Vuitton and then admire you. Such a bag can NOT communicate your values or enhance your social standing. Recently I purchased an LV handbag/wallet at Louis Vuitton Store in Kowloon-Tsim Sha Tsui. It has only 30-day conditional warranty with purchase. I used it for a few days and found compared to other luxury brand handbag, I will rate far below average in how good it makes your look and in its common quality with materials. Based on the overall experience of using my handbag / wallet I feel angry and disappointed.”

1. Indicate your feelings of the above description on Louis Vuitton using following descriptions?

<i>Very negative</i>						<i>Very positive</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Not at all believable</i>						<i>Very believable</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Not at all realistic</i>						<i>Very realistic</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Not at all convincing</i>						<i>Very convincing</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. What's your feeling on this brand, Louis Vuitton?

<i>Very bad</i>						<i>Very good</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Unfavorable</i>						<i>Favorable</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Very negative</i>						<i>Very positive</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

How do you agree with the following statements based on your own feeling?

		<i>Strongly disagree</i>					<i>Strongly agree</i>	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	If you owned Louis Vuitton handbag/wallet, it is very likely that you will use it in places other than your home.							

4	It is very likely that others will see you using Louis Vuitton handbag/ wallet.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	Louis Vuitton would be a symbol of social status	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	Louis Vuitton helps me fit into important social situations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	I like to be seen wearing Louis Vuitton.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	I enjoy it when people know I am wearing a Louis Vuitton.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	Louis Vuitton helps me communicate my self-identity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	Louis Vuitton helps me express myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	Louis Vuitton helps me define myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	Louis Vuitton reflects the kind of person I see myself to be	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Part III

Please provide some personal information for research purpose. Tick/circle the proper blank.

1. What's your gender? ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. What's your age?

☐ Under 20 ☐ 20-25 ☐ 26-29 ☐ 30-35 ☐ 35-40 ☐ Above 40

3. Your highest (current) education is _____

☐ Grade school ☐ High School ☐ College ☐ Undergraduate ☐ Master ☐ Doctor

4. What's your **annual household** income range?

☐ Under RMB36,000 ☐ RMB 36,000-59,999 ☐ RMB 60,000-119,999

☐ RMB 120,000-179,999 ☐ RMB 180,000-239,999 ☐ Above RMB 240,000

5. What's your marital status? ☐ Married ☐ Unmarried

Appendix C: Pretest 1 Questionnaire (Chinese Version)

调研说明:

尊敬的女士/先生,

您好,

我是香港岭南大学的研究生, 现正为毕业论文进行问卷调查, 恳请得到您的支持。

这个研究的目的是了解消费者对于购买奢侈品的态度。请仔细阅读和回答问题并且选择最能表达您真实观点和消费习惯的选项。所收集的问卷将由研究人员本着专业的态度进行分析, 并且仅用于学术目的。如果回答过程中有任何问题, 请及时向调研人员进行提问。

第一部分

1. 1) 您以前有买过任何你觉得是奢侈品牌的产品么? ☐有 ☐没有
2) 您有见过你朋友使用任何你觉得是奢侈品牌的产品么? ☐有 ☐没有
2. 写一个你最喜欢的奢侈品牌和产品 _____/_____ (比如古驰(Gucci)/钱包)
3. 你是从以下什么途径知道奢侈品牌的? (多选题)
 - ☐ 从印的广告
 - ☐ 从电视广告
 - ☐ 从消费者调研报告
 - ☐ 从销售人员
 - ☐ 从杂志上
 - ☐ 从我认识的人(例如朋友、家人等等)
 - ☐ 其他途径: 请写出_____

你觉得以下的各项说法多大程度上描述了你的看法? 请圈上或打勾最符合的数字(其中1=非常不同意, 2=不同意, 3=有点不同意, 4=中立, 5=有一点同意, 6=同意, 7=非常同意)

		非常 不同意						非常 同意
4	我对路易威登(Louis Vuitton)这个品牌很了解	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	我对路易威登(Louis Vuitton)评价是正面的	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	我对路易威登(Louis Vuitton)印象很好	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

第二部分

假设现在你决定要为你自己买一个手提包或者钱包。于是你去一个很信任的评论网站上查找信息，该网站的评论都来自其他用户自己发表上传。这个网站你和你的朋友过去经常去并且获得过很多对购物有用信息。然后你见到以下一段来自其他用户的评论：

（备注：情景一材料和情景二材料分别出现在两种问卷中）

1. 情景一（正面口碑）：

他/她说：“我会强烈建议你要买路易威登(Louis Vuitton)这个品牌。用路易威登(Louis Vuitton)的包，完全能展现你的个性和体现你的个人特质。别人都认得出这个牌子。这样的包能够体现社会地位。我前段时间在香港尖沙咀的专卖店买了一个路易威登(Louis Vuitton)的包。它有长达 4 年无条件的保修期。用了一段时间之后，我给它远远高于其他同类奢侈品牌的评价，衬托你的品位、内外的质量都很棒。整体的来说，我对于这次购买路易威登(Louis Vuitton)感到很开心和满意。”

2. 情景二（负面口碑）：

他/她说：“我会强烈建议你千万不要买路易威登(Louis Vuitton)这个品牌。用路易威登(Louis Vuitton)的包，根本不能展现你的个性和体现你的个人特质。别人根本认不出这个牌子。这样的包根本不能体现社会地位。我前段时间在香港尖沙咀的专卖店买了一个路易威登(Louis Vuitton)的包。它只有 30 天的有限保修期。用了一段时间之后，我给它远远低于其他同类奢侈品牌的评价，不能衬托你的品位、质量也很普通。整体的来说，我对于这次购买路易威登(Louis Vuitton)感到很失望和愤怒。”

1. 你觉得以上的这段对路易威登(Louis Vuitton)品牌的描述：

很负面						很正面
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
一点都不可信						很可信
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
一点都不真实						很真实
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
一点都不令人信服						很令人信服
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. 对于路易威登(Louis Vuitton)这个品牌，你的感觉是？

非常不好

非常好

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
非常不喜欢			非常喜欢			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
非常负面			非常正面			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

你觉得以下的各项说法多大程度上描述了你的看法？请圈上或打勾最符合的数字

(1=非常不同意, 2=不同意, 3=有点不同意, 4=中立, 5=有一点同意, 6=同意, 7=非常同意)

	非常不同意						非常同意
3 我会在家以外的地方用路易威登(Louis Vuitton) 手提包/钱包	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4 别人极大可能看到我用路易威登(Louis Vuitton) 手提包/钱包	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5 如拥有路易威登(Louis Vuitton) 手提包/钱包，它能够让我融入到我来说重要的高层次社会环境中	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6 我喜欢让别人看到我用路易威登(Louis Vuitton) 手提包/钱包，而不是藏着它不用	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7 当别人看到我用路易威登(Louis Vuitton) 手提包/钱包发出赞叹时，我会感到很开心	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9 路易威登(Louis Vuitton) 手提包/钱包品牌的高品质能够反映出我内在的个人特质	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10 路易威登(Louis Vuitton) 手提包/钱包品牌的高品质能够帮助我传达我的个性	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11 我认为高品质的路易威登(Louis Vuitton) 手提包/钱包品牌可以帮助我体现自己的价值	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12 路易威登(Louis Vuitton) 手提包/钱包品牌能够帮助我定位自己	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

第三部分

请提供一些个人信息作为科研用途。请圈上符合的选项或者在最符合的选项上打勾

1. 你的性别？

☐男 ☐女

2. 你的年纪？

☐ 低于 20 岁 ☐ 20 岁-25 岁 ☐ 26 岁-29 岁
☐ 30 岁-35 岁 ☐ 35 岁-40 岁 ☐ 大于 40 岁

3. 你的最高学历（或正在攻读的学位）是_____

☐ 初中 ☐ 高中 ☐ 大专 ☐ 大学本科 ☐ 硕士研究生 ☐ 博士

4. 你的家庭年收入是_____

☐ 低于人民币 36,000 ☐ 人民币 36,000-59,999 ☐ 人民币 60,000-119,999
☐ 人民币 120,000-179,999 ☐ 人民币 180,000-239,999 ☐ 高于人民币 240,000

5. 你的婚姻状况？

☐ 单身 ☐ 已婚

—————问卷结束—————

—————感谢您的配合—————

Appendix D: Main Study 1 Questionnaire (English Version)

The below is the sample questionnaire of cell 1 (negative WOM and publicly consumed product). The product and brand name will be changed across cells whereas the other three appeals of Part II will be listed after this sample questionnaire.

D-1. Treatment 1 Questionnaire:

Introduction and Instruction:

I am an MPhil student in Lingnan University and this survey is for my research project.

In this questionnaire, we are interested in finding how you feel about luxury brands. During the following pages, you will read some questions. Please read them carefully and respond to them according to your judgment. All data are used for academic purpose only and will be kept confidential. Please tick the suitable option which represents your true feelings. If you have any questions during the process, please feel free to ask.

Part I

Do you agree with the following statements? (Please circle the one best describe your opinion, 1= strongly disagree, 2=moderately disagree, 3= a little disagree, 4=neither agree nor disagree, 5= a bit agree, 6=moderately agree, 7= strongly agree)

		<i>Strongly disagree</i>				<i>Strongly agree</i>		
1	Louis Vuitton is very familiar to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	I know a lot of Louis Vuitton	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. What's your feeling on this brand, Louis Vuitton?

<i>Very bad</i>					<i>Very good</i>		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<i>Unfavorable</i>					<i>Favorable</i>		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Do you agree with the following statements?

		<i>Strongly disagree</i>				<i>Strongly agree</i>		
4	I frequently gather information about handbags/wallets from Internet before I buy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	I frequently gather information about handbags/wallets from friends or family before I buy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	To make sure I buy the right handbag/wallet or brand, I often observe what others used.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	I often consult other people to help choose the best handbag/wallet to buy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	If I have little experience with a handbag/wallet, I often ask my friends and acquaintances about the handbag/wallet.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	I like to know what handbag/wallet decisions make good impressions on others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	I generally purchase those brands that I think others will approve of.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	I often identify with other people by purchasing the same handbags/wallets and brands they purchase.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	I achieve a sense of belonging by purchasing the same handbags/wallets and brands that others purchase.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	If others can see in which handbags/wallets I use, I often buy the same handbags/wallets as theirs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	I rarely purchase the latest fashion styles until my friends approve of them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15	It is important that others like the handbags/wallets and brands I buy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Part II

Imagine that now you are now in need of a handbag / wallet for yourself. Then you turn to find advices from a favorite web that you trust. This web's comments are posted by other consumers. And you had got some information about brands and products from this web which was useful for you to make a decision. You see a comment posted by a user as below. Later you find the similar comments by many other users.

Poster: [afjever](#)

View no.: 500

Title: Do NOT buy this luxury brand

Web: ***BBS forum (Mon Mar 14 15:16:30 2011)

I will strongly recommend you NOT to buy luxury brand Louis Vuitton. Recently I purchased a LV handbag at Louis Vuitton Store in Tsim Sha Tsui, Hong Kong. I used it for a few days and found compared to other luxury brand handbag, I will rate far below average in how good it makes your look and in its common quality with materials. Using Louis Vuitton handbag / wallet will NOT express yourself or showcase your individuality. Others will NOT know it is a Louis Vuitton and then admire you. Such a bag can NOT communicate your values or enhance your social standing. Based on the overall experience of using my handbag, I feel angry and disappointed.

※ From: : ***BBS forum. [FROM: 172.21.12.135]

1. Indicate your feelings of the above description on Louis Vuitton using following descriptions:

Very negative

Very positive

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

Not at all attractive

Very attractive

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

<i>Not at all realistic</i>						<i>Very realistic</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Not at all convincing</i>						<i>Very convincing</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. How could this comment above change your attitude towards brand Louis Vuitton?

<i>Much more negative</i>			<i>No change</i>		<i>Much more positive</i>	
-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3

How do you agree with the following statements based on your own feelings?

		<i>Strongly disagree</i>					<i>Strongly agree</i>	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	Word-of-mouth communications tell the truth	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	You can believe what the people in word-of-mouth communication say or do	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	Word-of-mouth senders care more about getting you to buy things than what is good for you.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	I often notice tricks that word-of-mouth senders play to get me to buy something	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	Louis Vuitton handbag/wallet would be a symbol of social status	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	Louis Vuitton handbag/wallet can help me fit into important social situations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	I like to be seen using Louis Vuitton handbag/wallet	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	I enjoy it when people know I am using Louis Vuitton handbag/wallet	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	If I owned Louis Vuitton handbag/wallet, it is very likely that I will use it in places other than my home.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	Louis Vuitton handbag/wallet helps me communicate my self-identity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

13	Louis Vuitton handbag/wallet helps me express myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	Louis Vuitton handbag/wallet helps me define myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15	Louis Vuitton reflects the kind of person I see myself to be	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		<i>Definitely not</i>				<i>Definitely will</i>		
16	In the near future, regardless of budget, will you try to use Louis Vuitton as your handbag/wallet provider?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	If a counterfeit handbag/wallet of Louis Vuitton is available, will you buy genuine Louis Vuitton handbag/wallet?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18	If a counterfeit handbag/wallet of Louis Vuitton is available, will you buy the counterfeit Louis Vuitton handbag/wallet?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19	It is very likely that others will see you using Louis Vuitton handbag/ wallet.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

20. Now, what's your feeling on this brand, Louis Vuitton?

Very bad

Very good

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Unfavorable

Favorable

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

21. All in all, how do you rate the economic situation of your family today?

Very unsatisfactory

Very satisfactory

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Part III

Please provide some personal information for research purpose. Tick/circle the proper blank.

1. What's your gender?

☐ Male ☐ Female

2. What's your age?

☐ Under 20 ☐ 20-25 ☐ 26-29 ☐ 30-35 ☐ 36-40 ☐ Above 40

3. Your highest (current) education is _____

☐ Grade school ☐ High School ☐ College ☐ Undergraduate ☐ Master ☐ Doctor

4. What's your annual household income range?

☐ Under RMB36,000 ☐ RMB 36,000-59,999 ☐ RMB 60,000-119,999

☐ RMB 120,000-179,999 ☐ RMB 180,000-239,999 ☐ Above RMB 240,000

5. What's your marital status?

☐ Married ☐ Unmarried

-----The End. -----

-----Thanks for your cooperation. -----

D-2. The Scenario of Treatment 2

Imagine that now you are now in need of a handbag / wallet for yourself. Then you turn to find advices from a favorite web that you trust. This web's comments are posted by other consumers. And you had got some information about brands and products from this web which was useful for you to make a decision. You see a comment posted by a user as below. Later you find the similar comments by many other users.

Poster: [afjever](#)

View no.: 500

Title: Do buy this luxury brand

Web: ***BBS forum (Mon Mar 14 15:16:30 2011)

I will strongly recommend you to buy luxury brand Louis Vuitton. It is a well known luxury brand. Recently I purchased a LV wallet at Louis Vuitton Store in Tsim Sha Tsui, Hong Kong. I used it for a few days and found compared to other luxury brand wallet, I will definitely rate it far above average in how good it makes your look and in its high quality with material. Using Louis Vuitton handbag / wallet will express yourself and showcase your individuality. Others will know it is a Louis Vuitton and admire you. Such a bag can enhance your social standing and communicate your values. Based on the overall experience of using my handbag, I feel happy and satisfied

※ From : ***BBS forum. [FROM: 172.21.12.135]

D-3. The Scenario of Treatment 3

Imagine that now you are now in need of a towel for yourself. Then you turn to find advices from a favorite web that you trust. This web's comments are posted by other consumers. And you had got some information about brands and products from this web which was useful for you to make a decision. You see a comment posted by a user as below. Later you find the similar comments by many other users.

Poster: [afjever](#)

View no.: 500

Title: Do NOT buy this luxury brand

Web: ***BBS forum (Mon Mar 14 15:16:30 2011)

I will strongly recommend you NOT to buy luxury brand Louis Vuitton. Recently I purchased a LV towel at Louis Vuitton Store in Tsim Sha Tsui, Hong Kong. I used it for a few days and found compared to other luxury brand, I will rate far below average in how good it makes your look and in its common quality with materials. Using Louis Vuitton towel will NOT express yourself or showcase your individuality. Others will NOT know it is a Louis Vuitton and then admire you. Such a towel can NOT communicate your values or enhance your social standing. Based on the overall experience of using my towel, I feel angry and disappointed.

※ From: : ***BBS forum. [FROM: 172.21.12.135]

D-4. The Scenario of Treatment 4

Imagine that now you are now in need of a towel for yourself. Then you turn to find advices from a favorite web that you trust. This web's comments are posted by other consumers. And you had got some information about brands and products from this web which was useful for you to make a decision. You see a comment posted by a user as below. Later you find the similar comments by many other users.

Poster: [afjever](#)

View no.: 500

Title: Do buy this luxury brand

Web: ***BBS forum (Mon Mar 14 15:16:30 2011)

I will strongly recommend you to buy luxury brand Louis Vuitton. It is a well known luxury brand. Recently I purchased a LV towel at Louis Vuitton Store in Tsim Sha Tsui, Hong Kong. I used it for a few days and found compared to other luxury brand, I will definitely rate it far above average in how good it makes your look and in its high quality with material. Using Louis Vuitton towel will express yourself and showcase your individuality. Others will know it is a Louis Vuitton and admire you. Such a towel can enhance your social standing and communicate your values. Based on the overall experience of using my towel, I feel happy and satisfied

※ From: : ***BBS forum. [FROM: 172.21.12.135]

Appendix E: Main Study 1 Questionnaire (Chinese Version)

备注：以下为实验组一（关于社交场合使用的产品的负面口碑）的样本问卷。问卷中相关问题和描述所提及到的品牌和产品在四个实验组别的问卷中会对应改变。在样本问卷后为其他三个实验组的问卷的刺激材料（显示于问卷的第二部分）。

E-1. 实验组一问卷：

研究说明：

尊敬的女士/先生：

您好，

我是一名香港岭南大学市场及国际企业学系的硕士研究生，现正为毕业论文进行问卷调查，恳请得到您的支持。

这项问卷的目的是了解消费者对于购买奢侈品的态度。请您回答关于奢侈品牌的一些问题，仔细阅读第二部分的情景描述，并假设其中所描述到的场景是您在思考购买前所看到的信息。请按照顺序仔细阅读和回答问题，然后从1至7中选择对应的数字表达您对该问题描述的认可程度。

所有问题没有所谓正确或错误答案，请选择最能表达您真实观点和消费习惯的选项。如果回答过程中有任何问题，请及时向调研人员进行提问。

所收集的问卷将由研究人员本着专业的态度进行分析，并且仅用于学术目的。

第一部分

请您回答下面关于**路易威登(Louis Vuitton)**品牌的意见调查问题，并圈上最符合的数字者在最符合的数字上打勾，1=非常不同意，2=不同意，3=有点不同意，4=中立，5=有一点同意，6=同意，7=非常同意

非常不同意

非常同意

1.	我对路易威登(Louis Vuitton)这个品牌很熟悉	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	我听说过路易威登(Louis Vuitton)这个品牌	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. 您对路易威登(Louis Vuitton)的印象如何?

非常不好

非常好

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
很不喜欢						很喜欢
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

基于您自己的感受，请选择数字1到7来表示您对于问题描述的认可程度。

非常
不同意

中立

非常
同意

4.	在我购买手提包或钱包之前，我经常去网上搜索相关信息。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	在我购买手提包或钱包之前，我经常从朋友或熟人那咨询相关信息。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	为了确定我买到合适的手提包或钱包，我会经常观察别人在用的是哪种。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	我经常参考别人的意见来帮我选择最合适的手提包或钱包。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	如果我对于手提包或钱包有比较少的使用经验，我会经常咨询朋友和熟人的购买意见。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.	我乐于知道购买怎样的手提包或钱包才能给别人留下好的印象。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.	我经常购买那些我认为别人也同样认可的品牌。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.	我对于购买同样手提包或钱包产品和品牌的人，有一种认同感。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12.	我在购买了和别人同样手提包或钱包产品和品牌之后，获得一种归属感。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13.	如果别人能看到我用什么手提包或钱包，我经常会买和他们一样的。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14.	我很少买那些最新时尚款式，除非我朋友们也认同。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15.	对我来说，别人喜欢我买的手提包或钱包是很重要的事。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

第二部分

假设现在你需要给自己购买一个手提包或钱包。于是你打算上网去一个你喜欢并信赖的网络论坛寻找相关信息。这个论坛的评论一般都来自其他消费者，并且在以前你也经常在这个论坛里获得各种有用的购物评价信息。然后你看到以下的一段评价，随后发现大部分其他使用者也是有类似的评论：

发帖人: [afever](#) . 本篇人气: 500

标 题: 如买包别买这个奢侈品牌

发信站: ***论坛 (Mon Mar 14 15:16:30 2011)

我会强烈建议你不要买路易威登(Louis Vuitton)这个所谓奢侈品牌。我最近在香港的尖沙咀路易威登(Louis Vuitton)专卖店买了个LV的钱包。用了一段时间之后，我发现相比其他奢侈品牌来说，它不论设计方面还是质量方面都普通。用路易威登(Louis Vuitton)的包一来完全不能展示你的品位或个性，二来其他人根本不知道你用的就是路易威登(Louis Vuitton)。反正我对于这次的购物体验是很失望和愤怒的。

来源: . ***论坛. [FROM: 172.21.12.135]

1. 请选择您对于以上这段关于路易威登(Louis Vuitton)品牌论述的感受程度

非常的负面

非常的正面

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

一点也不吸引人

非常吸引人

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

一点也不真实						非常真实
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
一点也不令人信服						非常令人信服
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. 你觉得以上的评价多大程度上改变了你对路易威登(Louis Vuitton)品牌的态度?

非常负面的改变			没有改变		非常正面的改变	
-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3

基于您自己的感受, 请选择数字1到7来表示您对于问题描述的认可程度。

	非常 不同意						非常 同意
3. 口口相传的沟通说的是事实。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. 我是相信人们在口口相传沟通中所说的事。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. 口口相传的沟通更关心促进你购物, 而不是在乎哪款适合你。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. 我经常能看穿口口相传的沟通中那些劝说买东西的把戏。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. 路易威登(Louis Vuitton)品牌的手提包或钱包会是一种社会地位的标识。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. 使用路易威登(Louis Vuitton)品牌的手提包或钱包能帮助我融入到重要的社会环境。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. 我喜欢被看到用路易威登(Louis Vuitton)品牌的手提包或钱包。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. 对于别人认出我使用的手提包或钱包是路易威登(Louis Vuitton)品牌的, 我觉得很开心。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. 如果我有一个路易威登(Louis Vuitton)品牌的手提包或钱包, 是有很大的机会在家以外的地方使用它。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. 使用路易威登(Louis Vuitton)品牌的手提包或钱包能传达我自己认同的价值。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. 路易威登(Louis Vuitton)品牌的手提包或钱包能让我展示自己。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. 路易威登(Louis Vuitton)品牌的手提包或钱包帮我定位自己。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

15.	路易威登 (Louis Vuitton) 品牌的手提包或钱包会反映出我心目中 认为自己是哪类人。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		绝对 不会					绝对 会	
16.	在未来, 如果预算允许情况下, 你在购买手提包或钱包时, 是否 会考虑路易威登 (Louis Vuitton) 品牌?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17.	即使你知道一个假的路易威登 (Louis Vuitton) 品牌手提包或钱包 在哪里可以买到, 还会买真的包?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18.	如果你知道一个假的路易威登 (Louis Vuitton) 品牌手提包或钱包 在哪里可以买到, 会买那个假的?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19.	别人有机会见到你使用这个路易威登 (Louis Vuitton) 品牌的手提 包或钱包。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

20. 此刻, 你对于路易威登 (Louis Vuitton) 品牌的感受是?

非常不好						非常好	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
不喜欢						喜欢	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

21. 总的来说, 你对自己的家庭经济现况是感觉如何?

非常不满意						非常满意	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

第三部分

请提供一些个人信息作为科研用途。请圈上符合的选项或者在最符合的选项上打勾

1. 你的性别？

☐男 ☐女

2. 你的年纪？

☐ 低于 20 岁 ☐ 20 岁-25 岁 ☐ 26 岁-29 岁

☐ 30 岁-35 岁 ☐ 36 岁-40 岁 ☐ 大于 40 岁

3. 你的最高学历（或正在攻读的学位）是_____

☐ 初中 ☐ 高中 ☐ 大专 ☐ 大学本科 ☐ 硕士研究生 ☐ 博士

4. 你的家庭年收入是_____

☐ 低于人民币 36,000 元 ☐ 人民币 36,000-59,999 元

☐ 人民币 60,000-119,999 元 ☐ 人民币 120,000-179,999 元

☐ 人民币 180,000-239,999 元 ☐ 高于人民币 240,000 元

5. 你的婚姻状况？

☐ 单身 ☐ 已婚

-----问卷结束-----

-----感谢您的合作-----

E-2. 实验组二使用的情景：

假设现在你需要给自己购买一个手提包或钱包。于是你打算上网去一个你喜欢并信赖的网络论坛寻找相关信息。这个论坛的评论一般都来自其他消费者，并且在以前你也经常在这个论坛里获得各种有用的购物评价信息。然后你看到以下的一段评价，随后发现大部分其他使用者也是有类似的评论：

发帖人: [afever](#) . 本篇人气: 500

标 题: 如买包买这个奢侈品牌

发信站: ***论坛 (Mon Mar 14 15:16:30 2011)

我会强烈建议你买路易威登(Louis Vuitton)这个奢侈品牌。它是知名的奢侈品牌。我最近在香港的尖沙咀路易威登(Louis Vuitton)专卖店买了个LV的钱包。用了一段时间之后，我发现相比其他奢侈品牌来说，它不论设计方面还是质量方面都优秀。用路易威登(Louis Vuitton)的包一来完全能展示你的品位或个性，二来其他人知道你用的就是路易威登(Louis Vuitton)。我对于这次的购物体验是很开心和满意的。

来源: . ***论坛. [FROM: 172.21.12.135]

E-3. 实验组三使用的情景：

假设现在你需要给自己购买一条毛巾。于是你打算上网去一个你喜欢并信赖的网络论坛寻找相关信息。这个论坛的评论一般都来自其他消费者，并且在以前你也经常在这个论坛里获得各种有用的购物评价信息。然后你看到以下的一段评价，随后发现大部分其他使用者也是有类似的评论：

发帖人: afever .

本篇人气: 500

标 题: 如买毛巾，别买这个奢侈品牌

发信站: ***论坛 (Mon Mar 14 15:16:30 2011)

我会强烈建议你不要买路易威登(Louis Vuitton)这个所谓奢侈品牌。我最近在香港的尖沙咀路易威登(Louis Vuitton)专卖店买了条 LV 的毛巾。用了一段时间之后，我发现相比其他奢侈品牌来说，它不论设计方面还是质量方面都普通。用路易威登(Louis Vuitton)的毛巾一来完全不能展示你的品位或个性，二来其他人根本不知道你用的就是路易威登(Louis Vuitton)。反正我对于这次的购物经验是很失望和愤怒的。

来源: . ***论坛. [FROM: 172.21.12.135]

E-4. 实验组四使用的情景:

假设现在你需要给自己购买一条毛巾。于是你打算上网去一个你喜欢并信赖的网络论坛寻找相关信息。这个论坛的评论一般都来自其他消费者，并且在以前你也经常在这个论坛里获得各种有用的购物评价信息。然后你看到以下的一段评价，随后发现大部分其他使用者也是有类似的评论：

发帖人: [afever](#) . 本篇人气: 500

标 题: 如买毛巾买这个奢侈品牌

发信站: ***论坛 (Mon Mar 14 15:16:30 2011)

我会强烈建议你买路易威登(Louis Vuitton)这个奢侈品牌。它是知名的奢侈品牌。我最近在香港的尖沙咀路易威登(Louis Vuitton)专卖店买了条 LV 的毛巾。用了一段时间之后，我发现相比其他奢侈品牌来说，它不论设计方面还是质量方面都优秀。用路易威登(Louis Vuitton)的毛巾一来完全能展示你的品位或个性，二来其他人知道你用的就是路易威登(Louis Vuitton)。我对于这次的购物体验是很开心和满意的。

来源:. ***论坛. [FROM: 172.21.12.135]

Appendix F: Pretest 2 Questionnaire (English Version)

Introduction and Instruction:

Dear participant,

I thank you in advance for your participation in this survey. This study is about consumer orientation and purchase behavior.

I am an MPhil student in Lingnan University and this study is for my final research project.

In this questionnaire, we are interested in finding how you feel about luxury brands.

During the following pages, you will read some questions. Please read them carefully and respond to them according to your judgment. All data are used for academic purpose only and will be kept confidential.

Please tick the suitable option which represents your true feelings. If you have any questions during the process, please feel free to ask.

Part I

Do you agree with the following statements? (Please circle the one best describe your opinion, 1= strongly disagree, 2=moderately disagree, 3= a little disagree, 4=neither agree nor disagree, 5= a bit agree, 6=moderately agree, 7= strongly agree)

		<i>Strongly disagree</i>				<i>Strongly agree</i>		
1	I have heard of the brand, Louis Vuitton	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	My attitude towards the brand, Louis Vuitton is very positive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	I have a good impression towards the brand, Louis Vuitton	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	I have heard of the brand, MCM(Mode Creation Munich)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	My attitude towards the brand, Louis Vuitton is very positive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	I have a good impression towards the brand, MCM(Mode Creation Munich)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Part II

(Notes: The following four appeals of Cell 1, Cell 2, Cell 3, and Cell 4 will appear across the four kinds of questionnaires for this pretest)

1. The Scenario of Treatment 1

Imagine that you are now in need of a handbag / wallet for yourself. Then one day you read a **MAGANIZE** and see the following **ADVERTISEMENT** on **Louis Vuitton**:

LOUIS VUITTON

Louis Vuitton—a leading producer of luxury bags. Innovative bags to suit every person.

Use a Louis Vuitton to....

- Get noticed
- Be admired
- Enhance your social standing

They will know it's a Louis Vuitton!

2. The Scenario of Treatment 2

Imagine that you are now in need of a handbag / wallet for yourself. Then, one day you meet an acquaintance and she stated that she owned a Louis Vuitton bag. She suggested you to see her blog and you saw that:

She said:

Louis Vuitton is a leading producer of luxury bags. Recently I purchased a Louis Vuitton bag and some friends asked me about this. It also seems that it gets noticed on street. Besides, using Louis Vuitton can enhance the social standing because others will know it's a Louis Vuitton. So I suggest you can try to buy such a brand when you are considering of a luxury bag.

3. The Scenario of Treatment 3

Imagine that you are now in need of a handbag / wallet for yourself. Then, one day you read a MAGANIZE and see the following ADVERTISEMENT on Mode Creation Munich:

Mode Creation Munich —a leading producer of luxury bags. Innovative bags to suit every person

Use a Mode Creation Munich to....

- Get noticed
- Be admired
- Enhance your social standing

They will know it's a Mode Creation Munich !

4. The Scenario of Treatment 4

Imagine that you are now in need of a handbag / wallet for yourself. Then one day you meet an acquaintance and she stated that she owned a Mode Creation Munich bag. She suggested you to see her blog and you saw that:

She said:

Mode Creation Munich is a leading producer of luxury bags. Recently I purchased a Mode Creation Munich bag and some friends asked me about this. It also seems that it gets noticed on street. Besides, using Mode Creation Munich can enhance the social standing because others will know it's a Mode Creation Munich . So I suggest you can try to buy such a brand when you are considering of a luxury bag.

1. Indicate your feelings of the above description using following descriptions?

<i>Very negative</i>						<i>Very positive</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Not at all attractive</i>						<i>Very attractive</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Not at all realistic</i>						<i>Very realistic</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Not at all convincing</i>						<i>Very convincing</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. If I owned ** brand, it is very likely that I will use it in places other than my home.

<i>Strongly disagree</i>						<i>Strongly agree</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Part III

Please provide some personal information for research purpose. Tick/circle the proper blank.

1. What's your gender? ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. What's your age?

☐ Under 20 ☐ 20-25 ☐ 26-29 ☐ 30-35 ☐ 36-40 ☐ Above 40

3. Your highest (current) education is _____

☐ Grade school ☐ High School ☐ College ☐ Undergraduate ☐ Master ☐ Doctor

4. What's your **annual household** income range?

☐ Under RMB60, 000 ☐ RMB 60,000-17,9999 ☐ RMB 180,000-239,999

☐ RMB 240,000-599,999 ☐ Above RMB 600,000

5. What's your marital status? ☐ Married ☐ Unmarried

-----The End. -----

-----Thanks for your cooperation. -----

Appendix G: Pretest 2 Questionnaire (Chinese Version)

尊敬的女士/先生:

您好,

我是一名香港岭南大学市场及国际企业学系的硕士研究生, 现正为毕业论文进行消费调查, 恳请得到您的支持。

这项问卷的目的是了解消费者对于购买奢侈品的态度。请您回答关于奢侈品牌的一些问题, 仔细阅读问卷中的情景描述, 并假设其中所描述到的场景是您在思考购买前所看到的信息。请按照顺序仔细阅读和回答问题, 然后从1至7中选择对应的数字表达您对该问题描述的认可程度。

所有问题没有所谓正确或错误答案, 请选择最能表达您真实观点和消费习惯的选项。也许您会发现一些问题有类似的内容, 此为研究方法所需要, 请照常按照您的当前的观点回答。

如果回答过程中有任何问题, 请及时向调研人员进行提问。

所收集的问卷将由研究人员本着专业的态度进行分析, 并且仅用于学术目的。

谢谢您的配合。

第一部分

请您回答下面关于路易威登(Louis Vuitton)和 MCM(Mode Creation Munich)品牌的意见调查问题, 并圈上最符合的数字者在最符合的数字上打勾 (其中1=非常不同意, 2=不同意, 3=有点不同意, 4=中立, 5=有一点同意, 6=同意, 7=非常同意)

	非常不同意				非常同意		
1. 我对路易威登(Louis Vuitton)这个品牌很了解	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. 我对路易威登(Louis Vuitton)评价是正面的	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. 我对路易威登(Louis Vuitton)印象很好	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. 我对 MCM(Mode Creation Munich)这个品牌很了解	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. 我对 MCM(Mode Creation Munich)评价是正面的	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. 我对MCM(Mode Creation Munich)印象很好	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

第二部分

(备注：情景一材料、情景二材料、情景三材料、和情景四材料分别出现在四个实验组的问卷中)

1. 情景一（LV 广告）：

假设现在你需要给自己买一个手提包或钱包。你某天看杂志看到如下关于路易威登(Louis Vuitton)的广告。

LOUIS VUITTON

路易威登(Louis Vuitton)一奢侈品牌包的生厂商。志于为每个人提供创新的包。

使用路易威登(Louis Vuitton) 将….

- 获得关注
- 获得赞赏
- 加强您的社会地位

他们会知道这是一个路易威登(Louis Vuitton)！

2. 情景二（LV 正面口碑）：

假设现在你需要给自己买一个手提包或钱包。某天你遇到一个认识的人，她告诉你她最近在路易威登(Louis Vuitton)专卖店买了一个手提包。你从她的网上博客看到详细的评论如下。

她说：

路易威登(Louis Vuitton) 是奢侈品牌包的制造商。

最近我在路易威登(Louis Vuitton)专卖店买了左图的包，有很多朋友关注它和询问。在街上也得到很多关注的目光。

用路易威登(Louis Vuitton) 显然能增强你的社会地位，因为别人会都知道你使用的是路易威登(Louis Vuitton) 的包。

所以我建议你买奢侈品牌的包可以考虑这个牌子。

3. 情景三（MCM 广告）：

假设现在你需要给自己买一个手提包或钱包。你某天看杂志看到如下关于 MCM(Mode Creation Munich)的广告。

MCM (Mode Creation Munich) —奢侈品牌包的生厂商。志于为每个人提供创新的包。

使用MCM (Mode Creation Munich) 将...

- 获得关注
- 获得赞赏
- 加强您的社会地位

他们会知道这是一个**MCM (Mode Creation Munich)**！

4. 情景四（MCM 正面口碑）：

假设现在你需要给自己买一个手提包或钱包。某天你遇到一个认识的人，她告诉你她最近在 MCM(Mode Creation Munich)专卖店买了一个手提包。你从她的网上博客看到详细的评论如下。

她说：

MCM (Mode Creation Munich)是奢侈品牌包的制造商。

最近我在MCM (Mode Creation Munich)专卖店买了左图的包，有很多朋友关注它和询问。在街上也得到很多关注的目光。

用MCM (Mode Creation Munich)显然能增强你的社会地位，因为**别人都会知道你使用的是MCM (Mode Creation Munich)的包。**

所以我建议你买奢侈品牌的包可以考虑这个牌子。

1. 请选择您对于以上这段关于**品牌信息的感受

非常负面						非常正面	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
一点也不吸引人						非常吸引人	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
一点也不真实						非常真实	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
一点也不令人信服						非常令人信服	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

2. 如果你有一个**品牌的包，你会经常在家以外的地方使用它。

非常不同意						非常同意	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

第四部分

请提供一些个人信息作为科研用途。请圈上符合的选项或者在最符合的选项上打勾。

1. 你的性别？ ☐男 ☐女

2. 你的年纪？

☐低于 18 岁 ☐ 18 岁-25 岁 ☐ 26 岁-35 岁 ☐36 岁-50 岁 ☐大于 50 岁

3. 你的最高学历（或正在攻读的学位）是_____

☐初中 ☐高中 ☐大专 ☐大学本科 ☐硕士研究生 ☐博士

4. 你的家庭年收入是_____

☐低于人民币 60,000 元 ☐人民币 60,000-179,999 元 ☐人民币 180,000-239,999 元
☐人民币 240,000-599,999 元 ☐高于人民币 600,000 元

5. 你的婚姻状况？ ☐单身 ☐已婚

-----问卷结束-----

-----感谢您的合作-----

Appendix H: Main Study 2 Questionnaire (English Version)

The below is the sample questionnaire of cell 1 (advertising and high brand familiarity). The product and brand name will be changed across cells whereas the other three appeals of Part II will be listed after this sample questionnaire.

H-1. Treatment 1 Questionnaire:

Introduction and Instruction:

Dear participant,

I thank you in advance for your participation in this survey. This study is about consumer orientation and purchase behavior.

I am an MPhil student in Lingnan University and this study is for my final research project.

In this questionnaire, we are interested in finding how you feel about luxury brands.

During the following pages, you will read some questions. Please read them carefully and respond to them according to your judgment. All data are used for academic purpose only and will be kept confidential.

Please tick the suitable option which represents your true feelings. If you have any questions during the process, please feel free to ask.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Vera, Wei Wang
MPhil Candidate
Department of Marketing and International Business
Lingnan University, Tuen Mun,
Hong Kong, S.A.R. China

Section 1

In the following statements, **GENUINE Louis Vuitton** refers to the original branded product type, with a higher price, e.g., RMB 5,000. And **REPLICA Louis Vuitton** refers to high quality look-alike of the original branded product type sold at significantly lower price, e.g. RMB 500. Please circle the number that indicates your level of disagreement and agreement with the following statement.

1. Have you ever read any magazine on **Louis Vuitton** brand during past three years?

<i>Never</i>						<i>Always</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. Have you ever heard any comments on **Louis Vuitton** brand from your friend during past three years?

<i>Never</i>						<i>Always</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. Have you ever purchased any handbag/wallet during the past three years?

<i>Never</i>						<i>Always</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

4. What's your knowledge on the brand. **Louis Vuitton**?

<i>Very unfamiliar</i>						<i>Very familiar</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

<i>Little experienced</i>						<i>Well experienced</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

<i>Little knowledgeable</i>						<i>Very knowledgeable</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. What's your attitude on the **GENUINE** Louis Vuitton?

<i>Negative</i>						<i>Positive</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

<i>Unfavorable</i>						<i>Favorable</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

<i>Unfavorable</i>						<i>Favorable</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

6. What's your attitude on the **REPLICA** Louis Vuitton?

<i>Negative</i>						<i>Positive</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

<i>Unfavorable</i>						<i>Favorable</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

<i>Unfavorable</i>						<i>Favorable</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Do you agree with the following statements?

		<i>False</i>					<i>True</i>	
7	I would never buy a REPLICA version handbag/wallet of Louis Vuitton.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	I would never buy a GENUINE version handbag/wallet of Louis Vuitton.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		<i>Strongly disagree</i>					<i>Strongly agree</i>	
9	If I had an opportunity I would buy a REPLICA version handbag/wallet of Louis Vuitton.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	If I had an opportunity I would buy a GENUINE version handbag/wallet of Louis Vuitton.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section 2

Imagine that you are now in need of a handbag / wallet for yourself. Then one day you read a **MAGANIZE** and see the following **ADVERTISEMENT** on **Louis Vuitton**. Suppose GENUINE Louis Vuitton is with a higher price, e.g., RMB 5,000. And REPLICA Louis Vuitton is sold at a significantly lower price, e.g. RMB 500.

LOUIS VUITTON

Louis Vuitton—a leading producer of luxury bags. Innovative bags to suit every person.

Use a Louis Vuitton to....

- Get noticed
- Be admired
- Enhance your social standing

They will know it's a Louis Vuitton!

1. Indicate your feelings of the above description on Louis Vuitton using following descriptions?

<i>Very negative</i>						<i>Very positive</i>	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<i>Not at all attractive</i>						<i>Very attractive</i>	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<i>Not at all realistic</i>						<i>Very realistic</i>	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<i>Not at all convincing</i>						<i>Very convincing</i>	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Do you agree with the following statements?

		<i>Strongly disagree</i>					<i>Strongly agree</i>	
2	The above message is worth sharing with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	I will recommend this message to others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	If I owned a Louis Vuitton handbag/wallet, it is very likely that I will use it in places other than my home.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	If I had an opportunity I would buy a REPLICA version handbag/wallet of Louis Vuitton.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	If I had an opportunity I would buy a GENUINE version handbag/wallet of Louis Vuitton.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	For me, to buy a REPLICA version handbag/wallet of Louis Vuitton is easy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	If I bought a REPLICA version of a product of Louis Vuitton, most of the people who are important to be would approve.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	Most people who are important to me think it is OK to buy a REPLICA version handbag/wallet of Louis Vuitton	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	Most people who are important to me will look down on me if I buy a REPLICA version handbag/wallet of Louis Vuitton.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

11. What's your attitude on the **GENUINE** Louis Vuitton?

<i>Unfavorable</i>						<i>Favorable</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Undesirable</i>						<i>Desirable</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

12. What's your attitude on the **REPLICA** Louis Vuitton?

<i>Unfavorable</i>						<i>Favorable</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Undesirable</i>						<i>Desirable</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

I Think.....

		<i>Strongly disagree</i>					<i>Strongly agree</i>	
13.	If I had an opportunity I would buy a REPLICA version handbag/wallet of Louis Vuitton.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14.	If I had an opportunity I would buy a GENUINE version handbag/wallet of Louis Vuitton.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section 3

The following statements are regarding your personal characteristics as a consumer. Please circle the number that indicates your level of disagreement and agreement with the following statement.

Notes: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = moderately disagree, 3 = a little disagree, 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 5 = a bit agree, 6 = moderately agree, 7 = strongly agree

Do you agree with the following statements?

		<i>Strongly disagree</i>				<i>Strongly agree</i>		
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	In social situations, I have the ability to alter my behavior if I feel that something else is called for.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	I am often able to read peoples' true emotions correctly through their eyes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	I have the ability to control the way I come across to people, depending on the impression I wish to give them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	In conversations, I am sensitive to even the slightest change in the facial expression of the person I am conversing with.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	My powers of intuition are quite good when it comes to understanding others' emotions and motives.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	I can usually tell when others consider a joke to be in sad taste, even though they may laugh convincingly.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	When I feel that the image I am portraying isn't working, I can readily change it to something that does.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	I can usually tell when I've said something inappropriate by reading it in the listener's eyes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	I have trouble changing my behavior to suit different people and different situations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	I have found that I can adjust my behavior to meet the requirements of any situation I found myself in.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	If someone is lying to me, I usually know it at once from that person's manner of expression.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	Even when it might be to my advantage, I have difficulty putting up a good front.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	Once I know what the situation calls for, it's easy for me to regulate my actions accordingly.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section 4

Please provide some personal information for research purpose. Tick/circle the proper blank.

1. What's your gender? ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. What's your age?

☐ Under 18 ☐ 18-25 ☐ 26-29 ☐ 30-35 ☐ 36-40 ☐ Above 40

3. Your highest (current) education is _____

☐ Grade school ☐ High School ☐ College ☐ Undergraduate ☐ Master ☐ Doctor

4. What's your **annual household** income range?

☐ Under RMB60, 000 ☐ RMB60,000-17,999 ☐ RMB 180,000-239,999

☐ RMB 240,000-599,999 ☐ Above RMB 600,000

5. What's your marital status?

☐ Married ☐ Unmarried

-----The End. -----

-----Thanks for your cooperation. -----

H-2. The Scenario of Treatment 2

Imagine that you are now in need of a handbag / wallet for yourself. Then, one day you meet an acquaintance and she stated that she owned a Louis Vuitton bag. She suggested you to see her blog and you saw the followings. Suppose GENUINE Louis Vuitton is with a higher price, e.g., RMB 5,000. And REPLICA Louis Vuitton is sold at a significantly lower price, e.g. RMB 500.

She said:

Louis Vuitton is a leading producer of luxury bags. Recently I purchased a Louis Vuitton bag and some friends asked me about this. It also seems that it gets noticed on street. Besides, using Louis Vuitton can enhance the social standing because others will know it's a Louis Vuitton. So I suggest you can try to buy such a brand when you are considering of a luxury bag.

H-3. The Scenario of Treatment 3

Imagine that you are now in need of a handbag / wallet for yourself. Then, one day you read a MAGANIZE and see the following ADVERTISEMENT on Mode Creation Munich. Suppose GENUINE Mode Creation Munich is with a higher price, e.g., RMB 5,000. And REPLICA Mode Creation Munich is sold at a significantly lower price, e.g. RMB 500.

Mode Creation Munich —a leading producer of luxury bags. Innovative bags to suit every person

Use a Mode Creation Munich to....

- Get noticed
- Be admired
- Enhance your social standing

They will know it's a Mode Creation Munich !

H-4. The Scenario of Treatment 4

Imagine that you are now in need of a handbag / wallet for yourself. Then one day you meet an acquaintance and she stated that she owned a Mode Creation Munich bag. She suggested you to see her blog and you saw the followings. Suppose GENUINE Mode Creation Munich is with a higher price, e.g., RMB 5,000. And REPLICA Mode Creation Munich is sold at a significantly lower price, e.g. RMB 500.

She said:

Mode Creation Munich is a leading producer of luxury bags. Recently I purchased a Mode Creation Munich bag and some friends asked me about this. It also seems that it gets noticed on street. Besides, using Mode Creation Munich can enhance the social standing because others will know it's a Mode Creation Munich . So I suggest you can try to buy such a brand when you are considering of a luxury bag.

Appendix I: Main Study 2 Questionnaire (Chinese Version)

备注：以下为实验组一（关于品牌熟悉度高的品牌广告）的样本问卷。问卷中相关问题和描述所提及到的品牌和产品在四个实验组别的问卷中会对应改变。在样本问卷后为其他三个实验组的问卷的刺激材料（显示于问卷的第二部分）。

I-1. 实验组一问卷：

尊敬的女士/先生：

您好。

我是一名香港岭南大学市场及国际企业学系的硕士研究生，现正为毕业论文进行消费调查，恳请得到您的支持。

这项问卷的目的是了解消费者对于购买奢侈品的态度。请您回答关于奢侈品牌的一些问题，仔细阅读问卷中的情景描述，并假设其中所描述到的场景是您在思考购买前所看到的信息。请按照顺序仔细阅读和回答问题，然后从1至7中选择对应的数字表达您对该问题描述的认可程度。

所有问题没有所谓的正确或错误答案，请选择最能表达您真实观点和消费习惯的选项。也许您会发现一些问题有类似的内容，此为研究方法所需要，请照常按照您的当前的观点回答。

如果回答过程中有任何问题，请及时向调研人员进行提问。

所收集的问卷将由研究人员本着专业的态度进行分析，并且仅用于学术目的。

谢谢您的配合。

王玮 (Vera, Wei Wang)

香港屯门青山公路

岭南大学，市场与国际企业学系

硕士研究生

第一部分

在以下的论述中，假设你需要给你自己购买手提包或钱包。路易威登(Louis Vuitton)品牌的**真品**代表它是由原生产商品品牌出产和得到授权的，你也许可以在专卖店买到。而路易威登(Louis Vuitton)品牌的**复制品**则是指和真品在款式等外形上很相近，且质量也不错的产品，它远远低于**真品**的价格但它并没有得到原生产商品品牌的授权，你也许可以通过其他渠道购买。

假设路易威登(Louis Vuitton)**真品**的价格为人民币 5000 元，**复制品**的价格为**真品**价格的 1/10：人民币 500 元。

请您圈上或打勾最符合您想法的数字。其中 1=非常不同意，2=不同意，3=有点不同意，4=中立，5=有一点同意，6=同意，7=非常同意。

1. 在过去的三年内，你是否看过路易威登(Louis Vuitton)这个品牌的广告？

从来没有

经常

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. 在过去的三年内，你是否听到朋友提过路易威登(Louis Vuitton)这个品牌的相关信息？

从来没有

经常

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. 在过去的三年内，你有没有买过任何手提包或钱包？

从来没有

经常

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4.对于路易威登(Louis Vuitton)这个品牌，你是：

非常不熟悉

非常熟悉

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

完全没有消费经验

有丰富的消费经验

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

一点也不了解

非常了解

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5.对于路易威登(Louis Vuitton)品牌的**复制品**,你认为:

非常不好							非常好	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

非常不喜欢							非常喜欢	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

一点也不需要							非常需要	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

6. 对于路易威登(Louis Vuitton)品牌的**真品**,你认为:

非常不好							非常好	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

非常不喜欢							非常喜欢	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

一点也不需要							非常需要	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

基于您自己的感受, 请选择数字1到7来表示您对于问题描述的认可程度:

		错							对													
7	我是绝对不会买一个路易威登(Louis Vuitton)手提包或钱包的 复制品 。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7														
8	我是绝对不会买一个路易威登(Louis Vuitton)手提包或钱包的 真品 。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7														
		非常不同意							中立							非常同意						
9	将来有机会, 我会买一个路易威登(Louis Vuitton)手提包或钱包的 复制品 。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7														
10	将来有机会, 我会买一个路易威登(Louis Vuitton)手提包或钱包的 真品 。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7														

第二部分

假设现在你需要给自己买一个手提包或钱包。你某天看杂志看到如下关于路易威登(Louis Vuitton)的广告。假设此时你依然知道路易威登(Louis Vuitton)真品的价格为人民币 5000 元，复制品的价格为真品价格的 1/10：人民币 500 元。

LOUIS VUITTON

路易威登(Louis Vuitton)——奢侈品牌包的生厂商。志于为每个人提供创新的包。

使用路易威登(Louis Vuitton) 将….

- 获得关注
- 获得赞赏
- 加强您的社会地位

他们会知道这是一个路易威登(Louis Vuitton)！

1. 请选择您对于以上这段关于路易威登 (Louis Vuitton) 品牌信息的感受

非常负面						非常正面
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
一点也不吸引人						非常吸引人
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
一点也不真实						非常真实
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
一点也不令人信服						非常令人信服
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. 此刻，对于路易威登(Louis Vuitton)品牌的复制品，你认为：

不好						很好
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
非常不喜欢						非常喜欢
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
一点也不需要						非常需要
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. 此刻，对于路易威登(Louis Vuitton)品牌的真品，你认为：

不好						很好
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
非常不喜欢						非常喜欢
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
一点也不需要						非常需要
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

请选择数字1到7来表示您对于问题描述的认可程度：

		非常 不同意			中 立			非常 同意		
4	以上这段关于路易威登(Louis Vuitton)品牌的广告是值得和别人分享。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
5	我会把以上这段关于路易威登(Louis Vuitton)品牌的信息推荐给其他人。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
6	如果我有一个路易威登(Louis Vuitton)品牌的手提包或钱包，我多数是在家以外的地方使用它。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
7	对我来说，买到路易威登(Louis Vuitton)手提包或钱包的 复制品 是容易的。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
8	如果我买一个路易威登(Louis Vuitton)手提包或钱包的 复制品 ，很多对我来说重要的人会赞成。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
9	很多对我来说重要的人会鄙视我的，如果我买一个路易威登(Louis Vuitton)手提包或钱包的 复制品 。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
10	很多对我来说重要的人会觉得：买一个路易威登(Louis Vuitton)手提包或钱包的 复制品 是可以的。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
11	将来有机会，我会买一个路易威登(Louis Vuitton)手提包或钱包的 复制品 。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
12	将来有机会，我会买一个路易威登(Louis Vuitton)手提包或钱包的 真品 。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
		错						对		
13	我是绝对不会买一个路易威登(Louis Vuitton)手提包或钱包的 复制品 。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
14	我是绝对不会买一个路易威登(Louis Vuitton)手提包或钱包的 真品 。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

第三部分

这部分是关于您在社交场合相关行为的问题。请选择数字1到7来表示您对于问题描述的认可程度。

		非常 不同意			中 立		非常 同意	
1	在社交场合我能调节我的行为，如果我察觉到某些事和举动是他人所期待的。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	我经常能从别人眼睛里得知人们的真实情绪。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	我能根据我想给他人留下的印象类型，来调节我和他们接触的方式。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	在交谈中，我能敏锐的捕捉到对方表情微小的变化。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	对于了解别人的情绪和动机，我的直觉向来很好。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	即使大家听到笑话都笑了，我还是能分辨出他们是否真心认为该笑话的确是个好笑话。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	当我认识到我的愿景不能实现时，我能将它向可实现的方向进行稳妥的转变。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	我能经常从听者的眼神里察觉到我是否讲的不恰当的东西。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	对于要因不同的人和环境去转变我的行为,我是觉得困难的。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	我发现我可以适应任何环境和调整我的行为。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	如果有人对我撒谎，我经常能立刻从他/她的举动判断出来。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	对于我的优势方面，我也很难去在众人面前展现。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	一旦我知道环境需要什么状态，对我来说调整我的行动是很容易的事情。	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

第四部分

请提供一些个人信息作为科研用途。请圈上符合的选项或者在最符合的选项上打勾。

1. 你的性别?

☐男 ☐女

2. 你的年纪?

☐低于 18 岁 ☐ 18 岁-25 岁 ☐ 26 岁-35 岁 ☐36 岁-50 岁 ☐大于 50 岁

3. 你的最高学历（或正在攻读的学位）是_____

☐初中 ☐高中 ☐大专 ☐大学本科 ☐硕士研究生 ☐博士

4. 你的家庭年收入是_____

☐低于人民币 60,000 元 ☐人民币 60,000-179, 999 元
☐人民币 180,000-239, 999 元 ☐人民币 240,000-599, 999 元
☐高于人民币 600,000 元

5. 你的婚姻状况?

☐单身 ☐已婚

-----问卷结束-----

-----感谢您的合作-----

I-2. 实验组二使用的情景:

假设现在你需要给自己买一个手提包或钱包。某天你遇到一个**认识的人**，她告诉你她最近在**路易威登(Louis Vuitton)专卖店**买了一个手提包。并且她说这是它用的最好的一个包。你从她的网上博客看到详细的评论如下。假设此时你依然知道路易威登(Louis Vuitton)**真品**的价格为人民币 5000 元，**复制品**的价格为**真品**价格的 1/10：人民币 500 元。

她说：

路易威登(Louis Vuitton) 是奢侈品牌包的制造商。

最近我在路易威登(Louis Vuitton)专卖店买了左图的包，有很多朋友关注它和询问。在街上也得到很多关注的目光。

用路易威登(Louis Vuitton) 显然能增强你的社会地位，因为**别人会都知道你使用的是路易威登(Louis Vuitton) 的包。**

所以我建议你买奢侈品牌的包可以考虑这个牌子。

I-3. 实验组三使用的情景:

假设现在你需要给自己买一个手提包或钱包。你某天看**杂志**看到如下关于 **MCM (Mode Creation Munich)** 的广告。假设此时你依然知道 MCM (Mode Creation Munich)**真品**的价格为人民币 5000 元，**复制品**的价格为**真品**价格的 1/10：人民币 500 元。

MCM (Mode Creation Munich) 一奢侈品牌包的生厂商。志于为每个人提供创新的包。

使用MCM (Mode Creation Munich) 将….

- 获得关注
- 获得赞赏
- 加强您的社会地位

他们会知道这是一个**MCM (Mode Creation Munich) ！**

I-4. 实验组四使用的情景：

假设现在你需要给自己买一个手提包或钱包。某天你遇到一个认识的人，她告诉你她最近在MCM (Mode Creation Munich) 专卖店买了一个手提包。并且她说这是它用的最好的一个包。你从她的网上博客看到详细的评论如下。假设此时你依然知道 MCM (Mode Creation Munich) 真品的价格为人民币 5000 元，复制品的价格为真品价格的 1/10：人民币 500 元。

<p>她说：</p> <p>MCM (Mode Creation Munich) 是奢侈品牌包的制造商。</p> <p>最近我在MCM (Mode Creation Munich) 专卖店买了左图的包，有很多朋友关注它和询问。在街上也得到很多关注的目光。</p> <p>用MCM (Mode Creation Munich) 显然能增强你的社会地位，因为别人都会知道你使用的是MCM (Mode Creation Munich) 的包。</p> <p>所以我建议你买奢侈品牌的包可以考虑这个牌子。</p>
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