

# Purchase Intention in Luxury Food: The Role of Materialism, Social Comparison, and Bandwagon Effect

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## Abstract

**Objective:** This research aims to examine the influence of materialism, social comparison, and the bandwagon effect on purchase intention for luxury food products.

**Design/Methods/Approach:** This study adopts a quantitative approach and employs Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Squares (PLS) using the SmartPLS 3 software. An online survey was conducted by distributing a questionnaire among 200 respondents.

**Findings:** The results indicate a significant influence of materialism and the bandwagon effect on purchase intention. In contrast, no significant influence is found in the effect of social comparison on purchase intention.

**Originality/Value:** This research contributes to the academic and marketing fields by providing insights into the role of materialism, social comparison, and the bandwagon effect on purchase intention, particularly in the luxury food product category.

**Practical/Policy implications:** The findings of this study could be beneficial for marketers looking to promote their products, specifically in the luxury food category. Businesses could create distinctive products and promotions, such as offering limited edition menus or exclusive deals for VIP members, like access to secret menus or unique discounts. Marketers could utilize social media platforms by selecting influencers that align with the brand's luxury concept and appeal to the target audience. Viral campaigns also encourage audiences to compare themselves with social media celebrities, leading to a bandwagon effect and increasing brand loyalty.

**Keywords:** Materialism, Social comparison, Bandwagon effect, Purchase intention, Luxury brand

**JEL Classification:** M42, M48



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## 1. Introduction

The food and beverage (F&B) industry encompasses businesses involved in packaged foods and beverages, as well as alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, grain products, bakery and confectionery, frozen, canned, and dried foods, meat, poultry and seafood, and other similar products (industryarc.com, 2023). The F&B industry is related to finished products and encompasses the entire food and beverage production process, such as manufacturing, packaging, and distribution to meet consumer demand (Orendorff, 2022).

The food and beverage industry is projected to reach \$2.03 trillion in 2022 and is expected to grow in the coming years (statista.com, 2023). The industry is projected to reach \$7.464 trillion globally in 2027. This growth is logical because food and beverages are in significant demand worldwide. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, the industry experienced growth accompanied by a shift to online purchasing, with an increase of 51.6% for food and 39.3% for beverages (Orendorff, 2022).

Consumption of luxury food has become a global phenomenon, marked by the increasing popularity of exclusive and high-value products. Statista (2024) reports that the global luxury goods market is experiencing steady growth. The revenue generated from luxury goods is estimated to reach approximately US\$368.90 billion that year. Forecasts also suggest that this market will maintain a yearly growth rate of 3.22% until 2028. Specifically, the United States is making a significant contribution, with revenue totaling around US\$77.28 billion in 2024. Moreover, online sales are anticipated to keep rising and become a vital sales avenue. Primary drivers of this market's growth include increasing consumer trust and strong interest in luxury products.

Although the luxury goods market is showing good growth, the luxury food market, in particular, faces several challenges and issues. Some luxury foods can lead to unhealthy choices driven more by a desire for status than true well-being (luxuryboutiquemagazine.com, 2024). Creating a balance between pleasure and health becomes essential, and many luxury businesses are embracing the concept of "healthy luxury" (Wiedenroth & Otter, 2022). With this concept, delicious and prestigious products also prioritize nutrition for customers. Apart from nutritional considerations, luxury food also often carries a burden on social aspects. The pressure to maintain a high standard of living can cause stress, resulting in long-term negative consequences and impacting mental and physical health (luxuryboutiquemagazine.com, 2024). Ultimately, consuming luxury food should be more than just an indulgence. The luxury food and beverage industry needs to adapt to this shift in perspective, prioritizing education and offering healthier options. Only in this way can an authentic luxury experience include exquisite taste, sustainable health, and satisfaction.

Consumers often consider various factors before purchasing a product, which can be quite diverse. External and internal factors influence consumer behavior, and these factors interact with each other (Mothersbaugh et al., 2019). Externally, current social conditions can influence consumers when making purchases, for example, when there is a trend or a product has a well-known reputation. Trends can motivate others to try and follow them, which is known as the bandwagon effect, according to Mainolfi (2020). Leibenstein (1950) defines the bandwagon effect as a situation in which someone wants the exact item as a group of people wants to be part of them and ignores personal preference. The bandwagon effect can motivate consumers to purchase because they perceive the product as popular, especially if celebrities and influencers endorse it. Sabir et al. (2020) also suggest that consumers may intend to purchase a product because of the bandwagon effect from others, such as close family members and friends, or even from a large group of strangers, which can create trends.

Internally, several consumer attitudes can influence purchase intention, such as materialism and social comparison. These attitudes are internally driven, reflecting consumers' desire to showcase their social status through specific products, especially luxury brands (Mainolfi, 2020). According to Bahri-Ammari et al. (2020), materialism is defined as a set of attitudes that interpret the possession of material goods as a symbol of success. Materialists associate possession with happiness (Ahuvia & Wong, 2002). Accordingly, materialism can lead materialists as consumers to develop a desire to purchase specific products that they believe will bring them happiness.

Meanwhile, in luxury consumption, consumers often compare themselves to admired groups, such as wealthy individuals or those with good taste (Zhang & Kim, 2013). Comparing oneself to successful others leads individuals to alter their future expectations and, as a result, fosters their preferences for luxury brands (Mandel et al., 2006). One can display their social comparison through a product (A. P. Buunk & Dijkstra, 2011). Consequently, this act may generate an intention to purchase that product (Pillai & Nair, 2021).

Materialism, social comparison, and the bandwagon effect are often associated with luxury product consumption (Mainolfi, 2020), and those significantly pave the way for the emergence of luxury food. Luxury food can be defined as foods that are considered enticing and indicative of status at certain times and places (van der Veen, 2003). Furthermore, luxury food is a relative concept, and different societies have varying perspectives, allowing brands to determine which foods are perceived as social necessities and which are considered luxurious (van der Veen, 2003).

Although research on materialism, social comparison, and the bandwagon effect in luxury consumption has been widely conducted, most of it has focused on fashion and other durable goods. Previous research has shown that materialism, social comparison, and the bandwagon effect play an essential role in driving luxury consumption (Bahri-

Ammari et al., 2020; Mainolfi, 2020; Pillai & Nair, 2021; Usmani & Eja, 2020; Wang et al., 2023). However, these studies have not specifically analyzed these factors in the context of luxury food consumption. Therefore, this study aims to fill this research gap by examining the influence of materialism, social comparison, and the bandwagon effect on purchase intention and purchase behavior of luxury food. This study employs Social Identity Theory (SIT) as a guide to fill the research gaps. In 1979, Tajfel and Turner introduced social identity theory (SIT), suggesting that individuals' self-perception is tied to their group memberships (Lam et al., 2010).

This study makes several contributions. First, it enriches the literature on Social Identity Theory (SIT) in the field of marketing. The application of SIT in this study also focuses on the psychological aspects of consumer behavior that still need to be studied more empirically. Second, previous studies have examined luxury products, but many have focused on the fashion product category (Bahri-Ammari et al., 2020; Mainolfi, 2020; Katanakis & Balabanis, 2012). This study aims to expand the application of SIT to luxury products by focusing on the food product category. Third, this study not only contributes to academics and researchers but is also practically valuable for helping luxury food businesses understand their customers so that they can decide on appropriate marketing strategies.

This quantitative study involved 200 respondents, whose responses were collected online through a questionnaire. The analysis method used was Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The structure of this study consists of an introduction, literature review, hypothesis development, research methods, results and discussion, conclusions, and suggestions for further research.

## 2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

### 2.1 Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory (SIT) was introduced by Tajfel and Turner (1979) and states that individuals define their self-concept through their membership in social groups (Lam et al., 2010). There are different ways that individuals see themselves as part of a group or as an individual (Oyserman, 2007). SIT has been applied to various fields, particularly psychology and sociology (Hogg, 2016; Amini, 2020), but it has also been used in marketing to examine consumer self-concept (Lam et al., 2010).

Social identity is part of self-concept, so it can help individuals to define themselves, understand themselves internally, and help to place themselves socially (Oyserman, 2007). Sierra & McQuitty (2007) stated that three assumptions underlie social identity theory. The first assumption states that an individual's self-identity is influenced by their membership in their social group. The second assumption states that the subjective status of a social group can determine its members' cognitive self, whether an individual's identity is positive or negative. The third assumption states that members of other groups are the parties that can determine the evaluation of a group, so if other groups positively view a social group, the members will tend to feel better about themselves. Based on the assumptions of this theory, Ellemers et al. (1999) categorized social identity into three types: cognitive social identity, affective social identity, and evaluative social identity. Cognitive social identity refers to the individual's awareness of their membership in a group. In this category, if an individual feels more similar to other members of the group, then their social identity will be stronger. The second type is affective social identity, which refers to the emotional side of the individual's membership in the group, including pride, enthusiasm, and a sense of belonging. The last category is evaluative social identity, which refers to the individual's evaluation of their group, where the individual can evaluate their group as positive, neutral, or negative.

### 2.2 Hypotheses Development

Materialism refers to the tendency to "engage in the development and maintenance of oneself through the acquisition, use, experience, or relationship with a product" (Wang et al., 2022). Materialism itself is considered a part of the human condition (O'Shaughnessy & Jackson O'Shaughnessy, 2002) that is characterized by four personality traits, which are envy, possessiveness, non-generosity, and the inclination to preserve memories through souvenirs or photographs (Ger & Belk, 1996). Materialism is a multifaceted concept (Kilbourne et al., 2005) encompassing three dimensions: happiness, success, and centrality (Richins & Dawson, 1992). Materialists consider success the most significant dimension, highlighting the importance of material possessions (Kilbourne et al., 2005).

Purchase intention can be defined as the personal inclination of a consumer towards an exchange after a general evaluation of an object (Lin & Lu, 2010). Furthermore, Rezvani et al. (2012) reveal that purchase intention is an individual's motivation to act and reflects the likelihood of a consumer purchasing a product. According to Lin & Lu (2010), purchase intention has multiple meanings, including the consumer's willingness to consider a purchase, representing the consumer's desire to buy a product in the future, and expressing the consumer's decision to make a repeat purchase of a product. Mirabi et al. (2015) and Rehmani & Khan (2011) state that purchase intention can be an effective tool in predicting a consumer's purchasing process. The emergence of purchase intention in a consumer towards a product involves a combination of external stimuli factors and subjective assessments for future behavior (Lin & Lu, 2010).

Materialistic individuals frequently purchase a product, especially well-known products, due to the brand's good reputation (Mainolfi, 2020). Previous research shows that materialism is often associated with owning a particular item,

leading to purchase intention to consume that product (Bahri-Ammari et al., 2020; Richins & Dawson, 1992). Materialism is linked to purchase intention, especially for luxury products, since materialistic individuals consider personal ownership of a product as crucial for showcasing their status (Eastman et al., 2018) rather than for the pleasure of its use (Richins, 1994). Therefore, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

**H1.** Materialism has a positive effect on purchase intention.

The bandwagon effect refers to the phenomenon where individuals adopt the actions, ideas, or innovations of others (Nadeau et al., 1993). In consumer behavior, the bandwagon effect refers to consumers' tendency to buy popular brands to gain approval or identification with the group they conform (Tsai et al., 2013). The bandwagon effect can occur based on the motivation to seek social approval and not to be considered as the lower social class (Kastanakis & Balabanis, 2012). Therefore, the bandwagon effect also shows that individuals will try to align themselves with the majority's views, even if they differ from their views (Barrera & Ponce, 2021).

Several studies also investigated the relationship between materialism and the bandwagon effect. Those studies state that materialists usually buy products that reflect their high standard of living, depicting success and high social status (Bahri-Ammari et al., 2020; Mainolfi, 2020), as well as enhancing their appearance (Richins, 2011). Furthermore, materialistic individuals often look to reference groups as a reference when making purchasing decisions, which leads to the bandwagon effect (Mainolfi, 2020). For them, there are additional benefits to be gained after purchasing certain products, especially luxury ones, as they serve as symbolic signs of membership within the reference group because many others also buy the same products (Kastanakis & Balabanis, 2012). Therefore, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

**H2.** Materialism has a positive effect on the bandwagon effect.

### 2.3 Social Comparison

Social comparison refers to the inherent drive of humans to evaluate themselves based on others (Lewin et al., 2022). In social comparison, individuals define their standard of living based on the wealth and income of their reference group (Gentina et al., 2018; Guimond et al., 2007; Mainolfi, 2020). Social comparison is driven by motivations for self-evaluation, self-enhancement, and self-improvement (Wong & Ahuvia, 1998). People with high social comparison tendencies are likelier to compare themselves with others to evaluate their situation (A. P. Buunk & Dijkstra, 2011). In social comparison, individuals make comparisons that can make them feel better or worse than others (Buunk et al., 2005) because they compare themselves in a contrasting manner. They may compare themselves to someone's excellence, which triggers positive feelings such as admiration, leading them to learn from those who are better and improve themselves (Buunk et al., 2005). However, there are other impacts where this admiration can cause individuals who compare themselves to others to experience negative feelings, such as frustration, as their self-image is disturbed by the comparison results (Collins, 1996).

Social comparison tends to occur in societies with collectivist cultures (White & Lehman, 2005), where individuals are willing to buy specific products to enhance their self-esteem (Wood, 1989) and make a positive impression on others (Pillai & Nair, 2021). Similarly, individuals engaging in social comparison desire to purchase expensive products as they can signal quality and prestige to others (Pillai & Nair, 2021). This is due to the self-evaluation process after observing and comparing oneself to others, which eventually generates a form of self-evaluation through consuming the same products as those being compared (Miller & Halberstadt, 2005). Therefore, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

**H3.** Social comparison has a positive effect on purchase intention.

Individuals who engage in social comparison tend to compare themselves with groups they admire, often consisting of wealthy individuals with good taste (Zhang & Kim, 2013). Subsequently, they imitate the preferences of these groups (Das et al., 2021; Zhang & Kim, 2013) and end up purchasing high-priced products that may not align with their income level (Bahri-Ammari et al., 2020) to bridge the perceived psychological gap (Lei & Wang, 2018). This causes individuals engaging in social comparison regarding a product that signifies the desired social status to be influenced toward bandwagon behavior or the bandwagon effect (Mainolfi, 2020). Previous research (Ammari et al., 2020) shows that psychological and sociological factors like social comparison play a crucial role in the bandwagon effect, driven by the desire to align with a group when acquiring luxury items as a symbol of the elevated social status they aspire to portray. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

**H4.** Social comparison has a positive effect on the bandwagon effect.

Several studies have shown that the bandwagon effect can influence purchase intention (Anantharaman et al., 2022; Sundar et al., 2008). The bandwagon effect can create a perception of the attractiveness of a product and create a purchase intention for products that are associated with a reference group because of the desire to appear fashionable (Leibenstein, 1950), to be part of that group (Akturan & Bozbay, 2018; Tsai et al., 2013), and to gain horizontal status (Mason, 1992 in Akturan & Bozbay, 2018). The bandwagon effect suggests that people buy prestigious products to differentiate themselves from less prestigious groups. (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). Therefore, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

**H5.** The bandwagon effect has a positive effect on purchase intention.

Interpersonal factors can influence materialists due to their motivation to conform with others, in line with the bandwagon effect (Eastman et al., 2018; Hudders, 2012; Shaikh et al., 2017; Shammout et al., 2022). Materialists consume specific products based on their collective response, leading to bandwagon effects (Shammout et al., 2022). Conformity motives and self-enhancement are pivotal for materialists when consuming a product because they believe that reference groups, namely close friends and relatives, may be aware of what the materialists consume, thereby projecting a positive self-image (Hudders, 2012). Prior studies show that the bandwagon effect plays a vital role in mediating the connection between materialism and purchase intention. In this context, individuals aim to acquire luxury items to align themselves socially (Mainolfi, 2020; Shammout et al., 2022). The influence of the bandwagon effect directs their attention towards associating with reference groups, including friends and family. Consequently, the intention to purchase luxury goods becomes a method of mirroring the behaviors of these groups (Shammout et al., 2022). Therefore, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

**H6.** Materialism has a positive effect on purchase intention mediated by the bandwagon effect.

Individuals who engage in social comparison with others are often associated with social anxiety regarding negative evaluations (Lennox & Wolfe, 1984), making them follow the reference group in purchasing a product to secure their membership (Wiedmann et al., 2009). Social comparison constructed by individuals may contribute to their engagement in consuming products that align with the preferences of the reference group (Pillai & Nair, 2021). The social environment around them influences individual preferences and motivations for consuming a product (Wong & Ahuvia, 1998), where they tend to compare themselves, feel pressured to portray a positive impression in front of others, and ultimately desire to purchase products like those used by people around them (Pillai & Nair, 2021). A prior study (Wang, 2012) discovered that the bandwagon effect plays a crucial role in linking social comparison with purchase intention. In this scenario, the stress generated by the social comparison process propels individuals to emulate similar behaviors to avoid falling behind or standing out, ultimately fostering a longing to buy identical products used for comparison. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

**H7.** Social comparison has a positive effect on purchase intention mediated by the bandwagon effect.

### 3. Method

The object of this study is Häagen-Dazs. The name Häagen-Dazs was created using creativity and a sense of joy. It was made to create an iconic luxury brand and products that only use the best ingredients, resulting in a rich flavor and a soft texture compared to ordinary ice cream. The brand focuses on product quality and shows its luxury and exclusivity by providing comfortable and exclusive shops for customers (icecream.com, 2022). The luxury concept offered by Häagen-Dazs is highly considered. One form of Häagen-Dazs' consistency in upholding luxury food is repositioning for modern consumers, such as the young consumer segment (Jardine, 2021). Häagen-Dazs created a new campaign with the slogan "Thät's Dazs" that aims to invite influencers and creators to define their version of luxury with Häagen-Dazs through television, social media and even packaging design (Jardine, 2021). The population used in this study consists of individuals who are already familiar with the Häagen-Dazs brand. The sampling technique employed in this research is non-probability, where the researcher involves personal judgment in selecting the sample units (Zikmund et al., 2013). The sample for this study is based on the criteria of individuals who are aware of the Häagen-Dazs brand but have never purchased any Häagen-Dazs products.

The data for this study was collected from respondents living in Indonesia. Indonesia has a rapidly growing food and beverage market. According to Indonesia.go.id (2021), the food and beverage industry is the most significant contributor to the non-oil and gas industry, with a 34.82% achievement in the second quarter of 2021. In addition, the industry also contributes 6.66% to the national GDP. It supports the country's investment side by realizing a total fund of Rp36.6 trillion in the first semester of 2021 (Indonesia.go.id, 2021). The other reason for this location selection is that this study aims to see the behavior of luxury product consumers, especially luxury food, in Indonesia. In addition, this study did not sample in a more specific area because Häagen-Dazs does not have an intensive store. Häagen-Dazs

stores are only located in some major cities in Indonesia, so data collection in a more specific area is less feasible. Therefore, field research was conducted by distributing online questionnaires via the Google Forms platform to collect respondent data.

The online questionnaire was distributed over one week through several social media channels such as LINE, WhatsApp, and Instagram to obtain an ideal number of respondents. The minimum ideal sample size is 5-10 times the number of indicators used in the study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). With 20 indicators, this research determined a sample size of 200 respondents.

The measurement of variables in this study uses a 5-point Likert scale, where scale 1 indicates strongly disagree, and scale 7 indicates strongly agree. In this study, each variable consists of five questions. The measurement of the materialism variable is adopted from indicators used by Mainolfi (Mainolfi, 2020) and Richins (2004). The measurement of social comparison is adopted from indicators used by Bahri-Ammari et al. (2020) and Pillai & Nair (2021). The measurement of the bandwagon effect is adopted from indicators used by Bahri-Ammari et al. (2020) and Mainolfi (2020). The measurement of purchase intention is adopted from indicators used by Barber et al. (2012), Ling et al. (2010), and Mainolfi (2020). The operational definition and scales of the variables can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Variable Operational Definition

Variable	Operational Definition	Variable Measurement	Resources
Materialism	The tendency of individuals to engage in self-construction and maintenance through the acquisition, use, experience, or relationship with a product	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enjoy spending money on unnecessary things</li> <li>2. Enjoy luxury in life</li> <li>3. Life would be better if they had some things they do not have</li> <li>4. Happier if they could buy a lot of things</li> <li>5. Likes to have things that can impress people</li> </ol>	Shrum et al. (2013); Mainolfi (2020); Richins (2004)
Social Comparison	The tendency of individuals to evaluate and judge their own perceptions, behaviors, and abilities in comparison to others	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Often compare myself to others in terms of accomplishments in life</li> <li>2. Always concern with how they do something compared to how others do it</li> <li>3. Often talk to others about opinions and experiences that they have in common</li> <li>4. Notice what their close friends buy</li> <li>5. Notice wealthier friends and sees what they buy</li> </ol>	Bahri-Ammari et al. (2020); Pillai & Nair (2021)
Bandwagon Effect	The desire of people to purchase products through group affiliation and to conform to the groups they want to associate with	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Purchase products to integrate into the desired social group</li> <li>2. Only choose brands that other people buy</li> <li>3. Like to have products that are worn by celebrities</li> <li>4. Purchase products that are very popular</li> <li>5. Use products that are recognized by many people</li> </ol>	Kastanakis & Balabanis (2012); Bahri-Ammari et al. (2020); Mainolfi (2020)
Purchase Intention	The plan made by individuals consciously to try to purchase a brand	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Intend to buy the product</li> <li>2. Interested in buying the product</li> <li>3. Will consider buying the product</li> <li>4. Plan to buy the product</li> <li>5. Is likely to make a transaction for the product</li> </ol>	Spears & Sigh (2004); Barber et al. (2012); Ling et al. (2010); Mainolfi (2020)

After obtaining 200 questionnaire responses, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used as the data analysis technique to explain the relationships between multiple variables by examining the structure of relationships expressed in a set of equations (Hair et al., 2013). The software used was SmartPLS 3.0, and the analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between the materialism, social comparison, bandwagon effect, and purchase intention variables, as depicted in Figure 1.

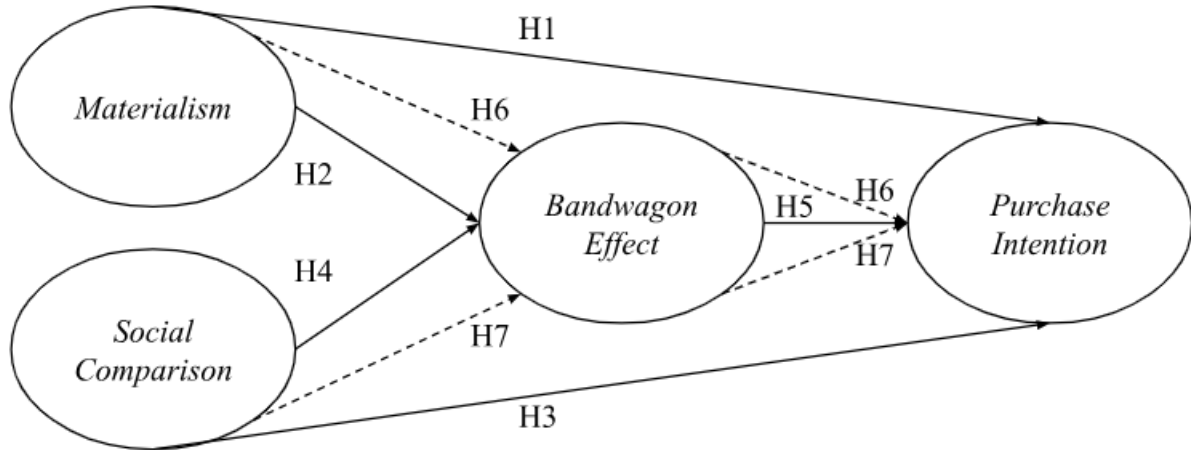


Figure 1. Conceptual Model

## 4. Result and Discussion

### 4.1 Result

#### 4.1.1 Respondents Characteristics

This research was conducted using primary data collected through an online questionnaire. The total number of respondents in this study was 200. This study's respondents' characteristics include gender, age, highest education level, occupation, and monthly expenditure, as explained in Table 2. Based on Table 2, the largest age group was respondents aged 18-25 years (81%), followed by the 26-35 age group (16%), and lastly, the 36-45 age group (3%). Of these, 71.5% of respondents were female, and 28.5% were male. Respondents also have a diverse educational background, with 55.5% being high school graduates, 37.5% being bachelor's degree graduates, 5% being diploma/associate degree graduates, 1.5% being master's/doctorate graduates, and 0.5% junior high school graduates. The diverse occupations of the respondents are also summarized in the table, with the highest order being students (65%), general employees (24%), entrepreneurs (6.5%), unemployed (2.5%), and housewives (2%). Lastly, the category of respondents based on monthly expenditure, where the largest category is respondents with expenditure of Rp 1,000,001 - Rp 3,000,000 (43.5%), ≤ Rp 1,000,000 (39.5%), Rp 3,000,001 - Rp 7,500,000 (15%), Rp 7,500,001 - Rp 10,000,000 (2%).

#### 4.1.2 Validity and Reliability

Construct validity and reliability were tested for each indicator to ensure model fit (Hair et al., 2013). In this test, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and composite validity were utilized. Hair et al. (2013) state that convergent validity can be assessed through factor loading values, where values above 0.50 are considered to fulfill the criteria. Cross-loading values can be used to measure discriminant validity, where the cross-loading value for each variable should be greater than 0.70 (Ghozali & Latan, 2014). Discriminant validity can also be measured through the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), requiring the AVE value to be 0.5 or higher (Hair et al., 2013). In addition, discriminant validity can also be measured with the HTMT value, which must be less than 0.9 (Hair et al., 2014). The HTMT value of each variable is less than 0.9, as seen in Table 4. Composite reliability was used to test the reliability of each indicator within a variable, with a requirement that the composite reliability value should be above 0.7 to meet the criteria. The results for all variables can be considered valid and reliable, and the validity and reliability values can be seen in Table 3.

Table 2. Respondents' Profile

<b>Profile</b>	<b>Classification</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Gender	Male	57	28,50%
	Female	143	71,50%
Age	18-25	162	81%
	26-35	32	16%
	36-45	6	3%
Educational Background	Junior High School Diploma	1	0,50%
	Senior High School Diploma	111	55,50%
	Associate Degree	10	5%
	Bachelor Degree	75	37,50%
	Postgraduate Degree	3	1,50%
Occupation	General Employee (Civil Servants/Private Sector/ State-Owned Enterprise)	48	24%
	Students	130	65%
	Entrepreneur	13	6,50%
	Housewife	4	2%
	Unemployed	5	2,50%
Monthly Expenditure	≤ Rp 1.000.000	79	39,50%
	Rp 1.000.001 - Rp 3.000.000	87	43,50%
	Rp 3.000.001 - Rp 7.500.000	30	15%
	Rp 7.500.001 - Rp 10.000.000	4	2%



Table 3. Validity and Reliability Test Result

Items	Factor Loading	Cross Loading	AVE	CR	Conclusion
M1	0,674	0,745	0,667	0,908	Valid & Reliable
M2	0,866	0,866			
M3	0,85	0,85			
M4	0,851	0,851			
M5	0,826	0,826			
SC1	0,816	0,816	0,665	0,908	Valid & Reliable
SC2	0,867	0,867			
SC3	0,862	0,862			
SC4	0,81	0,81			
SC5	0,715	0,715			
BE1	0,803	0,803	0,672	0,911	Valid & Reliable
BE2	0,785	0,785			
BE3	0,865	0,865			
BE4	0,869	0,869			
BE5	0,773	0,773			
PI1	0,878	0,878	0,706	0,923	Valid & Reliable
PI2	0,862	0,862			
PI3	0,844	0,844			
PI4	0,796	0,796			
PI5	0,818	0,818			

Table 4. HTMT Value

	Bandwagon Effect	Materialism	Purchase Intention	Social Comparison
Bandwagon Effect				
Materialism	0,882			
Purchase Intention	0,593	0,595		
Social Comparison	0,729	0,861	0,513	

#### 4.1.3 Assessment of the Structural Model

Following the assurance of concept measurement accuracy and reliability, the next step involves a comprehensive evaluation of the structural model results, comprising four assessments (Hair et al., 2017). The first assessment focuses on  $R^2$ , indicating how well exogenous constructs explain variations in endogenous constructs. The bandwagon effect exhibits a moderate explanation ( $R^2 = 0.611$ ), while purchase intention indicates a weaker explanation ( $R^2 = 0.321$ ), as observed in Table 5. The second assessment examines the  $f^2$  effect size, revealing significant impacts of materialism on the bandwagon effect ( $f^2 = 0.502$ ) and the strong influence of the bandwagon effect on purchase intention ( $f^2 = 0.463$ ), as observed in Table 6. Social comparison moderately affects the bandwagon effect ( $f^2 = 0.204$ ), with a relatively weak impact on purchase intention ( $f^2 = 0.069$ ). The third assessment,  $Q^2$ , affirms the predictive significance of materialism and social comparison for the bandwagon effect and purchase intention, as all  $Q^2$  values exceed 0, as indicated in Table 7. The last assessment,  $Q^2$  effect size, highlights the influential role of exogenous factors, particularly materialism, in shaping the bandwagon effect ( $Q^2 = 0.403$ ), and the moderate impact on purchase intention ( $Q^2 = 0.218$ ), depicted in Table 7.

Table 5. R Square

	R Square
Bandwagon Effect	0.611
Purchase Intention	0.521

Table 6. f Square

	Bandwagon Effect	Materialism	Purchase Intention	Social Comparison
Bandwagon Effect			0.463	
Materialism	0.502		0.244	
Purchase Intention				
Social Comparison	0.204		0.069	

Table 7. Construct Crossvalidated Redundancy

	SSO	SSE	Q <sup>2</sup> (=1-SSE/SSO)
Bandwagon Effect	1000.000	596.587	0.403
Materialism	1000.000	1000.000	
Purchase Intention	1000.000	782.155	0.218
Social Comparison	1000.000	1000.000	

4.1.4 Hypotheses testing

Hypotheses testing was conducted to examine the relationships between the existing constructs and assess the influence between variables. Hypotheses are considered significant if the t-statistic value is greater than 1.65. Figure 2 illustrates the results of hypothesis testing. Furthermore, Table 8 presents the path coefficient values, where four hypotheses are supported and three hypotheses are not supported.

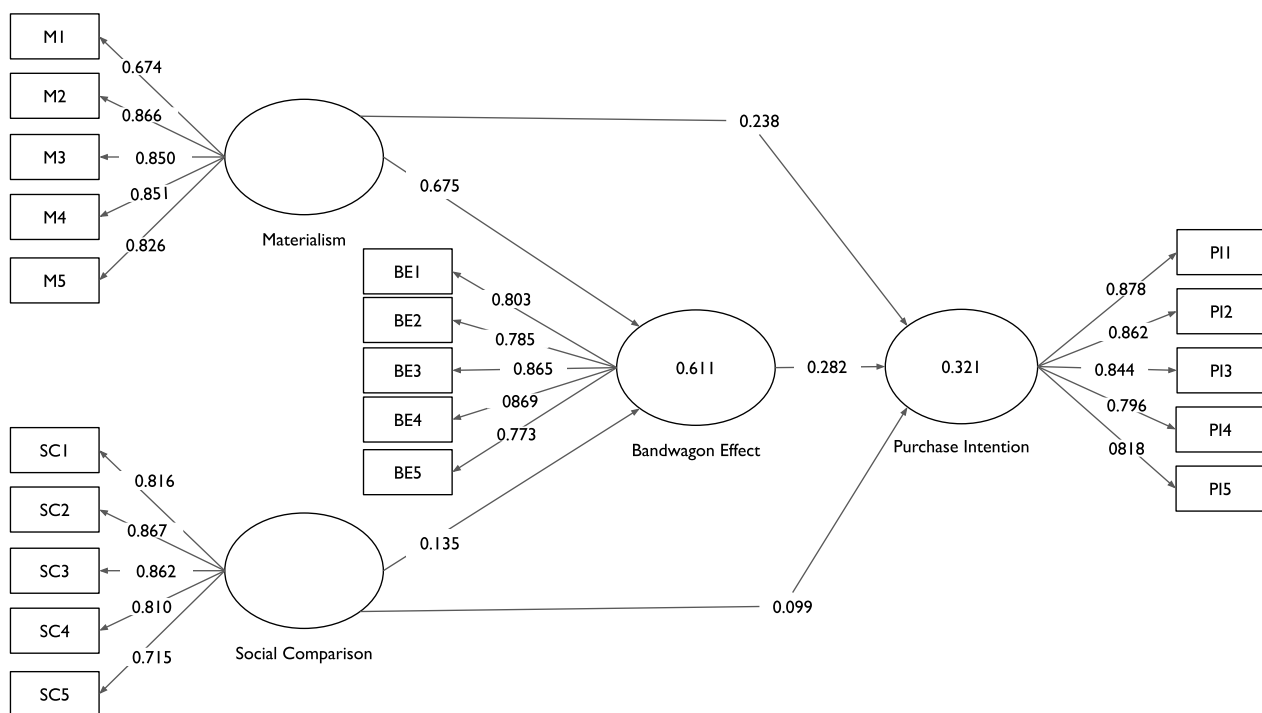


Figure 2. Model Analysis Result

Table 8. Hypotheses Result Summary

Hypotheses	Relationships	t-values	Conclusion
H1	Materialism → Purchase Intention	2,208	Supported
H2	Materialism → Bandwagon Effect	9,281	Supported
H3	Social comparison → Purchase Intention	1,133	Not Supported
H4	Social comparison → Bandwagon Effect	1,642	Not Supported
H5	Bandwagon Effect → Purchase Intention	2,791	Supported
H6	Materialism → Bandwagon Effect → Purchase Intention	2,786	Supported
H7	Social comparison → Bandwagon Effect → Purchase Intention	1,275	Not Supported

## Discussion

Hypothesis 1 (H1) states that materialism has a positive effect on purchase intention. The statistical analysis results in this study show a significant positive influence of the materialism variable on the purchase intention variable, leading to the conclusion that H1 is supported. This finding is consistent with Mainolfi's (2020) statement, which argues that materialism can lead to conspicuous consumption and influence individuals' desire to buy luxury products with a well-known reputation in the market. Häagen-Dazs purchases may be motivated internally by materialists who wish to demonstrate their possession of luxury products and have a good reputation in the market.

Hypothesis 2 (H2) states that materialism significantly influences the bandwagon effect. The statistical analysis results in this study show a significant positive influence of the materialism variable on the bandwagon effect variable, leading to the conclusion that H2 is supported. This finding is consistent with Mainolfi's (2020) claim that materialism can lead people to mimic friends, family, or other high-status social reference groups. People who buy Häagen-Dazs are perceived as successful individuals with good financial capabilities, as they can afford to purchase this luxury food, creating a desire for materialists to imitate them by buying the same product to be seen as part of that group.

Hypothesis 3 (H3) states that social comparison has a positive effect on purchase intention. The statistical analysis results in this study show no significant influence of the social comparison variable on the purchase intention variable, leading to the conclusion that H3 is not supported. Some studies indicate different influences of the social comparison variable on purchase intention (Pillai & Nair, 2021), which could explain the findings in this study. In this study, most respondents were between 18 and 25 years old and belonged to Generation Z, with most of them having a monthly expenditure ranging from Rp1,000,001 to Rp3,000,000. This indicates that a significant portion of respondents may not have strong purchasing power despite the influence of collectivism. Therefore, one of the reasons for the non-acceptance of H3 is the lack of purchasing power among most respondents, which is evident from their monthly expenditures.

Hypothesis four (H4) states that social comparison has a significant positive effect on the bandwagon effect. However, the statistical analysis results show no significant positive effect of the social comparison variable on the bandwagon effect. Thus, H4 is not supported. These findings align with H3, which indicates that some respondents have limited purchasing power, leading to social comparisons that do not positively influence the bandwagon effect. This suggests that, on average, respondents have limited purchasing power, even in a collectivist culture that pressures them to conform socially. This study challenges the belief that social comparison always results in the bandwagon effect. The research findings suggest that relying solely on comparisons may not universally be effective in influencing individuals to follow trends. Pillai & Nair (2021) stated that the concentration of social comparison is higher in collectivist cultures compared to individualistic cultures. The study observes that consumers from collectivist cultures are more prone to purchasing luxury brands as they are more vulnerable to social comparisons driven by the motivation to enhance self-esteem. These findings emphasize the significance of considering the target audience's demographic aspects, especially within their environment's cultural context. Adjusting marketing strategies for specific segments by utilizing relevant social comparisons while being mindful of cultural factors can significantly impact the effectiveness of campaigns.

Hypothesis five (H5) states that the bandwagon effect has a positive influence on purchase intention. The results of the statistical testing show a significant positive effect of the bandwagon effect variable on purchase intention; hence, H5 is supported. The Bandwagon Effect, or bandwagon effect, is considered a way for individuals to establish ties with a preference group with a similar lifestyle so that individuals will buy a product according to what the group buys (Tsai et al., 2013). Furthermore, Akturan & Bozbay (2018) and Tsai et al. (2013) explain that purchase intention for a particular product will be formed when the preference group uses the product because individuals want to be considered part of the group. This study found that the bandwagon effect leads individuals to follow the opinions and actions of their preference group, thus creating a desire to buy products like those of the preference group. When individuals see or

know that their reference group is buying or using luxury products like Häagen-Dazs, they are influenced to purchase the same product as a symbol of membership in that preference group.

Hypothesis six (H6) states that materialism has a positive influence on purchase intention through the mediating variable of the bandwagon effect. The results of statistical testing show a significant positive influence of materialism on purchase intention through the bandwagon effect. Thus, H6 is supported. This is in line with Hudders' (2012) opinion that materialists tend to imitate others to improve their self-image through the products they consume so that the purchase intention will arise from within the materialist towards the product their preference group also purchases. Mainolfi (2020) also argues that materialism can impact the choice of products an individual wants to buy, where the individual will choose products purchased or consumed by the individual's reference group. In this study, materialism influences purchase intention towards Häagen-Dazs luxury food when individuals see their reference group buying and consuming Häagen-Dazs luxury food products. Materialists have a conformity motive, so they will also buy Häagen-Dazs luxury food products that their reference group purchases to create a good self-image. Materialists are motivated by conformity and thus participate in purchasing luxury food products like Häagen-Dazs, which are bought by their reference groups to create a positive self-image.

Hypothesis seven (H7) states that social comparison has a positive effect on purchase intention through the mediating variable of the bandwagon effect. H7 is rejected because the statistical test findings do not demonstrate the significant influence of social comparison on purchase intention through the bandwagon effect. These findings align with H2 and H4, which also relate to social comparison and the purchasing power of Generation Z as most of the respondents in this study, and these factors do not support H7. In this study, some respondents were in the 18-25 age group, Generation Z. Most have monthly expenditures of Rp1,000,001-Rp3,000,000. This finding shows that most respondents have limited purchasing power, even in a collectivist culture. Therefore, one factor contributing to the rejection of H7 is the limited purchasing power of the majority of respondents, which is reflected in their monthly spending level. Consequently, the rejection of H7 means that the bandwagon effect does not have a significant influence in explaining the positive relationship between social comparison and purchase intention.

## 5. Conclusion

This study aims to examine the influence of materialism, social comparison, and the bandwagon effect on purchase intention for luxury food products. This study adopts a quantitative approach and employs Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Squares (PLS) using the SmartPLS 3 software. An online survey was conducted by distributing a questionnaire among 200 respondents. The results revealed that materialism influences purchase intention and the bandwagon effect due to materialists' internal motivation to showcase their ownership of luxury products and the motivation to emulate the upper-class groups in consuming specific products. Meanwhile, social comparison does not influence purchase intention and the bandwagon effect because there is no purchasing power for most of the respondents in this study. The bandwagon effect was also examined in this study, where the bandwagon effect phenomenon affects purchase intention, with individuals being influenced to purchase the same items as their preferred group as a symbol of membership in that group. The bandwagon effect also mediates the relationship between the influence of materialism and purchase intention. The conformity motive possessed by materialists stimulates the desire to purchase the same products as their reference group.

This study contributes to the knowledge about the influence of related variables on luxury products, especially in the less explored category of luxury food. It may inspire further studies to examine the same influence in other categories or reinforce existing empirical findings. This research also makes an important contribution to the application of Social Identity Theory (SIT) in the field of marketing, especially in examining the psychological aspects of consumer behavior towards luxury products. Moreover, the finding that social comparison does not have a significant impact on bandwagon effect and purchase intention poses a challenge for researchers to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between these variables, given the limited exploration and diverse results in previous literature.

The study's findings offer the potential to assist in marketing luxury food. This research provides insights for marketers on how internal and external factors can influence prospective customers in forming purchase intentions for their products, enabling marketers to utilize these factors strategically. Materialism matters for purchase decisions. This insight unlocks strategic opportunities to tap into customers' desire for possessions. This understanding can be adapted to various industries, including F&B, to leverage the customer's desire for ownership strategically. Businesses can develop unique products and promotions, like introducing limited edition menus or providing exclusive deals for VIP members, such as access to secret menus or exclusive discounts. Introducing limited edition menus and exclusive deals for VIP members can serve as impactful tactics for luxury brands, as they elevate the perception of exclusivity and luxury (Berghaus, 2021). Beyond just products, companies can also deliver high-end experiences to customers through luxury décor for their outlets and personalized services. Consuming luxury items to craft an exceptional experience through outlet design should effectively communicate a distinct prestige concept, set it apart from other stores, and highlight unique personal traits to offer enhanced value to customers (Lai, 2022).

This study observed that the bandwagon effect influences purchase intentions as well. Based on these findings, a strategy that can be employed is leveraging social media celebrities to disseminate information and inspire audiences, especially materialistic Gen Z customers, who were the most respondents in this study and are highly active on social

media. Marketers can leverage this platform by selecting social media celebrities that align with the brand's luxury concept and resonate with the target audience. Interactivity and social comparison are key to engaging Gen Z, so marketing strategies should be designed to stimulate both aspects. Viral campaigns can also encourage audiences to compare themselves with social media celebrities, leading to a bandwagon effect and increasing brand affinity. Mishra (2022) explains that involving influencers in viral marketing plays a vital role in reaching out to and captivating consumers. Furthermore, micro-influencers can help broaden the target audience's reach and enhance product virality. Leveraging micro-celebrities in influencer marketing has been demonstrated to exert a more robust influence on purchase intent, with envy and materialism as reinforcing factors (Jin, 2021). The marketing strategy can involve well-known celebrities to generate initial attention and reach. The strategic combination of influencers and micro-influencers, with careful selection, will aid in crafting an effective marketing strategy for targeting Gen Z on social media.

This study has several limitations. The research focused solely on the luxury food product category. Subsequent studies could examine products such as jewelry, luxury cosmetics, and high-priced art items to obtain different results. Unlike the fashion category, these categories are rarely discussed in the context of the bandwagon effect. These categories already boast a strong presence in the luxury market. Additionally, the study only considered a few variables, while many other variables could be added to explore more specialized empirical outcomes. The results of this study indicate the involvement of other variables, namely individualism cultural orientation and collectivism cultural orientation in society, which is in line with other research such as by Pillai & Nair (2021) and Shammout et al. (2022). Furthermore, the sample used in this study consisted of individuals with relatively small incomes. Future research could use a sample with larger incomes to better align with the context of luxury products. The results of this study indicate a negative relationship between social comparison towards the bandwagon effect and purchase intention, where the factor that can cause this is the individual's financial inability to purchase luxury products. Further research can examine whether individuals with higher incomes will yield different results considering their ability to purchase luxury products.

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### Author Contribution

Author 1: conceptualization, writing original draft, data curation, formal analysis, investigation, methodology. Author 2: review and editing, writing reviews and editing, supervision, validation. Author 3: review and editing.

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### Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest

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