

Factors Influencing Consumer Buying Behavior of Beauty and Personal Care in Bahrain

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Abstract: This study investigates the influence of four experiential dimensions—social, cognitive, affective, and hedonic—on consumer buying behavior in Bahrain’s beauty and personal care market. Drawing on the Theory of Reasoned Action and Social Learning Theory, the study develops and tests a conceptual framework using data collected from 385 consumers through a structured survey. Employing multiple regression analysis, the findings reveal that social experience is the strongest positive predictor of consumer behavior ($\beta = 0.824$, $p < 0.001$), followed by hedonic ($\beta = 0.235$, $p < 0.001$) and affective experiences ($\beta = 0.112$, $p < 0.001$). Surprisingly, cognitive experience has a statistically significant but negative influence on buying behavior ($\beta = -0.081$, $p = 0.001$), suggesting that rational deliberation may inhibit impulsive or emotion-driven consumption in this sector. These results underscore the dominant role of emotional and social factors in shaping purchase decisions and offer critical implications for marketers targeting beauty consumers in Gulf countries. The study contributes to both experiential consumer behavior theory and Middle Eastern consumer research, proposing strategies for personalized engagement and experience-based marketing.

Keywords: Consumer Behavior, Purchase Decision Making, Consumer Psychology, Personal Care Products

Type: Research paper



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1. Introduction

The global beauty and personal care industry has experienced a substantial evolution, driven by rising consumer expectations, heightened competition, and a growing emphasis on experiential consumption. In today’s marketplace, companies no longer compete solely through functional product offerings or price; instead, they differentiate through emotionally resonant, cognitively engaging, and sensorially appealing customer experiences (Kim & Sullivan, 2019). This strategic shift toward experience-based marketing is especially prominent in sectors such as beauty and personal care, where consumption is closely tied to self-expression, lifestyle, and emotional identity.

Bahrain's beauty and personal care market exemplifies these global shifts. With an estimated market value expected to reach BD 85 million by 2026 (Reporter Linker, 2022), the sector represents a vital and growing part of the national economy. The local market is shaped by a young, image-conscious, and increasingly sophisticated consumer base whose purchasing behavior is not merely a reflection of product quality, but a result of multisensory experiences and psychosocial influences. Despite this growth, academic research in the Bahraini context has largely remained limited to traditional marketing frameworks such as the 7Ps (Gomes, 2018) or general consumer traits like motivation and attitude (Hayat & Victor, 2020; Al-Khalifa et al., 2021), with insufficient attention to the experiential aspects that increasingly influence purchase behavior.

The significance of customer experience in shaping consumer decision-making is now well established in the marketing literature. As defined by Lemon and Verhoef (2016), customer experience is the cumulative result of direct and indirect interactions across various touchpoints—ranging from advertising and packaging to sensory design and emotional appeal. Bustamante and Rubio (2017) argue that consumer experience is shaped by cognitive, affective, and social components, which interact to influence behavioral intention. In beauty consumption, this influence becomes even more pronounced due to the hedonic nature of the products and the role of emotion and social signaling in self-enhancement.

Given the hedonic and symbolic value of beauty products, consumer decisions are often shaped by pleasure-seeking behavior, emotional gratification, and cognitive assessment of self-concept relevance. Esmaeilpour and Mohseni (2019) found that five experiential dimensions—cognitive, affective, social, behavioral, and sensory—exert significant influence on consumer behavior. Similarly, demand for natural cosmetics and wellness-aligned brands continues to grow globally, reflecting consumer preferences for ethical, sustainable, and personally meaningful choices (Zhang, 2019). These behavioral shifts underscore the need for marketing strategies that go beyond utility and tap into subjective experiences.

Despite the growing relevance of these experiential dimensions globally, there is a distinct lack of empirical research that examines how they function in the unique sociocultural context of Bahrain. This is especially critical given that consumption in the Gulf region reflects a hybrid of modern, aspirational consumerism and traditional cultural norms. Local consumers exhibit a high degree of brand consciousness and emotional investment in personal care products, yet their behavior has not been thoroughly explored through the lens of experience-based frameworks.

This study addresses this gap by investigating the role of four key experiential dimensions—social experience, cognitive experience, affective experience, and hedonic experience—in shaping consumer buying behavior in Bahrain's beauty sector. Drawing on the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and Social Learning Theory (SLT), we propose a conceptual model in which these experiences serve as psychological antecedents to consumer purchase behavior.

The study empirically tests this model using survey data from 385 female consumers in Bahrain and employs regression analysis to assess the relative strength and significance of each predictor.

The research objectives are (1) to assess the relative influence of social, cognitive, affective, and hedonic experiences on consumer buying behavior in Bahrain, (2) to empirically test an experience-based consumer behavior model using validated constructs grounded in psychological and marketing theory, and (3) to generate actionable insights for practitioners seeking to develop consumer-centered, experience-driven strategies in the Bahraini beauty market.

This research contributes to marketing theory by contextualizing the experiential model within a Middle Eastern consumer base. It extends the frameworks of the Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) and Social Learning Theory (Bandura & Walters, 1977) to evaluate how subjective experiences translate into behavioral outcomes in hedonic product categories. Unlike studies that focus on digital engagement, this paper retains a broader experiential lens—one that is applicable to both in-store and hybrid consumption experiences. The findings are expected to enhance theoretical understanding of experiential consumer behavior while providing practical insights for regional marketers navigating the changing dynamics of beauty consumption.

By centering the study on Bahrain—a country balancing traditional values with rapid modernization—this research offers a timely and contextually relevant examination of how contemporary consumers experience, evaluate, and ultimately engage with beauty products. In doing so, it advances both theory and practice in the domain of experiential consumer behavior.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Foundations of Consumer Experience

Contemporary marketing theory increasingly acknowledges the shift from transactional to experiential paradigms of consumer engagement, particularly in hedonic and identity-driven product categories such as beauty and personal care (Schmitt, 1999; Brakus et al., 2009). Within this experiential turn, the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and Social Learning Theory (SLT) offer foundational insight into the psychological mechanisms underlying consumer decision-making.

The Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) posits that consumer behavior is shaped by attitudes toward behavior and subjective norms, both of which are formed through cognitive evaluations and social pressures. This theory has been widely applied in marketing to explain purchase intentions in health, sustainability, and fashion domains. In the context of beauty consumption, TRA helps clarify how internal beliefs and perceived social approval coalesce into behavioral intention.

Complementing this, Social Learning Theory (Bandura & Walters, 1977) emphasizes the role of observational learning, imitation, and vicarious reinforcement. Consumers acquire preferences and behavioral patterns by observing the experiences and endorsements of peers, influencers, and social

networks. In beauty markets, SLT underpins the influence of social proof, peer comparison, and digital communities in shaping consumption habits.

Together, TRA and SLT provide a dual-lens framework to explore four key experiential constructs that this study hypothesizes to influence consumer buying behavior: social experience, cognitive experience, affective experience, and hedonic experience.

2.2. Social Experience and Buying Behavior

Social experience encompasses interpersonal interactions and cultural norms that influence consumer preferences and behaviors. It reflects the relational and community-oriented nature of consumption, where peer influence, word-of-mouth, and social visibility affect purchasing decisions. Zhouyan (2020) found that social influence was a significant driver of beauty product adoption in both Western and Eastern markets, while Zhang & Zhou (2019) noted that trust, recommendations, and social validation heavily shape consumer attitudes toward natural cosmetic brands. In the Gulf context, where collective values and social signaling remain prominent, the role of social experience in driving consumption is expected to be particularly pronounced.

2.3. Cognitive Experience and Buying Behavior

Cognitive experience refers to the mental processes involved in understanding, evaluating, and interpreting product information. It includes rational assessments of product features, quality, environmental impact, and utility (Shavinina & Kholodnaja, 2017). In consumer research, cognitive experience is often associated with deliberate information processing and utilitarian judgments (Recker, 2021). However, in high-involvement yet hedonic markets like beauty and personal care, the effect of cognition may be complex. Studies have shown that cognitive overload or critical appraisal may dampen purchase intention when affective cues dominate consumer decision-making (Ta et al, 2022). The contradictory role of cognition—sometimes reinforcing, other times inhibiting behavior—necessitates empirical testing.

2.4. Affective Experience and Buying Behavior

Affective experience captures the emotional responses elicited during the purchasing process, including feelings of pleasure, satisfaction, or excitement (Schmitt, 1999). Emotionally resonant branding and sensorial advertising strategies aim to leverage affective experience to enhance consumer engagement. Shahpasandi (2020) and Esmaeilpour & Mohseni (2019) demonstrate that affective experiences significantly predict impulse buying and purchase intention in online and offline contexts. In beauty consumption—an inherently identity-linked domain—emotions tied to self-image, confidence, and expression often guide decision-making. Affective experience thus remains a critical antecedent to behavior in emotionally charged markets.

2.5. Hedonic Experience and Buying Behavior

The hedonic aspect of consumer experience refers to sensory enjoyment and psychological pleasure derived from product usage (Roz, 2021). In contrast to utilitarian consumption, hedonic consumption emphasizes aesthetics, indulgence, and escapism. Beauty products are prototypically hedonic goods, where product texture, fragrance, packaging, and symbolic meaning are often more influential than functional performance. Studies in fashion and cosmetics (e.g., Tarka et al., 2022; Haq & Abbasi, 2016) consistently affirm that hedonic motivations significantly predict purchase frequency and brand loyalty. In the Gulf region, where luxury and aspirational consumption patterns are culturally salient, hedonic experiences are likely to hold elevated importance in consumer choice.

2.6. Research Gap and Contribution

While prior studies have examined individual factors—such as social influence or emotional branding—the integrated role of multiple experiential dimensions in shaping consumer behavior remains underexplored, particularly in Middle Eastern markets. Moreover, much of the literature has focused on Western or East Asian contexts, with minimal empirical work conducted in Bahrain. This study fills that gap by empirically testing a four-dimensional experiential framework (social, cognitive, affective, hedonic) using a large, demographically representative sample. It aims to advance both the conceptual understanding of experience-driven behavior and the practical guidance for marketing strategy in the region's beauty industry.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Philosophy and Approach

This study adopts a positivist research philosophy, which emphasizes objective measurement and statistical inference to uncover causal relationships. The approach is deductive, aiming to test hypotheses derived from established theoretical models—specifically, the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and Social Learning Theory (SLT). This structure enables empirical testing of how various consumer experiences influence buying behavior in the beauty and personal care sector.

3.2. Research Design

A cross-sectional, quantitative research design was used to collect and analyze data at a single point in time. This design is appropriate for examining associations between multiple independent variables and a behavioral outcome in a large, diverse sample. The study is descriptive and explanatory in nature, focusing on testing specific hypotheses about the effects of experiential dimensions on consumer behavior.

3.3. Population and Sampling

The target population consists of female consumers residing in Bahrain, who regularly purchase products in the beauty and personal care sector. Given the sector's demographic skew and cultural specificity, the sample was restricted to women to ensure internal validity.

- Sampling frame: Women aged 18 and above who use products from at least one of the following four segments: cosmetics, skincare, personal care, and fragrances.
- Sampling method: Non-probability convenience sampling was employed due to practical constraints and accessibility, though efforts were made to diversify the sample across income and age groups.
- Sample size: A total of 385 responses were collected, calculated using the Raosoft sample size calculator at a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error for an estimated population of ~1.7 million (Raosoft, 2022).

3.4. Data Collection

Primary data were collected using a structured online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The instrument included demographic questions and multi-item scales measuring the independent and dependent variables. The survey was pre-tested for clarity and timing prior to full deployment.

3.5. Measurement Instruments

All constructs were measured using 5-point Likert scales (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree), adapted from prior validated studies, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Measurement constructs and item composition

| Construct | Source(s) | No. of Items |
|----------------------|--|--------------|
| Social Experience | Naranje (2018), Zhouyan (2020) | 5 |
| Cognitive Experience | Shavinina & Kholodnaja (2017), Recker (2021) | 4 |
| Affective Experience | Esmaeilpour & Mohseni (2019), Shahpasandi (2020) | 4 |
| Hedonic Experience | Roz (2021), Tarka et al. (2022) | 5 |
| Buying Behavior | Bhatt (2018), Vancic (2020) | 6 |

The survey included screening questions to ensure respondents were regular users of personal or beauty care products.

3.6. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS v26, following a multi-step procedure:

- Descriptive Statistics: To summarize demographic variables and assess data distribution.
- Reliability Analysis: Cronbach's alpha was calculated to assess internal consistency of each scale. A threshold of $\alpha \geq 0.70$ was used.
- Correlation Analysis: Pearson's correlation was used to examine linear associations between independent variables and the dependent variable.

- Multiple Linear Regression: To assess the simultaneous effect of the four experiential predictors on consumer buying behavior and test hypotheses H1–H4.

3.7. Ethical Considerations

Ethical protocols were followed throughout the study. Respondents were informed of the study's purpose and assured of anonymity and confidentiality. Participation was voluntary, and data were used solely for academic purposes. No personal identifying information was collected.

3.8. Conceptual Model and Hypotheses

The conceptual framework hypothesizes that each of the four experiential constructs—social experience, cognitive experience, affective experience, and hedonic experience—has a direct impact on consumer buying behavior. The model is tested empirically through the regression analysis described above.

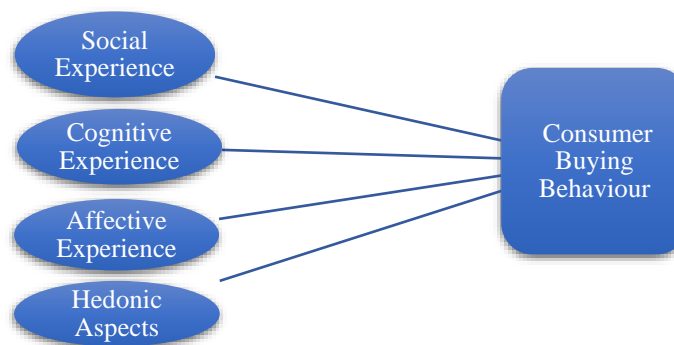


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

4. Results

This section presents the outcomes of the statistical analyses conducted to evaluate the hypotheses and test the proposed model. The analyses were carried out in four steps: reliability testing, correlation analysis, regression modeling, and hypothesis testing. The goal was to examine the effect of four experiential constructs—social, cognitive, affective, and hedonic experiences—on consumer buying behavior (CBB) in Bahrain's beauty and personal care market.

4.1. Reliability of Measurement Scales

Prior to hypothesis testing, the internal consistency reliability of the constructs was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. As shown in Table 2, all variables exhibited

strong internal reliability, with α values ranging from .78 to .88. Social experience demonstrated the highest reliability ($\alpha = .88$), followed closely by cognitive experience ($\alpha = .86$). The dependent variable, buying behavior, yielded an alpha of .81, indicating stable and consistent measurement across its six items. The overall reliability of the entire instrument was excellent ($\alpha = .892$), exceeding the threshold of .70 recommended by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), and suggesting that the instrument was psychometrically sound.

These results confirm that the items used to measure each construct reliably capture their respective latent variables, allowing for valid interpretation in subsequent analyses.

Table 2: Cronbach's Alpha

| Variable | α |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Social Experience | 0.88 |
| Cognitive Experience | 0.86 |
| Affective Experience | 0.79 |
| Hedonic Experience | 0.78 |
| Buying Behavior | 0.81 |
| Overall Scale | 0.892 |

4.2. Correlation Analysis

To assess the strength and direction of bivariate associations among variables, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were computed. As shown in Table 3, all experiential dimensions exhibited statistically significant, positive correlations with consumer buying behavior. The strongest relationship was observed between social experience and buying behavior ($r = .857$, $p < .01$), reflecting a robust linear association. This indicates that individuals who experience greater social engagement or influence in the consumption context are significantly more likely to exhibit purchase behavior.

Hedonic experience was moderately correlated with buying behavior ($r = .465$, $p < .01$), followed by cognitive experience ($r = .397$) and affective experience ($r = .361$). Significant correlations among independent variables were also observed—for instance, affective and hedonic experiences were highly correlated ($r = .677$), as expected given their shared emotional valence. However, no correlations exceeded .90, suggesting that multicollinearity was not a concern.

These findings establish initial empirical support for the conceptual model and justify proceeding with multivariate regression analysis to assess the unique contribution of each predictor.

Table 3: Pearson correlation matrix

| Variable | 1 (CBB) | 2 (SE) | 3 (CE) | 4 (AE) | 5 (HE) |
|----------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| CBB | 1 | .857 | .397 | .361 | .465 |
| SE | .857 | 1 | .438 | .131 | .225 |
| CE | .397 | .438 | 1 | .231 | .390 |
| AE | .361 | .131 | .231 | 1 | .677 |
| HE | .465 | .225 | .390 | .677 | 1 |

4.3. Multiple Regression Analysis

A standard multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine the predictive power of the four experiential dimensions on consumer buying behavior. The results indicated a statistically significant overall model, with $F(4, 382) = 445.94$, $p < .001$. As presented in Table 4, the model explained 82.4% of the variance in the dependent variable ($R^2 = .824$), an exceptionally high proportion for behavioral data. The adjusted R^2 (.822) remained nearly identical, suggesting the model is generalizable and not overfitted.

Table 4: Regression model summary

| R | R ² | Adj. R ² | SE |
|-------|----------------|---------------------|-------|
| 0.908 | 0.824 | 0.822 | 0.236 |

Table 5 confirms the statistical significance of the regression through analysis of variance (ANOVA). The regression sum of squares ($SS = 99.651$) was far greater than the residual sum of squares ($SS = 21.341$), reinforcing that the predictors accounted for most of the variability in buying behavior. The large F-statistic further supports the strength of the model fit.

Table 5: ANOVA

| Source | SS | df | MS | F | Sig. |
|------------|--------|-----|--------|---------|--------|
| Regression | 99.651 | 4 | 24.913 | 445.939 | .000** |
| Residual | 21.341 | 382 | 0.056 | | |

These statistics provide strong evidence that the model is not only statistically significant but also substantively meaningful in predicting consumer behavior in this context.

4.4. Coefficient Estimates and Hypothesis Testing

Standardized and unstandardized regression coefficients for the model are presented in Table 6. Among the four predictors, social experience emerged as the most influential factor, with a standardized beta of $\beta = .824$ ($p < .001$). This indicates that, holding other variables constant, a one-unit increase in social experience is associated with a substantial increase in predicted buying behavior. This finding strongly supports Hypothesis 1 (H1), affirming the centrality of interpersonal dynamics in cosmetic consumption in the Bahraini context.

Table 6: Regression coefficients

| Predictor | B | SE | β | t | Sig. |
|----------------------|--------|-------|---------|--------|--------|
| Constant | 0.235 | 0.123 | — | 1.909 | .057 |
| Social Experience | 0.715 | 0.021 | 0.824 | 34.421 | .000** |
| Cognitive Experience | -0.088 | 0.028 | -0.081 | -3.208 | .001** |
| Affective Experience | 0.117 | 0.030 | 0.112 | 3.841 | .000** |
| Hedonic Experience | 0.221 | 0.029 | 0.235 | 7.597 | .000** |

Hedonic experience also exerted a statistically significant positive effect ($\beta = .235$, $p < .001$), confirming Hypothesis 4 (H4) and highlighting the importance of sensory pleasure and symbolic indulgence in the decision-making process. Affective experience contributed modestly yet significantly ($\beta = .112$, $p < .001$), supporting Hypothesis 3 (H3). This suggests that emotions like excitement or happiness, while influential, play a secondary role compared to social and hedonic drivers.

Interestingly, cognitive experience exhibited a statistically significant but negative effect on buying behavior ($\beta = -.081$, $p = .001$). This finding supports Hypothesis 2 (H2), though the direction of the effect is contrary to conventional expectations. The result implies that increased rational evaluation and deliberative thinking may actually reduce the likelihood of purchasing in this context, potentially due to conflict with emotionally driven or impulsive tendencies common in beauty-related consumption. This aligns with emerging literature on cognitive dissonance in hedonic decision-making, where overthinking may suppress experiential motivation (Ta et al, 2022).

The intercept term was not statistically significant ($p = .057$), indicating that when experiential predictors are held at zero, the model does not estimate a meaningful baseline level of buying behavior.

Table 7 provides a concise summary of hypothesis testing results, indicating that all four hypotheses were supported, with statistical significance at the $p < .01$ level.

Table 7: Hypothesis test results

| Hypothesis | Predictor | β | p-value | Result |
|------------|----------------------|---------|---------|------------|
| H1 | Social Experience | 0.824 | 0.000 | Supported |
| H2 | Cognitive Experience | -0.081 | 0.001 | Supported* |
| H3 | Affective Experience | 0.112 | 0.000 | Supported |
| H4 | Hedonic Experience | 0.235 | 0.000 | Supported |

Overall, these findings provide robust support for an experience-based model of consumer behavior in the beauty and personal care industry and reveal important insights into the relative and even paradoxical effects of different experiential dimensions.

5. Discussion

This study investigated the impact of four experiential dimensions—social, cognitive, affective, and hedonic experiences—on consumer buying behavior in the beauty and personal care market in Bahrain. The findings provide strong empirical support for the proposed model and yield several theoretically significant and practically actionable insights.

Among the four predictors, social experience emerged as the most powerful driver of consumer buying behavior ($\beta = 0.824$), confirming the central role of peer influence, social norms, and community-driven cues in shaping consumption decisions in this sector. This finding aligns with the tenets of Social Learning Theory (Bandura & Walters, 1977), which posits that individuals learn behaviors

and preferences by observing and interacting with others in their social environment. It also resonates with previous findings in collectivist cultures, where purchase decisions are often influenced by family members, friends, and opinion leaders (Zhouyan, 2020; Zhang & Zhou, 2019). In Bahrain's tightly knit society, where beauty and grooming are not only personal but also social expressions, this social dimension becomes a critical determinant of behavior.

The study also finds that hedonic experience ($\beta = 0.235$) and affective experience ($\beta = 0.112$) significantly influence consumer behavior. These results are consistent with existing literature in experiential marketing and hedonic consumption, which emphasizes that emotional resonance, aesthetic pleasure, and sensory gratification are key motivators in the consumption of beauty products (Schmitt, 1999; Roz, 2021). The positive effects of these dimensions confirm that consumers derive psychological satisfaction and identity reinforcement through their engagement with beauty brands, particularly when such products evoke joy, relaxation, or excitement. These findings support the integration of emotion-based marketing strategies in beauty product positioning.

Perhaps most interestingly, the analysis reveals a statistically significant negative effect of cognitive experience on buying behavior ($\beta = -0.081$). This counterintuitive finding suggests that increased rational evaluation—such as scrutinizing ingredients, price, ethical claims, or value propositions—may actually inhibit rather than promote consumer action in the beauty sector. While some research has linked cognitive engagement to more informed and deliberate purchases (Recker, 2021), the current results indicate that in emotionally charged and hedonic markets, overthinking may disrupt affective flow and reduce impulsive or intuitive buying. This aligns with emerging behavioral theories emphasizing the paradox of choice, information overload, or emotional dissonance in high-cognition environments (Ta et al, 2022). In short, when beauty consumption becomes overly rationalized, it may cease to be fun or fulfilling—thus weakening the consumer's motivation to purchase.

Together, these findings validate a multidimensional experiential model and emphasize the need to consider both reinforcing and inhibiting psychological mechanisms in consumer behavior research. The results carry implications not only for theory but also for brand strategy, suggesting that effective engagement in the beauty market requires a deep understanding of the emotional, social, and sensory experiences that consumers seek, as well as awareness of the potentially demotivating effects of excessive rational appeal.

6. Conclusion

This study advances the field of consumer behavior by demonstrating that experiential dimensions—particularly social, affective, and hedonic experiences—play a critical role in shaping buying behavior in the beauty and personal care sector. Using a robust sample of 385 consumers in Bahrain and a theory-driven model grounded in TRA and SLT, the research offers empirical evidence that behavior is not solely a function of attitudes or product utility, but rather a

multifaceted outcome of how consumers feel, perceive, and engage with products in their social and psychological contexts.

The study's findings are particularly relevant to marketing practitioners in the Gulf region. Brands should prioritize experience-centered strategies that foster emotional connection and social engagement, rather than relying exclusively on rational appeals or functional messaging. Strategies such as influencer marketing, immersive in-store experiences, and emotional storytelling can effectively leverage the affective and social dimensions that drive behavior. At the same time, marketers should be cautious about overloading consumers with cognitive information, especially in product categories where emotional resonance is more impactful than logical justification.

Theoretically, the study contributes to experiential marketing literature by proposing and validating a four-dimensional model of consumer experience that integrates positive and negative psychological drivers. It also adds regional diversity to the literature by exploring consumer dynamics in Bahrain, a culturally rich yet understudied market in consumer research.

While this study offers meaningful contributions, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional design prevents the establishment of causal relationships. Although the regression analysis identifies significant predictors, the directionality of influence remains inferential. Future research could employ longitudinal or experimental methods to validate causal mechanisms. Second, the study employed non-probability convenience sampling, which may limit generalizability to the broader population. Although demographic diversity was sought, the sample consisted only of women in Bahrain, which constrains the applicability of findings across genders or across different Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. Comparative studies across countries, including both male and female consumers, would enhance external validity. Third, the model focused on four key experiential predictors but omitted other potentially influential variables, such as brand trust, digital engagement, sustainability concerns, and cultural values. Incorporating these variables in future structural models (e.g., PLS-SEM or multi-group SEM) could yield a more holistic understanding of beauty consumption. Lastly, the finding that cognitive experience negatively predicts buying behavior opens the door for qualitative or mixed-methods research. Future work could explore consumer narratives and decision-making processes in more depth to better understand the emotional-cognitive tension underlying beauty product consumption.

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