Spring 2022

Effects of Socioeconomic Status on Consumer Behavior and Attitudes Towards a Brand's Image

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EFFECTS OF SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOR AND ATTITUDES

TOWARDS A BRAND'S IMAGE

Undergraduate Honors Thesis

Submitted in Partial fulfillment of

University Honors Program Requirements

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

March 14, 2022

by

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Abstract

This research seeks to understand more about the effects of socioeconomic background on consumer behavior and its impact on the perception of brand images. Data from people of different SES were compared to understand how they view advertisements intended for different audiences and their corresponding effects. It was conducted by sending out a confidential, voluntary survey to a convenience sample targeting 100 consumers. Consumers were asked to rate statements, on a scale of one to five, for each of the research questions to assess specific aspects of their consumer attitudes and behaviors. The high SES group has a higher average rating of statements for each variable. However, both high and low SES groups show a moderately strong relationship between consumer attitude and behavior. The analysis of the literature review and data support that SES has a strong relationship with consumer behavior and attitudes. This study suggests that the advertising industry should explore ways to develop a brand image that appeals to the values of both low and high SES groups.

Key Words: Socioeconomic status, advertising, behavior, consumer attitude, brands

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Introduction

From commercials to content posted on social media, people often consume advertisements that can influence their views. How one perceives such content varies depending on various factors that influence how individuals choose to express their opinions and desires (Saleem & Abideen, 2011). For example, Americans are noted for their materialistic desires to compensate for feelings of inferiority (Richins, 1995). This research seeks to understand more about the effects of socioeconomic background on consumer behavior and its impact on the perception of brand images.

Advertisements attempt to portray a message that provokes certain attitudes and behaviors. Research has identified how advertisers can reach a specific audience. An example of consumer buying behavior is the psychoanalytical model. It considers how behaviors are affected by both the conscious and subconscious mind (Jisana, 2014). While many factors influence an individual's decisions, this research focuses on how advertisements affect a brand's image to consumers of various socioeconomic statuses (SES). This study provides insight into the attitudes associated with one's SES when viewing specifically targeted content.

People are motivated by reducing inconsistencies in order to minimize resulting feelings of tension (Gawronski, 2012). An advertisement depicting a message that does not align with an individual's attitudes may create cognitive dissonance. This feeling may cause one to change their attitudes or behaviors to restore that consistency (Lee & Jeong, 2014). Consumers who must be more cognizant of their spending habits may choose to value price over the brand and its message. They would be motivated to change their behaviors to accommodate their prudent use

of money (Gawronski, 2012). As a result, an individual would choose to engage with alternative brands.

Research by Kamakura and Mazzon (2013) shows that there is a growing market for brands targeted toward consumers of middle to lower SES. That is because such brands offer functional and price-sensitive products. However, higher levels of SES are associated with a more significant increase in psychological needs satisfaction, which results in marketing efforts aimed at consumers in this demographic. Basic psychological needs are anything essential that is not a biological necessity, such as the need for social approval. SES influences how people fulfill those needs and may affect consumers' attitudes and behaviors (White & Tong, 2019).

Promotional strategies emphasizing benefits to reinforce a consumer's needs would increase brand loyalty (White & Tong, 2019). It would assist in creating positive experiences and encourage engagement with the brand's products. These messages may not be aimed at people of low SES because it is more difficult for a brand to reach them. Financial limitations may prevent those consumers from purchasing valued brands to fulfill their needs. As a result, they change their behaviors to align with their attitudes, and this study seeks to learn how consumers would do so.

Advertisements are intended to depict a product or portray a message that meets the needs of potential consumers. This research investigates the effects of SES on consumer attitudes and brand perception. Investigating the impact on consumers that cannot fulfill their needs with a brand's products because of their social status provides insight into where messages are lacking. It can help advertisers better understand how to tailor messages that fulfill basic psychological needs and reach more consumers.

The literature review begins by analyzing examples of advertisements' effects on consumer perception. It shares insight into how the advertising messages affect viewers. The examples share the purpose of the advertisements' contents, which aids in understanding the importance of evaluating the messages they portray.

Literature Review

Case Studies

According to Richins (1995), idealized media images often possess the deception of desirable circumstances that can be achieved only by specific members of society. Such images present an edited version of life that appears to be more ideal than it is. For example, Miss Dior Chérie showcased an advertisement with an image of a blonde, slim model in a lavish garden with a chauffeur in the background. It highlights the brand's perfume in the bottom corner connecting Dior with perfection and luxury (Mondino, 2007). That image suggests to consumers that the brand is for those who desire such a lifestyle, and its products may satisfy those personal values.

Pepsi attempted to project a message of unity in an advertisement that starred Kendall Jenner in 2017. They borrowed imagery from the Black Lives Matter movement, which caused a lot of controversies. People claimed Pepsi was making light of a serious issue and did not accurately portray real-world experiences. Elle Hears, executive director of the Marsha P. Johnson Institute, was one of the many people who criticized Pepsi for appropriating imagery to promote its product, which minimizes the courage and sacrifices behind protesting.

This influence of media images, including the examples above, impact consumer perception. Specifically, advertisements are created to provoke emotions that persuade consumers to achieve desired results, such as purchasing a product. Emotional reactions are supposed to increase consumer attention, but with that heightened focus comes the possibility of inducing social comparison and raising consumers' expectations (Richins, 1995). Advertising can deliver powerful messages, which impact the attitudes and behaviors of consumers.

Social media is an influential tool with great reach. Users can post and share messages, which may affect public opinions in society. The sentiment is a factor that affects the diffusion of messages. Tsugawa and Ohsaki (2015) conducted a study that shows that negative messages are more viral than positive ones regarding the volume of shares. If a promotional message provokes emotions contrary to a consumer's values, then it may significantly impact the company that created it. Therefore, advertisers need to analyze and test their messages to prevent the spread of negative sentiment towards a brand.

The following section shares information about the cognitive dissonance theory. This theory explains how inconsistencies in consumers' attitudes affect their behaviors. It emphasizes that people are motivated to reduce such inconsistencies and the ways in which they do so. Understanding the role of cognitive dissonance can aid advertisers in creating an advertising message that positively affects consumer behavior.

Cognitive Dissonance Theory

The messages that advertisers create encourage consumers to engage with a brand. If a message does not align with their attitudes, consumers may change their behaviors to explore alternative options (Lee & Jeong, 2014). Brands, and the values of the brands' personality, offer

consumers an opportunity to engage with its products. That allows individuals to indulge in their desires to behave in a way that aligns with their attitudes. The cognitive dissonance theory helps to explain this idea.

Cognitive consistency consists of a broad class of theories that propose that people are motivated by reducing inconsistencies. Such inconsistencies cause an error in an individual's belief system and, as a result, ignite a desire to change them (Gawronski, 2012). Specifically, the cognitive dissonance theory emphasizes that peoples' cognitive systems function in a way that aims to maintain consistency amongst various elements. Research shows that low SES consumers often desire to compensate for their sense of low status (Yoon & Kim, 2018), which motivates people to behave in a way that minimizes feelings of cognitive tension.

An attitude is a way of thinking or feeling, which reflects in an individual's behavior. It consists of a person's feelings and beliefs (Pickens, 2005). Attitudes can help explain why people behave in a particular way. When attitudes and behaviors conflict with one another, it results in cognitive dissonance. Advertisers must remove such dissonance to enhance consumer attitudes (Bose & Sarker, 2012). Campaigns and promotional messages that create dissonance in their audience may force consumers to not engage with that brand.

Consumers have existing knowledge that helps guide them through a society overwhelmed by communication efforts. Brands hold a unique and identifiable position in a person's mind, also known as brand positioning (Loef, 2002). It comes from brand attributes such as its benefits, emotions, and values. An underlying motivation for an individual to purchase products from a brand comes from its positioning (Loef, 2002). When an

advertisement's message does not meet consumer perception expectations, there may be unintended consequences.

Pepsi created an advertisement featuring Kendall Jenner, referenced in the case studies section. Despite its attempt to create a unifying message, consumers found that it took away from the seriousness of the Black Lives Matter Movement - an effort to bring justice to Black people around the world. The brand's use of celebrity demonstrators and smiling activists in the march trivializes the severity of the issues they were protesting (Smith, 2017). Even with the intent to feature emotional stories and strong connections, Pepsi's depiction of the social cause missed the mark to promote its product.

Numerous consumers called out the brand for its inappropriate portrayal of people that have dedicated their lives to these issues. There are multiple messages from previous consumers that decided to boycott Pepsi products because of the brand's advertisement. People have accused Pepsi of appropriating the movement (Smith, 2017). This criticism creates a conflict between purchasing its products and supporting the Black Lives Matter Movement. Many people chose to boycott the brand and avoid its products due to the unfavorable execution of its message.

According to YouGov BrandIndex, the Pepsi campaign resulted in the brand reaching the lowest perception level that it had seen in over eight years. However, it is not the first to receive criticism for inadequate advertising. Several groups have found brands' advertising offensive, which leads to unpleasant feelings towards the brand (Christy & Haley, 2008). A consumer's reaction to a campaign is not entirely dependent on its message, as it is also affected by how it is delivered. The inadequate portrayal of a brand's message impacts the disapproval of that

advertisement. When it does not align with an individual's attitudes, it may result in a negative consumer response (Bose & Sarker, 2012).

The following section explains the role of the congruity theory. This theory focuses on how people aim to maintain consistency amongst various elements. It suggests that an imbalance motivates one to consider other ideas to restore that consistency. Learning about the effects of the congruity theory shares how consumers make an effort to maintain consistency in their behaviors and attitudes.

Congruity Theory

Cognitive dissonance focuses on how people aim to maintain consistency amongst various elements. That is because cognitive consistency suggests that people are motivated by reducing inconsistencies. The congruity theory explains that one's desire to change their behavior is to align with their attitude. It focuses on motivations and how persuasive communication affects an individual's change in attitude (Lee & Jeong, 2014).

This theory suggests that people prefer consistency, so an imbalance motivates one to consider other ideas to restore that consistency. Various elements, such as low economic mobility, motivate people to change their attitudes and, as a result, their behavior to not engage with a certain brand (Loef, 2002). How the congruity theory impacts behaviors towards media could involve an individual seeing a commercial with a player they support endorsed by a brand they do not prefer.

One may not engage with the Nike brand, for example, because they do not see that value in its premium price point. If they watched their favorite athlete wearing Nike, they may feel that they should explore its products. This experience would lead to an inconsistency in their

thoughts because they like the player, so they should also prefer the associated brand. The congruity theory would suggest that the individual would minimize tensions between such thoughts by either changing their attitude or behavior.

Depending on other variables, one may choose to relieve inconsistencies by changing their behavior to engage the Nike brand and its products. However, there is also the possibility that one would change their attitudes towards the player. This research shed light on how an individual is most likely to react to such tensions. Furthermore, it helps to identify if SES is an indicator of how a consumer may alter their behavior.

If there is a dissonance between thoughts, it tends to result in negative self-feelings. Such feelings drive motivation, and people attempt to eliminate them to compensate for their sense of low self-worth (Richins, 1995). The strongest response is to attain possessions that portray a person's ideal standard (Richins, 1995). In the example above, the individual would choose to engage with the brand by purchasing its products. It would move them closer to the goal of supporting the player.

However, it may be difficult to relieve such tensions when other factors are involved. For instance, one may not support a brand because they do not have the financial means to do so. Consumers often purchase products for self-expressive benefits (Sirgy et al., 2008). Advertising and promotion create an identity for brands. Products construct personalities of social symbolism, and consumers desire brands that express the identity that they want to have (Elliott & Leonard, 2004).

Individuals who are aware they lack financial mobility may choose to purchase a brand associated with success. This desire is a force that pushes people to purchase products from a

specific brand. A study showed that low-income individuals have a similar perception to those with high income regarding well-known, favorable brands and view product owners as more successful (Elliott & Leonard, 2004). Such brands present an idealized version of reality or a desirable identity that consumers want to acquire.

Low SES results in feelings of being stuck economically. This effect constitutes a low sense of control, and consumers seek variety to fill that void (Yoon & Kim, 2018). Having the ability to choose from various products is a way to gain control, express oneself, and facilitate individuality. A consumer may want to purchase a specific brand that aligns with their desired identity, but they may not be able to do so (Sirgy et al., 2008). If one cannot compensate for such dissonance, it would cause inconsistencies in one's attitudes. It would lead to an individual changing their behavior to purchase products that eliminate such inconsistencies and fit into a desirable category (Gawronski, 2012). As a result, one may have to change their behavior and not engage with the brand or its products.

The last section of the literature review discusses the roles that the cognitive dissonance and congruity theories have in advertising. It explains the effects that they have on consumers' behaviors and attitudes. Specifically, it provides a better understanding of how it may affect people of different SES backgrounds. It can help advertisers evaluate the advertising messages they are creating by understanding the factors that impact consumers.

Application of Theorems

How people view media messages may influence their attitudes, which reflects in their behavior. The cognitive dissonance theory explains that individuals attempt to maintain

consistency by behaving in a way that minimizes tension (Yoon & Kim, 2018). This theory helps to explain how one's SES impacts why people choose to engage with some brands over others.

Individuals are motivated to purchase products based on a brand's positioning. When a brand's message does not meet consumer expectations, it may motivate them to alter their purchasing behavior. People with low SES are not as likely to purchase products with a higher price in contrast to people with high SES (Ghlai-Zinoubi, 2021). It is the result of certain products not being widely accessible to this group demographic because of the high price tags that come with them.

Consumers who carry a negative view on price treat it as an amount of money that they must give up (Maison, 2019). The individual may be less likely to purchase a specific product as a result. People with low SES have less money to spare, so they may find it difficult to part if they are not spending it on an essential product. Those that must be more conscious of their spending tend to choose products because of their affordability (Maison, 2019). A consumer who chooses to value price over the brand is in a situation when they must change their purchasing behavior to accommodate for their prudent use of money.

Some people may choose to purchase products that are affordable or counterfeit brands. Although consumers desire such brands, they may resort to buying alternative products for its financial benefits (Wilcox et al., 2019). Cognitive consistency suggests that individuals want to maintain consistency between their attitudes and behaviors. They may not have the means to engage with the brand, which forces the consumer to turn towards more cost-friendly versions of the desired product.

A consequence of advertisements is that they do not always align with consumer attitudes and behaviors. However, cognitive consistency suggests that an individual's attitudes motivate them to behave in a way that aligns with their views. The cognitive dissonance and congruency theorems help to understand the study's results by providing information about how consumers' SES correlates with their attitudes and behavior, as well as the effects advertising messages have on those attitudes and behaviors.

The following research questions guided this study: How much does a favorable brand influence consumer identity; To what extent are consumers willing to pay a premium price for a particular brand's product; Which factors of an advertisement's message influence consumer decisions to engage with a brand? The methodology section goes in-depth about the study that investigates how SES affects consumers' behavior.

Methodology

Results from people of different SES were compared to understand how they view advertisements intended for different audiences and their corresponding effects. It was conducted by sending out a confidential, voluntary survey to a convenience sample targeting 100 consumers. Questions were customized to ask about consumer status, attitudes, behavior, and perceptions. Responses were gathered on the Amazon Mechanical Turk platform and analyzed using descriptive statistics.

This data analysis investigates the prediction and explanation of the relationship among variables (Seeram, 2019). Descriptive statistics were used to investigate the relationship between the SES of consumers and their attitudes and behaviors. It will focus on interpreting the ratings

for each question, which will aid in understanding the impact that an individual's SES has on consumer behavior.

The results were assessed based on SES by measuring a combination of education, income, and occupation to determine one's position within the social hierarchy (American Psychological Association, n.d.). Specifically, the Kuppuswamy scale uses the head of a household's information to determine the family's SES (Singh et al., 2017). This assessment used the 2019 version of the scale, which assigns a score to each category to determine an individual's socioeconomic class.

Following the Kuppuswamy scale (see Appendix A), the categories that determine SES are education, occupation, and income of the head of a family. First, the individual's education is ranked on a scale from one to seven. Then, their occupation is ranked on a scale of one to ten. Lastly, the monthly income of the head of household is ranked on a scale from one to twelve. The final scores are added together to create a total score with a range of 1-26. The range that the score falls into dictates the socioeconomic class of each individual to group the survey respondents for analysis.

Results

Consumers were asked to rate statements, on a scale of one to five, for each of the research questions to assess specific aspects of their consumer attitudes and behaviors.

RQ1: How much does a favorable brand influence consumer identity?

RQ2: To what extent are consumers willing to pay a premium price for a particular brand's product?

RQ3: Which factors of an advertisement's message influence consumer decisions to engage with a brand?

A composite score was calculated for the three variables for each respondent. Their demographic data was converted into numeric results according to the Kuppuswamy scale (Singh et al., 2017). The sum of the scores for that section determined each respondents' rank in socioeconomic status, which found that 64 of the volunteers surveyed fall into the lower SES group, and 36 volunteers fall into the higher SES group.

Then, the average score for how each respondent rated the statements for each research question was calculated. Those scores were combined into their respective SES groups and averaged to find the mean rating for each research question. Finally, the results were computed using jamovi computer software to determine the descriptive statistics of the data and better understand the findings.

The first research question sought to examine how much a favorable brand influenced consumer identity. Results show that the high SES group rated the variable's respective statements higher (M = 4.20, SD = 0.57) than those in the low SES group (M = 3.81, SD = 0.65), which demonstrates that the identity of individuals of higher SES is more connected with a brand than those of lower SES.

Next, the second research question focused on understanding the extent that consumers are willing to pay a premium price for a particular brand's product. Similar to the previous question, its results show that the high SES group rated the statements higher (M = 4.16, SD = 0.47) than those in the low SES group (M = 3.83, SD = 0.67). The data suggests that people of

higher SES are more willing to pay a premium price for their favorite brands than those in the lower SES group.

Lastly, the third research question considered which factors of an advertisement's message influence consumers' decision to engage with a brand. The results show that there is a trend with the data because the high SES group, again, rated the statements higher (M = 4.05, SD = 0.64) than those in the low SES group (M = 3.71, SD = 0.77). That implies that consumers of high SES are more likely to be influenced by a brand's advertising messages than those of lower SES.

As it appears in table 1, the data shows that both groups have relatively high ratings for each variable that the research questions assessed. The ratings included a scale option from one to five; one was associated with a weak relationship to the statement provided in the questionnaire, and five was associated with a strong relationship to the statement. However, the average ratings were consistently greater for the high SES group when compared to the low SES group, which suggests individuals of high SES have a stronger connection with their preferred brand than those of low SES.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Questionnaire Data

	SES Group	N	Mean	SD
RQ1	High	64	4.20	0.57
	Low	36	3.81	0.65
RQ2	High	64	4.16	0.47
	Low	36	3.83	0.67
RQ3	High	64	4.05	0.64

	Low	36	3.71	0.77

Adapted from: The jamovi project (2021). *jamovi*. (Version 1.6) [Computer Software]. Retrieved from https://www.jamovi.org

The following section discusses the contribution that the results from this study make to the literature. It goes in-depth about the interpretation of the results. The application of cognitive consistency to the data and its analysis, specifically the cognitive dissonance and congruity theorems, will help to explain the findings. Additionally, it provides suggestions to improve future research, limitations to the current study, and the relevance of the results to the advertising industry.

Discussion

The research investigated how promotional messages affect a brand's image to consumers of differing SES. It considered multiple variables that impact consumers' identity and how SES plays a role. Cognitive consistency suggests that an individual's attitudes motivate them to behave in a way that aligns with their views (Gawronski, 2012). The findings provide insight into the consequences of brand messaging and consumers' SES impact on their attitudes and behavior.

The first research question focused on how a favorable brand influences consumer identity. Its results show that the high SES group has a higher average rating to statements for each variable. However, both high and low SES groups show a moderately strong relationship between consumer attitude and behavior. Interpretation of the data suggests that consumers of

both low and high SES have a relatively strong association between their identity and a brand's image.

The cognitive dissonance theory (which suggests that people want to avoid or reduce dissonant attitudes and behavior) supports these results from the first research question, for consumers demonstrate a connection with the values of their favorite brands (Bose & Sarker, 2012). If an individual has to adjust their values, they may choose to change their behavior, instead, to not engage with a brand that does not share their attitudes. However, if an individual connects with a brand, engaging with its products provides them an opportunity to behave in a way that aligns with their attitudes (Lee & Jeong, 2014).

Next, the second research question addressed the extent that consumers are willing to pay a premium price for a brand's product. Its results show that consumers of low SES are not as willing to pay a premium price for a desirable brand as those in the high SES group. Variables related to low socioeconomic status, such as little income, may impact the attitudes that individuals in that group have towards brands (Loef, 2002). The congruity theory suggests that if an individual experiences inconsistencies in their thoughts, they may choose to change their attitudes to align with their behavior.

For instance, if one cannot afford a particular brand's product, they may choose not to engage with that brand. The current study suggests that advertisers should increase their efforts to reach consumers with a low SES to engage more consumers. Not only should advertisers direct their strategy towards consumers of low SES, but they should create messages that appeal to both SES groups. Furthermore, the cognitive dissonance theory implies that consumers have a

stronger connection with brands that share their values, so it could be beneficial to develop a brand's image that aligns with a majority of individuals' values.

The Miss Dior Chérie advertisement, which is reviewed in the case studies section, may benefit from appealing to individuals of both low and high SES. Promotional messaging is intended to reach a larger audience, so it should be attuned to the needs of more than only one type of consumer. The advertisement showcases a brand image that suggests consumers must desire a lavish lifestyle to engage with its products (Mondino, 2007). Alternatively, if it developed a brand image that demonstrates values of diversity and inclusion, more consumers may be encouraged to engage with its brand.

Lastly, the third research question considered aspects of a consumer's decision to engage with a brand's advertisements. The findings imply that there is a significant relationship between the variables measured and a respondent's SES. Individuals prioritize engaging with specific brands that align with their attitudes. Although both SES groups engage with a preferred brands' messaging, those of low SES are not as influenced by its advertisements as those in the high SES group.

The congruity theory (which suggests that people prefer consistency and the desire to change their behavior to align with their attitudes) supports these results from the third research question. Those of lower SES may be more motivated to change their attitude because that is the most efficient way to maintain consistency between their attitudes and behavior (Loef, 2002). Therefore, advertisers may benefit by increasing their efforts to appeal to individuals of low SES. If those of low SES are able to maintain their attitudes, they are more likely to behave in a way that engages with the brand.

The data regarding the variable for each research question shows that the average ratings are consistently greater for the high SES group when compared to the low SES group. This finding implies that individuals in the higher SES group possess a stronger consumer identity associated with a brand's image. If advertisers were to create messages that appealed to low and high SES consumers, the brand's image would possibly reach both groups. A brand that demonstrates attitudes that align with those of a majority of consumers would encourage more individuals to engage with that brand.

As explained in the case studies section, individuals criticized Pepsi for appropriating imagery from the Black Lives Matter movement to promote its products. Advertisements aim to provoke emotions that persuade consumers to achieve desired results, such as purchasing a product (Richins, 1995). However, they did not properly execute a campaign that aligned with individuals' attitudes, which consequently caused the audience to reject the brand and its products. Pepsi would benefit from dedicating more resources to portray and support the movement accurately.

Future research may consider alternative variables, such as one's concept of their self-image, that explain the consistent difference in scores between low and high SES groups. These potential studies have the potential to indicate possible factors that influence the relationship between SES and consumer behavior and attitudes, including low economic mobility (Loef, 2002). Studies may also choose to utilize tests of statistical significance. That would establish whether there are significant differences in relation to the dependent variables measured.

Additionally, developing a different means of measuring SES and collecting behavioral data from consumers would provide more insight into the effects of socioeconomic backgrounds on advertising. Another well-accepted measure of an individual's social standing is the Udai Pareek scale, which considers nine domains of SES (Singh, 2017). After filling in the information, each item is assigned a score. The total score is summed up and interpreted in terms of class.

While this study provided unique insight, it did have limitations. The Kuppuswamy scale used to measure the socioeconomic status of each respondent classified individuals into different SES groups, but the categories considered are abstract and may impact the accuracy of the grouping. The total family income used does not consider the size of the family, which is a determinant of SES (Bashar, 2019). Also, it has more emphasis on income rather than educational and occupational factors.

Another factor that impacted the study was incorporating examples into the questionnaire. When participants were asked to input the name of their favorite brand, they were given a list of examples such as Kraft, Nike, and Samsung. The study may have benefited if it provided options to choose from rather than asking for respondents to type a brand name. Furthermore, it should not include examples, as they could influence participants' responses to the survey.

The analysis of the literature review and data support that SES has a strong relationship with consumer behavior and attitudes. Therefore, advertisers should explore ways to develop brand images that appeal to the values of both low and high SES groups. For example, if those of low SES tend to value community, then a brand image may benefit from amplifying a sense of

belonging. Additional studies on the relationship between socioeconomic background and

consumer behavior can increase the understanding of brand identity and methods to develop a

brand's image that positively resonates with more individuals.

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Appendix A

Modified Kuppuswamy Scale

Education of head of family		Score
Professional degree		7
Graduate or postgraduate		6
Intermediate or post high school diploma		5
High school certificate		4
Middle school certificate		3
Primary school certificate		2
Illiterate		1
Occupation of head of family		
Professional (white collar)		10
Semi-professional		6
Clerical, shop-owner/farm		5
Skilled worker		4
Semi-skilled worker		3
Unskilled worker		2
Unemployed		1

Monthly income of family			
In 2001 (Base year)	**In 2017 (January 2017 CPI)**	**In 2019 (February 2019 CPI)**	**Score**
≥15,197	≥41,430	≥52,734	12
7,595-15,196	20,715-41,429	26,355-52,733	10
5,694-7,594	15,536-20,714	19,759-26,354	6
3,793-5,693	10,357-15,535	13,161-19,758	4
2,273-3,792	6,214-10,356	7,887-13,160	3
761-2,272	2,092-6,213	2,641-7,886	2
≤760	≤2,091	≤2,640	1

Socioeconomic class		**Total score**
I	Upper	26-29
II	Upper middle	16-25
III	Lower middle	11-15
IV	Upper lower	5-10
V	Lower	01-04

Adapted from: Wani, R. (2019). Socioeconomic status scales-modified Kuppuswamy and Udai

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Appendix B

Results Descriptive Data

Group Descriptives

	Group	N	Mean	Median	SD	SE
brand_influence_identity	high	64	4.20	4.25	0.564	0.0705
	low	36	3.81	3.75	0.653	0.109
premium_price_product	high	64	4.16	4.25	0.466	0.0582
	low	36	3.83	3.88	0.665	0.111
ad_message_influence	high	64	4.05	4.00	0.639	0.0799
	low	36	3.71	3.75	0.773	0.129

Appendix C

Consumer Attitudes Questionnaire

Consumer Attitudes Questionnaire
The survey should take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

1. Please input the name of your favorite brand (Kraft, Nike, Samsung, etc.) and use it to answer the following questions (referred to as brand X).

2. List 5 adjectives (innovative, adventurous, compassionate, etc.) that you would use to describe yourself.

3. List 5 adjectives that best describe brand X.

4. How familiar are you with the brand you chose?

   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ Very familiar

   ◯ Familiar

   ◯ Never heard of it

Brand
Statements

Please rate the following statements in relation to the brand you chose (brand X).

5. I prefer brand X over any other brand.

   Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

6. Consuming brand X is consistent with how I see myself.

   Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

7. If I were a brand, I would be brand X.

   Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

8. Brand X's image corresponds to my self-image.

   Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

9. I would pay a premium price for brand X's products.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	Strongly Agree

10. Brand X's value comes from its image and status.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	Strongly Agree

11. I am inclined to buy brand X over other brands.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	Strongly Agree

12. Brand X is preferable to any other brand of the same product.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	Strongly Agree

13. Advertisements (social media, TV, billboards, etc.) of brand X showcase its personality.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

14. I prefer brand X's advertisements over those of similar brands.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

15. Advertisements of brand X influence my consumption of its products.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

16. I often engage with brand X's media platforms.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

Demographic Profile

This is the final section of the survey.

17. What is the highest level of education that the head of your household has completed?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ No education
- ◯ Primary school certificate
- ◯ Middle school certificate
- ◯ High school certificate
- ◯ Bachelor degree or post high school diploma
- ◯ Graduate or postgraduate
- ◯ Professional degree

18. Which of the following categories best describes the employment status of the head of your household?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Professional or white collar
- ◯ Semi-professional
- ◯ Clerical or shop-owner/farm
- ◯ Skilled worker
- ◯ Semi-skilled worker
- ◯ Unskilled worker
- ◯ Unemployed

19. What is an estimate of the monthly income that your family earned in 2021?

    Mark only one oval.

    ⬭ Less than $2,641
    ⬭ $2,641-$7,886
    ⬭ $7,887-$13,160
    ⬭ $13,161-$19,758
    ⬭ $19,759-$26,354
    ⬭ $26,355-$52,733
    ⬭ Greater than $52,733