Role of Self-Regulatory in Luxury Brands' Social Media Advertising

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Abstract

Luxury brands are increasingly using social media messages as their ads to consumers. This paper investigates the impact of regulatory focus on brand attitudes after research participants viewed a luxury brand's message on social media. The research question is whether promotion-focused consumers and prevention-focused consumers have different responses to messages that emphasize either innovation or tradition. Based on an online experiment, this research findings show that the framing of the message interacts with regulatory focus. An ad that emphasizes innovation yields more favorable brand attitudes than an ad that emphasizes tradition among promotion-focused consumers. However, this does not happen among prevention-focused consumers. This research provides theoretical implications and practical suggestions for industry practitioners.

Keywords: luxury brands, advertising, regulatory focus, message framing, social media

1. Introduction

Luxury brands like Louis Vuitton and Burberry offer and advertise innovative products, thanks to partnerships with new designers. According to a recent report (Ahmed, 2022), many luxury brands have started to promote non-traditional designs and clothing lines mainly to attract new and younger consumers. For example, Louis Vuitton hired a streetwear label designer, Virgil Abloh, back in 2018 as the new men's artistic director. Abloh's appointment reflects increased consumer interest in a fusion of luxury and streetwear. As expected, Abloh's innovative and visionary designs grasped younger consumers' attention and increased sales by 16% in the first quarter of 2019 styles (Freidman & Peiton, 2018).

Other luxury brands like Hermes and Chanel continue to offer and advertise their traditional and iconic designs (Hourson & Kim, 2021). These luxury brands apparently do not wish to take a different path from their current one, and they continue to sell products such as handbags and clothing with long-established designs, which consumers have loved for decades. For example, Chanel has sold iconic tweed jackets since 1925, and these jackets are still popular worldwide. Nevertheless, these luxury brands continue to be quite successful, notwithstanding this custom of sticking with the traditional way of doing things.

While some luxury brands have embraced new and innovative directions, some brands have not; the implication is that two different groups of consumers are attracted by the two approaches: One group responds well to innovation, while the other group prefers tradition and an emphasis on history. If so, what is the key factor that separates the two groups? This is an important question because competition among luxury brands is fierce, and they spend large amounts of money on advertising (D'Arpizio et al., 2021).

We posit here that the answer to this question is in an individual-difference variable, the consumer's *regulatory focus*, which distinguishes between individuals focusing on prevention goals versus those focusing on promotion goals. Prevention-focused consumers mainly strive to avoid adverse outcomes, such as losses and failures, whereas promotion-focused consumers are more likely to aim at positive outcomes, such as gains and successes (Higgins, 1997; Higgins et al., 1997; Lockwood et al., 2002). Even though previous studies examined this theory in message processing (Aaker & Lee, 2001), product choices (Herzenstein et al., 2007), and ethical ideology (Zou & Chan, 2019), only a handful number of studies applied the regulatory focus theory in the luxury brand context (e.g., Fazeli et al., 2020; Kim & Sung, 2013). On top of that, to the best of our knowledge, the current research is the first study examining the role of self-regulatory focus on advertising messages emphasizing innovativeness versus tradition.

To address this research gap, we investigate the effects of consumer regulatory focus on response to luxury brands' advertising messages. The critical question is whether regulatory focus impacts consumer response to messages emphasizing innovation and newness rather than tradition and history. Suppose the brand attitudes that result from these two types of messages turn out to be different among promotion-focused versus prevention-focused consumers. In that case, this will provide a solid rationale for using these distinctive approaches among luxury brands.

We first discuss the theoretical background for the research, including a review of relevant literature, followed by a development of the hypotheses. The hypotheses were then tested in an online experiment utilizing social-media messages with two product categories (handbags and clothing). We used social media messages (text-only) because luxury brands commonly use social media for advertising and other marketing activities (Cais, 2021). Finally, we discuss the findings, focusing on the theoretical and managerial implications. In so doing, we endeavor to make two significant contributions to the existing literature. First, we hope to illuminate a crucial variable explaining why different consumers respond dissimilarly to luxury brands' advertising messages that emphasize either innovation or tradition. Second, we hope to provide actionable guidelines for brand managers who promote luxury brands with very different strategies.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 Luxury Brands Advertising

Luxury brands have contributed to economic growth at the global level for the past decades. According to a recent report, the luxury industry is estimated at over $110 billion and is expected to reach $153 billion by 2026 (D'Arpizio et al., 2021). Further, luxury product consumers show distinctive motivations such as socioeconomic, functional, and personal value-related attributes (Kwon et al., 2017; Prendergast & Wong; 2003). Accordingly, scholars explored the impact of luxury brands in marketing and advertising, such as branding strategies and advertising tactics (Gurzki et al., 2019; Kwon et al., 2017; Fazeli et al., 2020).

Researchers argue that advertising is one of the vital marketing tools that luxury brands can use to deliver their brands meaningfully. It helps brands create, develop, and manage the whole image (Sung & Phau, 2019). These advertisements often portray images of elegant, successful, and confident individuals using luxury products to express their socioeconomic superiority. Moreover, researchers agree that luxury products are generally hard to obtain, bringing esteem to the product owner (Nueno & Quelch, 1988). Also, luxury brands' advertisements typically promote heritage, tradition, and high quality (Freire, 2014). However, some luxury brands (e.g., Porsche, Burberry) recently promoted new and innovative brand images in their advertising campaign, which shows the new brand logo and rebranding messages.

Formerly, luxury brand advertising targeted an elite group of consumers who could afford high price tags (Chevalier & Mazzalovo, 2011; Han et al., 2010). Many luxury brands published advertisements on selective media such as high-end fashion magazines (e.g., *Vogue*) and the brand's website. However, as luxury brands gradually expanded their target consumers to a broader group of consumers due to economic changes in the early 2000s, the brands invested in advertising budgets across all media vehicles. It is important to note that luxury brands have had to start investing in digital marketing to engage with their consumers because of the popularity and effectiveness of digital media (Fazeli et al., 2020). A recent report shows that luxury brands spend almost 35% of their advertising budget on digital marketing, which is expected to increase continuously (Gonzalez, 2021).

2.2 Regulatory Focus Theory

Regulatory Focus Theory (RFT) is centered on the motivational orientation of individuals (Higgins, 1997; Cesario et al., 2004). RFT posits that consumers' judgments and decisions are aimed at their motivational goals and needs (Aaker & Lee; 2001; Chan & Ho, 2017; Lockwood et al., 2002; Zhao & Pechmann, 2007). RFT distinguishes between two types of consumers based on their primary motivational goals: promotion-focus or prevention-focus consumers (Higgins, 1997; Pham & Higgins, 2005). Promotion-focus consumers aim to achieve positive outcomes, such as gains and successes, and pursue actions to achieve these desired end states. On the other hand, prevention-focus consumers focus on avoiding adverse outcomes, such as losses and failures, and pursue actions designed to avoid these negative outcomes (Fazeli et al., 2020; Higgins, 1997). Furthermore, Crowe and Higgins (1997) found that promotion-focused individuals typically adopt advancement tactics and pursue accomplishments, whereas prevention-focused individuals mainly try to avoid mistakes and pursue safety. These authors also found that promotion-focused individuals are more likely to engage in risky actions than their prevention-focused counterparts.

Previous research shows that regulatory focus affects consumers in various ways, such as information processing

(Aaker & Lee, 2001; Chan & Ho, 2016; Zhu & Meyers-Levy, 2007), health message efficacy (Borges & Gomez, 2015; Latimer et al., 2008; Zhao & Pechmann, 2007), and parenting (Keller, 2008). Further, scholars found that these two distinctively different types of consumers show significantly different behaviors in the marketplace. For example, Chernev (2004) revealed that prevention-focused consumers tend to have stronger preferences for the status quo than promotion-focused consumers and are less likely to purchase new products when risks are contextually salient (Herzenstein et al., 2007). Furthermore, Fazeli et al. (2014) found that promotion-focused (or prevention-focused) consumers tend to have higher purchasing intentions for luxury products through online shopping. Because purchasing luxury products brings joy, self-enhancement, and hedonic pleasures (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004), these benefits fit the needs of promotion-focused consumers (e.g., hopes, gains, and advancements) (Higgins, 1997).

Furthermore, Higgins et al. (2003) argue that regulatory fit is important for understanding why some activities can be more engaging than others. Depending on how people engage in a given activity, they may experience a regulatory fit that sustains their goal orientation to that activity. If this is achieved, it will often lead to deeper and more meaningful involvement as the person "feels right" about what they are doing (Aaker & Lee, 2006). Studies show that this "feels right" increases an individual's engagement in a task (Avnet & Higgins, 2006), leads to paying a higher premium (Higgins et al., 2003), and generates stronger purchasing intentions from online shopping (Fazeli et al., 2019).

Based on RFT, many researchers examined how two different groups of consumers process promotional messages (Kim & Sung, 2013; Mowle et al., 2014; Zarouali et al., 2019). The following section reviews previous literature in more detail.

2.3 Regulatory Focus in Advertising

Various studies have examined the effects of regulatory focus on advertising effectiveness. For instance, researchers have examined the role of the relationship between self and regulatory focus in processing messages on environmental advertising. Kareklas et al. (2012) found that promotion-framed (in contrast to prevention-framed) messages are more persuasive for individuals with an active independent self-view (vs. interdependent self-view). Bhatnagar and McKay-Nesbitt (2016) found that primed promotion (in contrast to prevention) focused messages on environmental concerns generated more favorable responses among promotion-focused (in contrast to prevention-focused) individuals. Furthermore, researchers have demonstrated that antismoking advertisements targeting adolescents are effective when the viewers' regulatory focus fits the message frame (Kim, 2006; Zhao & Pechmann, 2007).

Although regulatory focus theory has been applied in advertising studies, only a handful of studies have examined its role in the realm of luxury brands. Septianto et al. (2020) investigated the interaction between promotion pride (in contrast to prevention pride) and luxury value (authenticity in contrast to exclusivity) in luxury advertising. They found that promotion pride generates a strong preference for exclusivity appeals, whereas prevention pride leads to a strong preference for authenticity appeals. Further, Wang et al. (2020) found that promotion-focused consumers have higher purchasing intentions for counterfeit luxury products than their prevention-focused counterparts. Fazeli et al. (2019) found supportive evidence that promotion-focused (in contrast to prevention-focused) individuals shop more frequently online for luxury products without direct interaction with a seller or checking out the product in person. These findings resonate with previous studies (Crowe & Higgins, 1997; Herzenstein et al., 2007), arguing that promotion-focused consumers are willing to take risks to pursue gains, advancement, and hedonic pleasure.

2.4 Hypotheses Development

Heritage is important to a brand's identity and equity in the luxury industry. It contributes to brand and product differentiation (Dion & Borraz, 2015) and is associated with brand reliability (Beverland, 2006). As the luxury industry continuously develops new and innovative products and experiences (Robert & Armitage, 2015), it is crucial to investigate how advertising messages emphasizing innovation and newness (compared to tradition) impact consumer perception.

We found that only a handful of studies examined the relationship between the self-regulatory fit and perception of newness (vs. tradition, heritage) in the marketing communication context. For example, Herzenstein et al. (2007) found that promotion-focused consumers have higher ownership of new products (i.e., new televisions) than prevention-focused consumers as they pursue advancement, gain, and risks than their prevention-focused counterparts (Aaker & Lee, 2006; Higgins et al., 2003;). However, for established products (i.e., CD players), they found no differences between promotion- and prevention-focused consumers regarding ownership, as those products are related to low risks. The study highlighted that consumers' perception of established products

(compared to new products) tends to link to stability.

A few studies showed a similar pattern. Lin and Shen (2012) investigated if brand attitudes are influenced by the compatibility between regulatory focus, frames (gain vs. loss), and product attributes (hedonic vs. utilitarian). Results revealed that promotion-focused individuals showed stronger brand attitudes toward gain-framed (compared to loss) and hedonic (compared to utilitarian) messages. However, message frames did not generate any differences among prevention-focused individuals. Lin and Shen (2012) argued that the impact of self-regulatory fit might have been diluted when the messages used specific frames, such as loss and gain, in a particular product category (e.g., utilitarian vs. hedonic). Similarly, Latimer et al. (2008) examined whether tailoring messages to individuals' regulatory focus would increase the persuasiveness of messages. More specifically, promotion messages encouraged to eat more fruits and vegetables (FV) to *optimize* one's health, while prevention messages encouraged them to do so to *protect* one's health. Their research showed that promoters found that promotion-focused messages (compared to prevention-focused ones) are persuasive but not for preventers. Latimer et al. (2008) argued that preventors might have been motivated to meet the minimum recommended FV intake and stopped trying to increase FV intake. In other words, preventors might have felt comfortable (stable) once they meet the recommendation. But promotors, who want to achieve gain and self-enhancement (Higgins, 1997) were motivated to increase FV intake to the highest level. These studies showed that feeling stable and safe is a critical motivational factor for prevention-focused individuals, but advancement is important for promotion-focused individuals.

Based on previous research, the current study expects luxury brands' advertising messages emphasizing innovation (compared to tradition) will generate a favorable brand attitude among promotion-focused consumers (Higgins, 1998). However, for prevention-focused consumers, we expect ad messages emphasizing tradition to be more favorable than innovation messages. Generally, many luxury brands (e.g., Chanel, Dior) brag about their long history in the market in marketing and advertising. Therefore, consumers might consider them established brands that generate low risks. Particularly for prevention-focused consumers, advertising messages emphasizing either innovation or tradition might generate no difference in consumers' perceptions. Nevertheless, when advertising messages emphasize innovation rather than tradition, promotion-focused individuals might favor the brand because messages are compatible with their self-regulatory fit. Formally, we expect that:

When a luxury brand posts an ad on social media, the ad's message frame will interact with a consumer's regulatory focus with regard to brand attitudes. Specifically:

H1: For promotion-focused consumers, an ad that emphasizes innovation will result in more favorable brand attitudes than an ad that emphasizes tradition

H2: For prevention-focused consumers, there will be no difference in brand attitude between an ad that emphasizes innovation or tradition.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Design and Participants

The study involved an experiment with a 2x2 between-subjects design (brand message: tradition vs. innovation; product category: handbags vs. clothing). This research was approved by the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB). e used Qualtrics.com website. Each participant read a scenario regarding a target luxury brand, "X" and responded to various measurements. We informed participants that the target brand was very similar to a reference set of three brands whose names were provided. We selected two product categories (handbags and clothing) as the two product categories for this research because of a) the prevalence of luxury brands in these product categories and b) the fact that brands in these categories are consumed in public and potentially have high symbolic value (Han et al., 2010).

Five hundred forty-five participants were recruited through Amazon Mturk and were provided monetary compensation. All participants were female, over 18 years old, and residents of the United States and urban areas. Out of 545 participants, 76 were eliminated due to insincere responses or because they failed an attention check question about online shopping embedded in the study measures. Eliminating these participants left us with a final sample of 469 usable responses. The participants were widely distributed in age (Range = 19–77, M = 40.35, SD = 12.85). Almost all had completed high school, and 37.3% had college degrees.

3.2 Stimuli and Pretests

Pretest 1 was conducted for both product categories (handbags and clothing) to select reference brands for manipulating brand prestige. For stimuli advertising messages, pretest two was conducted with two different advertising messages; one message emphasized tradition, while the other message emphasized innovation.

Appendix 1 shows the advertising messages that we used.

Pretest 1. Ten brands of handbags and ten brands of clothing were used in this pretest. Participants responded to measures (1-7 Likert scale) regarding perceived brand prestige (3 items, 7-point Likert scale) and brand familiarity ($M_{clothing}$ = 5.11, $M_{handbag}$ = 4.56) in the handbags and clothing categories, respectively. Brand familiarity was measured to select the most familiar brands among the consumers. A total of 49 participants were recruited through Amazon Mturk. Out of 49 participants, 8 participants were eliminated who failed to pass attention check questions. After eliminating eight participants, 41 usable responses remained for the data analysis. Three brands (Chanel, Gucci, and Louis Vuitton) were selected as the reference brands for handbags for the main study because a repeated-measure ANOVA confirmed that these three brands were, in fact, perceived to be higher in prestige than five non-luxury brands (Old Navy, American Eagle, Gap, Banana Republic, and Fossil; M_{luxury} = 6.68, $M_{non-luxury}$ = 3.56) that customers are familiar with (Chanel: $F(1, 40)$ = 116.32, p<.001, η^2 =.74, M_{Chanel} = 6.71 versus $M_{non-luxury}$ = 4.11; Gucci: $F(1, 40)$ = 132.05, p<.001, η^2 =.77, M_{Gucci} = 6.76; LV: $F(1, 40)$ = 98.31, p<.001; η^2 = .71; M_{LV} = 6.68). For clothing, a repeated-measure ANOVA confirmed that three high-prestige brands (Armani, Burberry, and Dolce & Gabbana) were, in fact, perceived to be higher in prestige than five commonly seen non-luxury brands (Old Navy, Express, H&M, American Eagle, and Forever 21) (Armani: $F(1, 40)$ = 138.70, p<.001, η^2 = .78, M_{amani} = 6.65 versus $M_{non-luxury}$ = 3.64; Burberry: $F(1, 40)$ = 103.77, p<.001; η^2 = .72; $M_{burberry}$ = 6.33; D&G: $F(1, 40)$ = 108.72, p<.001; η^2 = .73; $M_{D\&G}$ = 6.52).

Pretest 2. For advertising messages, two messages were created (see Appendix 1); one message emphasized tradition, while the other one emphasized innovation. A total of 184 participants were recruited through Amazon MTurk. After deleting 30 insincere responses that failed to pass attention check questions, a total of 154 usable responses remained for the data analysis. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions of the survey (2 product categories: handbags vs. clothing x 2 advertising messages: tradition vs. innovation). At the beginning of the survey, participants were asked to imagine a scenario involving a brand of handbags/clothing that was referred to as "brand X." Participants were informed that the actual brand name would not be revealed because we did not want to influence their responses. Instead, participants were asked to think of "brand X" as one that was very similar to brands such as Chanel, Gucci, and Louis Vuitton for handbags or Armani, Burberry, and Dolce & Gabbana for clothing. For example, participants assigned to the handbags x innovation condition were informed that "brand X" was very similar to other brands such as Chanel, Gucci, and Louis Vuitton, and brand X was trying to launch a new advertising campaign on social media. Next, participants saw the innovative advertising message for 30 seconds. The order of messages was randomized. After, participants were asked to indicate their strength of agreement with statements such as 'The message you just saw stresses the tradition/the past/the heritage' (handbag: $M_{traditional\ message}$ = 6.34 versus $M_{change\ message}$ = 2.60; clothing: $M_{traditional\ message}$ = 6.27 versus $M_{change\ message}$ = 2.56)'The message you just saw stresses moving forward/the future/change' (1-7 Likert scale, handbag: $M_{traditional\ message}$ = 3.04 versus $M_{change\ message}$ = 6.16; clothing: $M_{traditional\ message}$ = 2.86 versus $M_{change\ message}$ = 6.40). Repeated Measure General Linear Model showed that the manipulation of both traditional and innovation messages was highly effective for each product category (handbag: $F(1, 68)$ = 143.65; p < .001; η^2 = .68; clothing: $F(1, 78)$ = 236.67; p < .001; η^2 = .75).

3.3 Procedure

Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions of the experiment. They were informed that the study aimed to examine how consumers feel about advertising messages from luxury brands on social media. Participants were also asked to imagine a scenario regarding a luxury brand X which is launching an advertising campaign on social media. We informed them that we would not tell them the actual brand name because we did not want the particular brand name to influence their responses. Instead, we asked participants to think of "brand X" as one that was very similar to brands such as A, B, and C, with A, B, and C being the specific reference brands for either clothing or handbags. For example, participants assigned to the clothing category and innovative message condition were informed that a luxury brand X which is very similar to Armani, Burberry, and Dolce & Gabbana, is launching a text-only advertising message on social media.

Participants saw the ad message for 30 seconds. They were then asked to respond to the dependent measures in the following sequence: brand attitude, regulatory focus measurement, attention check question, and demographic questions. Further, participants were asked to answer filler questions that asked about their leisure activities to distract them from the focal interests of this research.

Measures All variables were measured with seven-point Likert scales. For brand attitude, the items were good/bad, unappealing/appealing, and unlikable/likable. For regulatory focus measurements, 12 items (e.g., In general, I am focused on preventing negative events in my life. In general, I am focused on achieving positive

outcomes in my life.) were adapted from Lockwood et al. (2002), among which 6 items measured prevention focus and 6 items measured promotion focus. Reliability was satisfactory for all measures (brand attitudes Cronbach's α = .96; prevention focus Cronbach's α = .86; promotion focus Cronbach's α = .88). Each participant's prevention focus average score and promotion focus average score were calculated. Then, each participant's promotion focus index was created by subtracting their of prevention average score from their promotion average scores (Lockwood et al., 2002).

4. Results

The hypotheses predicted a two-way interaction between the ad's message frame and consumers' regulatory focus on brand attitudes. The statistical significance was judged at the .05 level. Participants were split into two groups of prevention-oriented-consumers and promotion-oriented-consumers via a median split based on their promotion index (Mdn = 1.00, Range = 5.83−8.00): those whose index score was lower than the median were in the prevention-oriented group and those whose index score higher than the median were in the promotion-oriented group. A total of 239 participants were in the prevention-oriented group, and 230 participants were in the promotion-oriented group. Prevention-orientation was coded as 1, and promotion-orientation was coded as 2. A three-way ANOVA was performed, with the message frame, product categories, and prevention/promotion-orientation as the independent variables and continuous age as a blocking variable. None of the two-way, three-way, or four-way interactions involving product categories was significant, indicating that the results did not vary by product categories. The main effects of the message frame were statistically significant ($F(1, 453)$ = 3.91, p = .049). The two-way interaction between the message frame and consumers' prevention/promotion orientation was marginally statistically significant ($F(1, 453)$ = 3.15, p = .077, η^2 = .007). A follow-up simple effect analysis showed that the direction of the two-way interaction presented as what the hypothesis predicted: promotion-oriented consumers had more favorable brand attitudes for an innovation-focused ad than a tradition-focused ad ($F(1, 453)$ = 6.60, p = .011; η^2 = .014; M = 6.61 vs. 5.98; $M_{difference}$ = 0.63). Therefore, H1 was supported. However, this did not happen among prevention-oriented consumers ($F(1, 453)$ = 0.07, p = .791; M = 6.35 vs. 6.42; $M_{difference}$ = -0.07). H2 was supported. Figure 1 shows the pattern of the means in the data.
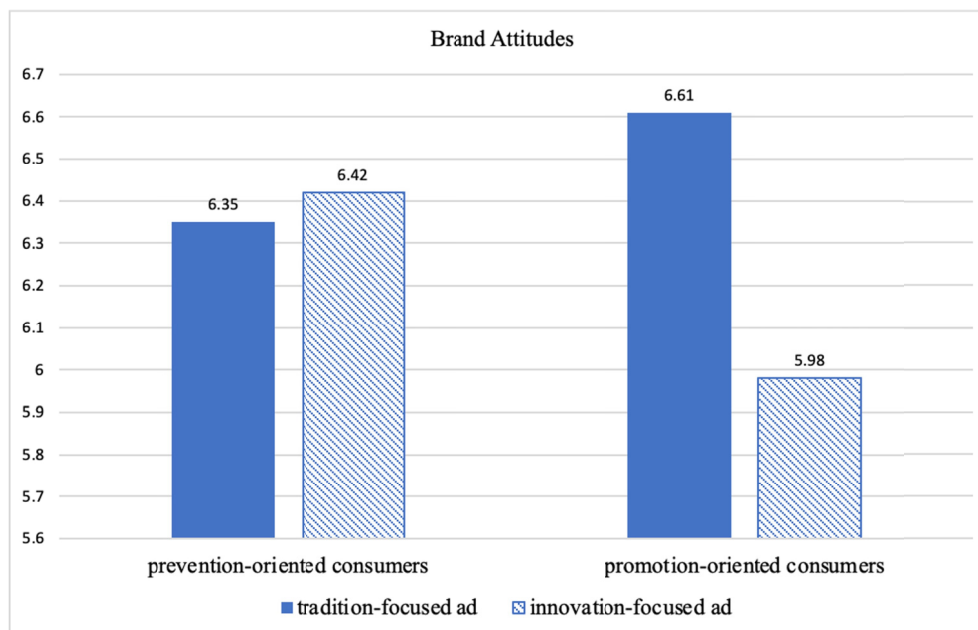

Figure 1. Means of brand attitude between Promotion vs. Prevention-oriented Consumers

5. General Discussion

Given the rapid growth of social media advertising, many luxury brands join social media to promote products and brands to consumers. Previous research examined the role of regulatory focus on consumers' online purchasing intentions, information processing, and acceptance of new products (Aaker & Lee, 2001; Chan & Ho,

2017; Fazeli et al., 2020; Herzenstein et al., 2007). Studies found that compatibility between consumers' self-regulatory fit and brands' persuasive messages tends to generate a more favorable attitude toward persuasive messages and higher purchasing intention. A few studies examined the influence of regulatory focus in the context of luxury brand consumption. For example, Fazeli et al. (2020) found that promotion-focused consumers tend to have a stronger online purchasing intention of luxury products than prevention-focused consumers. They argued that purchasing luxury products generates hedonic satisfaction and self-enhancement benefits, which promotion-focused consumers seek as those psychological benefits reflect advancements and gains (Higgins, 1997). Further, Kim and Sung (2013) revealed an interaction effect between brand personality and message frame (prevention vs. promotion). Their study showed that a brand personality with luxury and hedonic characteristics is positively associated with promotion-focused messages. In contrast, a utilitarian or competent brand personality is related to prevention-focused messages. Nevertheless, to the best of our knowledge, no studies examined the role of regulatory focus on consumers' preference for social media advertising messages from luxury brands.

Our research results show that promotion-focused consumers favor an innovative ad message over a traditional ad message. This finding confirms that previous studies showed that promotion-focused consumers typically seek advancement and growth and are not afraid of taking risks (Higgins, 1998; Kim & Sung; 2013; Lin & Shen; 2012). Yet, as we expected, the results show that there was no difference in brand attitudes between ad messages emphasizing innovation or tradition among prevention-focused consumers. Typically, prevention-focused consumers try to avoid adverse outcomes and seek security and stability (Cesario et al., 2008; Mowle et al., 2014). However, when responding to established products, prevention-focused consumers tend to have less uncertainty about the products, even if they are new in the market (Herzenstein et al., 2007). Luxury products are widely known around the globe, and the quality of products is top-notch (Han et al., 2010; Kessous & Valette-Florence, 2019). Consequently, when luxury brands promote innovativeness on social media advertising, prevention-focused consumers might experience fewer perceived risks of innovations (Ram & Sheth, 1989). Our study reflects our assumption showing that prevention-focus consumers indicate similar brand attitudes whether they see ad messages promoting innovation or tradition.

The present study contributes to the literature in the following ways. First, previous studies examined the impact of regulatory focus in many contexts, such as information processing (Aaker & Lee, 2001; Chan & Ho, 2016), health message efficacy (Borges & Gomez, 2015), and online keyword search (Mowle et al., 2014). However, limited studies have examined how consumers' self-regulatory fit would influence message processing that focuses on innovativeness and tradition. Further, previous studies found that prevention-focused consumers prefer stability and safety over adventure and newness (Aaker & Lee, 2001; Kim & Sung, 2013; Lin & Shen, 2012). Nevertheless, the present study reveals that prevention-focused consumers tend to have a similar brand attitude when the brand promotes newness (e.g., innovativeness) or stability (e.g., tradition). As explained in the previous section, prevention-focused customers likely perceive luxury brands as stable and well-established due to their long history of reputable products. Thus, consumers' perceptions of luxury brands provide stability (rather than uncertainty) even if the brand promotes innovativeness in the advertising messages.

Another possible attribution of this finding is the impact of the cultural background of research participants (Lee et al., 2000) or the interaction effect between consumers' regulatory focus and perceived risks involved in the decision-making process (Lin & Shen, 2012). Lastly, this research corroborates previous studies' findings that promotion-focused consumers prefer advertisements with text and/or images related to newness and adventure (Fazeli et al., 2020; Higgins, 1997; Zou & Chan, 2018).

The present study provides practical implications for marketers and advertisers of luxury brands. First, as our results show, practitioners might want to create social media advertising messages emphasizing innovativeness and newness for promotion-focused consumers. More specifically, using specific keywords (e.g., new, revolution) in the messages will be helpful for marketers. Companies should know precisely about consumers' self-regulatory fit to apply this recommendation. Due to personal and interest-based data from different social media, luxury brands should be able to assess consumers' preferences for regulatory fit. For example, studies show that regulatory focus is typically associated with gender, education, and cultural background (Kumar, 2015; Lee et al., 2000), which are easily accessible through social media websites. Therefore, practitioners would be able to create a customized advertising campaign for promotion or prevention-focused consumers.

6. Limitation and Future Research

Although this study provides valuable theoretical and practical implications, it has some limitations. First, the stimuli used in this study employed two product categories, handbags and clothing. Although female consumers

commonly consume these two product categories, future studies might want to use other product categories (e.g., luxury watches and high-end cars). Second, we tested our stimuli among female consumers as they are more prevalent consumers of luxury brands (Stokburger-Sauer & Teichmann, 2013; Kwon et al., 2017). It might be interesting for scholars to see how male consumers respond to advertising messages differently based on their self-regulatory fit. Third, we tested the advertising messages from traditional luxury brands such as Louis Vuitton and Chanel. However, some luxury brands (e.g., Balenciaga) are becoming popular, especially among young consumers, due to the brands' innovativeness and newness. Therefore, future studies should investigate how consumers feel about ad messages from those 'new and innovative' luxury brands on social media. Additionally, it might be beneficial to measure luxury shopping experiences which might influence participants' answers.

Further, we suggest scholars examine the impact of other variables on regulatory fit. For example, research shows individual's self-regulatory (prevention vs. promotion) mediates the effect of self-construal (interdependent vs. independent) in information processing (Aaker & Lee, 2001; Zhang & Mittal, 2007). Moreover, while our research did not consider the possible interaction effect between self-regulatory and consumers' need for uniqueness (CNFU), a previous study shows that two dimensions of CNFU (creative choice, similarity avoidance) are positively associated with two dimensions of self-regulatory (approach, avoidance) in evaluations of online advertising (Stiglbauer & Kovacs, 2019). It might be interesting to see whether the interaction effect applies to the luxury brand context. Lastly, we recommend that scholars examine the impact of the perception of risks between promotion (vs. prevention)-focused individuals in their response to tradition (vs. innovation)-focused ad messages. Research shows that prevention-focused individuals are more attentive to the risks and feel unfavorable toward advertising messages. In contrast, promotion-focused individuals are more receptive and show more favoritism to advertising messages (Kim et al., 2022). We strongly believe that findings in the current research and practical insights should motivate such future research efforts.

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Appendix A

Advertising Messages

Message type	
Tradition	**Our Spring 2021 Collection**
	We are building again on our splendid heritage!
	The designs in our Spring collection are grounded in our history, dating back to 1928. We are very proud to maintain this grand tradition!
Innovation	**Our Spring 2021 Collection**
	We are moving forward again with our new vision!
	The designs in our Spring collection look to a bright, pathbreaking future. We are very proud to pioneer new designs and state-of-art innovations!