

# **The Glory Days Are Over? A Pragmatic Study on How Luxury Fashion Pop-up Stores Generate Meaningful Experiences to Build Brand Loyalty among Chinese Gen-Z Consumers**

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## **Abstract**

**Research Context:** Amid macroeconomic headwinds and a shifting definition of luxury, the Chinese luxury market is undergoing an unprecedented crisis. In order to address these uncertainties and embrace the growing Gen Z luxury consumers, pop-up stores are widely used as an effective experience marketing strategy, which is valued for their flexibility, cost efficiency, and immersive environments.

However, despite the bulk of literature on Chinese Gen Z consumers and pop-up stores, research that combines these two themes and particularly focuses on pop-up stores' role of building brand loyalty remains limited. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap.

**Research Purpose:** The purpose of this research is twofold: (i) to investigate how key factors of brand experience in luxury fashion pop-ups contribute to the formation of brand loyalty from the perspective of Chinese Gen Z consumers, (ii) to provide practical guidance for luxury marketers in developing future experiential marketing strategies through pop-up stores.

**Research Design:** This dissertation employs a qualitative approach, which combines both semi-structured interviews and focus groups to ensure data triangulation. A total of 12 participants were involved in the phase of data collection, and their transcripts went through three iterations of coding. The outcome of thematic analysis provided a solid foundation for the final conclusions and recommendations.

**Key Findings:** The findings reveal that luxury pop-up stores can leverage sensory, affective, intellectual, behavioral, lifestyle, pragmatic, relational and social dimensions to create meaningful brand experiences, thereby contributing to the formation of brand loyalty. This process is further shaped by Gen Z's distinctive perception of luxury, namely cultural confidence and the dual aspiration for peer recognition and the expression of personal uniqueness. Finally, the study also confirms that brand loyalty extends beyond repeat purchasing behavior in the digital era, advocacy, co-creation, and digital engagement represent higher levels of heart loyalty.

**Originality and Values:** The most outstanding contribution for this dissertation is to propose a comprehensive framework for luxury fashion retailers to build brand loyalty through pop-up stores among Chinese Gen Z consumers, which considers the different luxury consumption concept and shopping habits of this target group, and rooted in the unique Chinese context.

**Key Words:** Pop-up store, Chinese Gen Z, Luxury perception, Brand experience, Experience marketing, Brand loyalty

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# CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Context and Rationale for Study

### *1.1.1 Context*

In 2025, the global luxury fashion sector is confronting its most far-reaching disruption and its greatest potential setback in at least fifteen years (Bain, 2025), with luxury value creation expected to generate less value than the previous year for the first time since 2016 (McKinsey, 2025).

Meanwhile, although China remains the region's center of gravity, Chinese luxury market has witness a significant decline of 18%-20% in 2024 (Reuters, 2024). As marketing budget is reduced to adjust to this tough time for all luxury fashion companies, the mounting pressure is put on managers and creative teams to generate greater demands with fewer resources.

Beyond macroeconomic headwinds, luxury's dilemmas are also partly self-inflicted, as established brands risk being perceived as old-fashioned and outdated (Ko et al., 2019), with high price no longer being part of the definition of luxury (Kapferer and Valette-Florence, 2021). Consumers increasingly seek memorable and immersive experiences, making the delivery of exceptional brand experiences instead of physical goods a key priority for today's luxury industry. In order to maintain competitive, fashion retailers are compelled to adopt innovative approaches that engage emerging consumer segments without compromising the loyalty of their current clients (Klein et al., 2016).

In an effort to address uncertainties above and overcome the intense competition in marketplace, pop-up stores are emerging as a popular experiential marketing tool among luxury fashion retailers, because of their flexibility (Warnaby and Shi, 2018), cost-effectiveness (Rosenbaum et al., 2021) and experience-driven appeal. Thus, a dissertation investigating how luxury fashion brands utilise pop-up stores to build brand loyalty in China is timely.

### *1.1.2 Rationale*

Pop-up store, defined by Rosenbaum et al. (2021) as 'temporary retail spaces set within flexible, unconventional environments', has long been identified as an 'efficient tool for brand communications, particularly in terms of generating retail experience and sparking word of mouth (WOM) while reaching out both established and emerging target segments simultaneously' (Henkel

and Toporowski, 2021).

Apart from their limited availability and immersive physical environments, one of the defining characteristics of pop-up shops is their promotional nature, which is often designed to generate short-term buzz and awareness (Mađarac et al., 2020). Therefore, for newly emerging luxury fashion brands, pop-up stores can serve as a temporary alternative to permanent locations. They allow for market testing before committing to a site, with the primary goal of increasing brand awareness (Alexander and Ling, 2023). In contrast, established brands commonly use pop-up stores to drive immediate sales of limited-edition or co-branding products. Alternatively, they may prioritise enhancing brand image, aiming to attract consumers who might feel intimidated by flagship stores (Robertson et al., 2018). This indicates that a substantial body of existing research examine the roles of pop-up stores from a retail instead of marketing perspective. Moreover, while these studies acknowledge the opportunity for experiential shops to trigger buzz and other short-term outcomes, they tend to overlook potential longer-term consequences (Henkel and Toporowski, 2022), such as cultivating brand loyalty, thus requiring further research..

Furthermore, with the evolving definition of luxury consumption from physical products alone to intangible and authentic experiences (Kim et al., 2025), fashion brands are delivering luxury lifestyle experiences in pop-up stores with new solutions, such as establishing the 'third place' (Alexander, 2019) through incorporating their own iterations of chic restaurant and iconic cafe, or unveiling short-time gallery. Given the changing formats of pop-up stores in today's fashion landscape, this study aims to explore which defining characteristics and brand touchpoints of luxury fashion pop-up stores are most effective in creating meaningful brand experiences.

Finally, the group of young consumers is anticipated to drive the growth of luxury fashion industry in the coming decades, accounting for approximately 55% of the global market by 2025 (Sharma et.al, 2021). Gen Z, representing almost 20% of China's population (Yang et.al, 2020), has been recognised as a primary audience for pop-up stores by academic researchers and industry practitioners (Alexander and Ling, 2023). Although considerable studies exists on fashion pop-up stores and experience marketing, research incorporating these constructs that mainly focus on Gen

Z segment, whose unique cultural features and shifting preferences are markedly different from those of traditional luxury market segments (Zhang and Zhao, 2019) are limited.

Hence, this research sheds the light on the emerging and key driver, namely Gen Z consumers in China, and investigates their consumption behaviour in new luxury fashion landscape, aims to fill research gaps above.

## **1.2 Research Questions, Aim and Objectives**

### *1.2.1 Research Questions*

Drawing on the preceding discussion, the following research question is formulated to guide the present research as: *How do interactions with brand touchpoints in luxury fashion pop-up stores influence the formation of brand loyalty among the Chinese Gen Z focusing on their perceptions?*

### *1.2.2 Aim*

This research aims to explore how key factors regarding brand experiences in luxury fashion pop-up stores that contribute to the development of brand loyalty from the perspective of Chinese Gen Z consumers, and to offer practical guidance for luxury marketers in developing future experiential marketing strategies via pop-up stores.

### *1.2.3 Objectives*

This dissertation seeks to achieve the following objectives,

(i) To critically review and analyse the existing literature on perceptions of luxury fashion in China, brand experience, brand loyalty, and pop-up shops in fashion industry.

(ii) To identify how luxury pop-up stores leverage experience marketing to build brand loyalty in China.

(iii) To explore how Chinese Gen Z consumers' new perception of luxury impact the formation of brand loyalty in the context of luxury pop-up stores.

(iv) To propose a comprehensive framework with managerial implications for luxury fashion brand

marketers and retailers, who seek to build brand loyalty among Chinese young consumers through pop-up stores.

## **1.3 Theoretical and Managerial Contributions**

### *1.3.1 Theoretical Contributions*

This qualitative research has identified the interpretational relationship between pop-up stores and brand loyalty among luxury fashion brands, addressing a gap in research to date.

Regardless of extensive research on pop-up store's target audience, it remains unclear which store features ultimately lead customers to perceive pop-up shops as appealing in terms of creating memorable experiences (Henkel and Toporowski, 2021). And this question becomes even more pronounced when considering the unique perceptions and lifestyle traits of Chinese Gen Z consumers regarding their luxury fashion consumption. Hence, this study will ultimately propose a new framework for pop-up store marketing strategy based on the context of Chinese Gen Z consumers. Through which, this research offers theoretical supports for proposition that pop-up stores can generate brand experiences by building community and shaping consumer lifestyles. Consequently, this dissertation contributes to the current body of knowledge on brand experience by going beyond established four dimensions developed by Brakus et al (2009).

Additionally, align with previous literature, this study further demonstrates that meaningful experience will encourage customers to re-engage or re-consume, thus enhance long-lasting brand loyalty (Mostafa and Kasamani, 2021). Meanwhile, in the digital era characterised by the prevalence of the internet and social media, the measurements of brand loyalty have become increasingly complex (i.e., interactions within online communities). This research hold theoretical significance, not only because it highlights the role of luxury pop-up stores in building lasting relationship between brands and consumers rather than simply triggering short-buzz and stimulating word-of-mouth (WOM) , but also reveals that brand loyalty extends beyond re-purchasing. Particularly in the luxury fashion context, heart loyalty that refers to emotional attachments and shared values (Dapena-Baron et al., 2020) has proven to be a more valuable metrics. Accordingly, this research advances the current theoretical perspectives by considering a

broader conceptualisation of brand loyalty.

### *1.3.2 Managerial Contributions*

The findings of this research will influence luxury fashion retailers to understand the potentials of pop-up stores.

First of all, the growing expense and several emerging ways to reach customers such as opening VIP salons or launching museum exhibitions (Sherman, 2022) are challenging the traditional merits of pop-up stores (Chen, 2024). Aiming to respond to the potential doubts and criticism from industry, this paper reiterates pop-up stores' strategic role in cultivating brand loyalty through the creation of immersive brand experience, keeping a balance between exclusivity and accessibility (Ishihara and Zhang, 2017), and evoking resonance with local customers.

Moreover, although pop-up stores are gaining remarkable traction in China, only a few cases succeed in delivering memorable brand experiences, which cautions that the current fashion sector has witnessed an increasing challenge of homogenization. Therefore, by challenging the traditional characteristics of pop-up stores and incorporating them with Chinese Gen Z's unique luxury consumption concepts and lifestyle traits, this study provides practical guidelines for luxury brand managers, marketing professionals, and retail strategists, who seek to leverage pop-up stores efficiently in this fast-growing but uncertain market.

## **1.4 Research Design and Methodology Overview**

Considering the complexity of the research question, the employment of multi-methods qualitative in this study is appropriate, which incorporates semi-structured interviews and a focus group. With the aim of establishing general awareness of luxury fashion market among young customers in China, and then capture detailed insights into Gen Z's subjective perceptions towards several iconic pop-up stores, a sequential explanatory design building on insights from the preceding literature review will be employed to guide the primary data collection. This study examines Chinese Gen Z consumers aged from 22 to 26, who have experience with luxury fashion pop-up stores, with participants selected using convenience and snowball sampling. The descriptive data will be

analysed through thematic analysis, using coding to generate and refine themes.

### **1.5 Structure of the Dissertation**

The structure of this dissertation aligns with the objectives of this qualitative research. In the following Chapter 2, the theoretical foundation will be built through a critical review of existing literature on the perception of luxury fashion in China, brand experience, brand loyalty, and the role of pop-up stores within the luxury fashion sector. And the Chapter 3 will introduce and explain the research design adopted for this study. Chapter 4 forms the core of the dissertation. It first presents and analyses data from the deductive phase using descriptive statistics, which includes a thematic analysis (coding) of visitors to several iconic luxury brands' pop-up stores, based on six semi-structured interviews and one focus group. Then, the chapter will briefly discuss key takeaways. Finally, by critically reviewing and summarising above findings, the dissertation provides practical recommendations for luxury fashion retailers to build brand loyalty via pop-up stores in China and these recommendations will be structured around a proposed conceptual framework.

## CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

In light of the research question in section 1.2.1, this chapter aims to offer a critical review of the existing literature on four key concepts that underpin the research: (i) ***Perception of Luxury Fashion in China***; (ii) ***Brand Experience***; (iii) ***Brand Loyalty***; and lastly (iv) ***Fashion Pop-up Stores in Luxury Fashion Context***. The review begins by exploring the key definitions, and then evaluates the theories, scales, frameworks, and models in related fields. Following this, it identifies the research gaps based on previous papers, and finally highlights the theoretical significance of this study.

### 2.2 Theoretical framework

#### *2.2.1 Perception of Luxury Fashion in China*

##### 2.2.1.1 Evolving Definitions of Luxury

Luxury is a multifaceted dynamic concept that evolves over time, varies across cultural and geographical contexts, and shifts in meaning depending on the consumer group in question (Ko et al., 2019). In general, luxury derives perceived value from its exclusivity and rarity by its economic barriers (Wang et al., 2024). In line with these characteristics, scholars widely define luxury as scarce, exclusive, and costly goods that are affordable only to consumers with sufficient resources (Wang, 2022).

However, this view has been criticised as overly simplistic, as it still limits the definition of luxury to physical goods and treats the possession of expensive items as the main sign of status. Based on this argument, Dubois et al. (2021) noted that consumers also require beyond the domain of purchasing or owning physical luxury goods in striving for the meanings and benefit of luxury, which means these sole 'socially oriented' motives were not sufficient to address customers' perceptions of luxury (Hennigs et al., 2012). Kauppinen-Räsänen et al. (2019) further describe these definitions of luxury as resting on high functional value (i.e., superior quality and craftsmanship) and high symbolic value (i.e., associations with an affluent lifestyle), while cautioning that customers may also pursue deeper meanings of luxury in cultural, experiential, and psychological dimensions.

Recent literature highlights three main reasons for the evolving understanding of luxury. First, as luxury becomes more accessible and the middle class gains entry to premium products at more attainable prices, luxury fashion brands are increasingly challenged to strike a balance between maintaining broad appeal and preserving a sense of exclusivity for elite groups (Kapferer and Bastien, 2017). This has led some scholars to suggest that the luxury market is more diverse than traditionally assumed in status-driven literature, and the growing desire for spirituality and happiness through unparalleled experience is overtaking conspicuous display as the core of luxury (Rathi et al, 2022). Becker et al. (2018) further reinforced the distinction between accessible and prototypical inaccessible luxury, asserting that the added value of such products primarily derives from the social significance attributed to them by individuals or groups.

Second, the transition to an experience-driven economy has reshaped consumers' perceptions of luxury. To support this insight, Atkinson and Kang (2021) provided empirical evidence highlighting that luxury consumption has shifted from its 'traditional conspicuous consumption' model to the aspiration for experiences (Siepmann et al., 2021), whereas drawing on social construction and consumer culture theory, Reyes-Menendez et al. (2022) offer a more nuanced explanation emphasising that customers co-create and strengthen the values of luxury items through their interactions within various social groups, such as brand communities. This indicates that the value of luxury is increasingly relational and constructed by collective meanings, marking a breakthrough definition as it also acknowledges consumers' distinctive individuality (Becker et al., 2018).

Third, scholars have increasingly questioned the underlying motivations for purchasing luxury goods or services. Particularly rooted in current marketplace, recent studies indicate that the perceived value of luxury goods may be linked to intrinsic goals rather than merely functional, economic, or utilitarian benefits (Kauppinen-Räsänen et al., 2019). For example, luxury consumers pay more attention on the brands that represent their values and lifestyles (Osburg et al., 2021), as luxury narratives have long embodied the lifestyles and ideologies of high society and elitism. However, the limitation of this perspective lies in the potential impact of consumers' age profiles and the social structures among different countries, given substantial variations in individual values and cultural contexts (Atkinson and Kang, 2021).

In respond to these shifts, this study focuses on pop-up store as a highly experiential marketing strategy, exploring its role in balancing rarity while facing public general.

#### 2.2.1.2 Chinese Gen Zs' Perceptions of Luxury Fashion

Generation Z, widely regarded as 'digital natives', represents the first generation to have grown up surrounded by digital communication (Djafarova and Bowes, 2021). They are the newest generation born born between the mid-1990s and the late 2000s (Priporas et al., 2020). This emerging segment with specific characteristics continues to enter the luxury market, thus exerts profound impact on luxury fashion brands while attracting interests from scholars.

Several literature has uncovered that Gen Z shows entirely different consumption concept and shopping habits compared to earlier generations (Wang, 2021). Empirical research confirmed that Millennial consumers demonstrate strong brand consciousness and are willing to invest in luxury goods to pursue higher quality and refined taste, indicating that they still value materialism, brand signaling, and status consumption (Giovannini et al., 2015). By contrast, Gen Z mainly consists of teenagers and young adults seeking self-worth and identity, which tends to be reinforced through luxury brands or the association with luxury experience (Shin et al., 2022). Although they have exhibited higher levels of openness and self-awareness, Pentina et.al (2018) argued that the 'bandwagon effect' in luxury consumption has been amplified because of the booming popularity of social media among Gen Z consumers. And prior empirical research validated these findings as this group of consumers tend to purchase popular luxury fashion goods due to the peer pressure (Cho et al., 2022). These seemingly conflicting insights suggested that the desire for uniqueness and the need for group conformity play critical roles in enhancing millennials' intention to purchase luxury fashion and might further impact the formation of brand loyalty, thus required clarification.

Meanwhile, existing research overlooks the internal dynamics and nuanced complexities of Chinese luxury consumption (Diaz Ruiz, 2023). In collectivist cultures like China, luxury consumers place more emphasis on their relationship within the group and on maintaining its social standing (Siu et al., 2016). Consequently, consuming branded and high-priced products is often recognised as a way to show concern for face, as it highlights conspicuous consumption to fulfill the personal

psychological need for signaling social status (Zhang and Wang, 2019). However, equivalent cross-cultural literature focused on young luxury consumer, especially Gen Z is comparatively insufficient. On the one hand, the rise of 'China-chic' has spilled over from mass brands into premium and luxury tiers (Tie et al., 2025), which implies that luxury offers lacking cultural resonance may lose appeal with young consumers. On the other hand, qualitative evidence on young Chinese adults shows that besides traditional elements such as premium materials, craftsmanship, the increasing public relatedness conveys the greater sense of rarity (Diaz Ruiz, 2023). Consequently, for a generation used to luxury consumption, retailers are expected to catch up with popular trend, as young consumers are characterised by chasing the latest sensations and fleeting fame on social media (Creevey et al., 2022).

To summarise, understanding the interplay between cultural confidence, face-saving, and the dual desires for uniqueness and conformity is therefore critical in analysing how brand experiences influence loyalty among Chinese Gen Z luxury customers, which is the core focus of this study.

### *2.2.2 Brand Experience*

The experiential approach was first introduced in the seminal study by Holbrook and Hirschman (1982), who argued that beyond its rational components, consumption also encompasses experiential dimensions. In this way, brand experience reflects a pursuit of fantasy, sensation, and enjoyment, placing emphasis on the symbolic, hedonic, and aesthetic aspects of consumption (Zha et al., 2020).

From consumers' perspective, experience refers to the impression formed in a customer's mind during interactions with the brand (Paramita et al., 2021). These interactions can be either direct or indirect. Direct interactions typically occur when customers purchase, use, or consume a brand's products or services (Iglesias et al., 2019). Indirect interactions, on the other hand, happen when customers encounter the brand through advertising, marketing communications, word-of-mouth, media coverage, or online reviews (Karjaluoto et al., 2016). However, this perspective overlooks the co-creative role of individuals in shaping the retail experience. Alternatively, Pine and Gilmore (2011) emphasized the rise of the 'experience economy', arguing that while products and services are

external economic offerings, experiences are inherently personal as they engage consumers emotionally, physically, and intellectually.

The bulk of earlier papers on brand experience has focused on specific facets (Mostafa and Kasamani, 2020). For example, Prentice et al. (2019) argued that consumer experiences with a brand create emotional connections and increase the emotional attachment (love), whereas several marketers suggest that the ambient or design elements or the use of typeface, colour or photographic representations in the physical settings will impact brand experience (Zha et al., 2020). Although the scale formulated by Brakus et al. (2009) can be considered to be a milestone and replicated by a large body of researches (Figure 2.1), most authors conclude that this established scale is required to be adapted to suit the specific contexts (de Oliveira Santini et al., 2018). For example, building on an analysis of brand experience from fashion retailers' perspectives, Alexander and Ling (2023) proposed a multi-layered framework to advance understanding in this area (Figure 2.2), which fills research gaps resulting from the limited literature conceptualising retail experiences in pop-up stores.

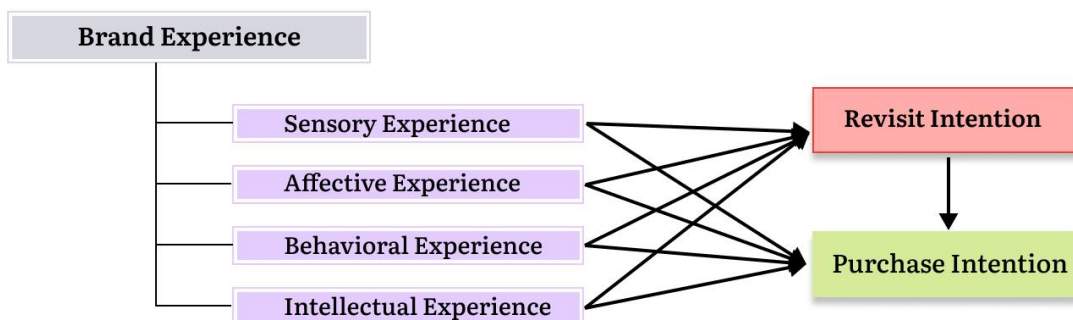


Figure 2.1 The Four Dimensions of Brand Experience (Brakus et al., 2009)

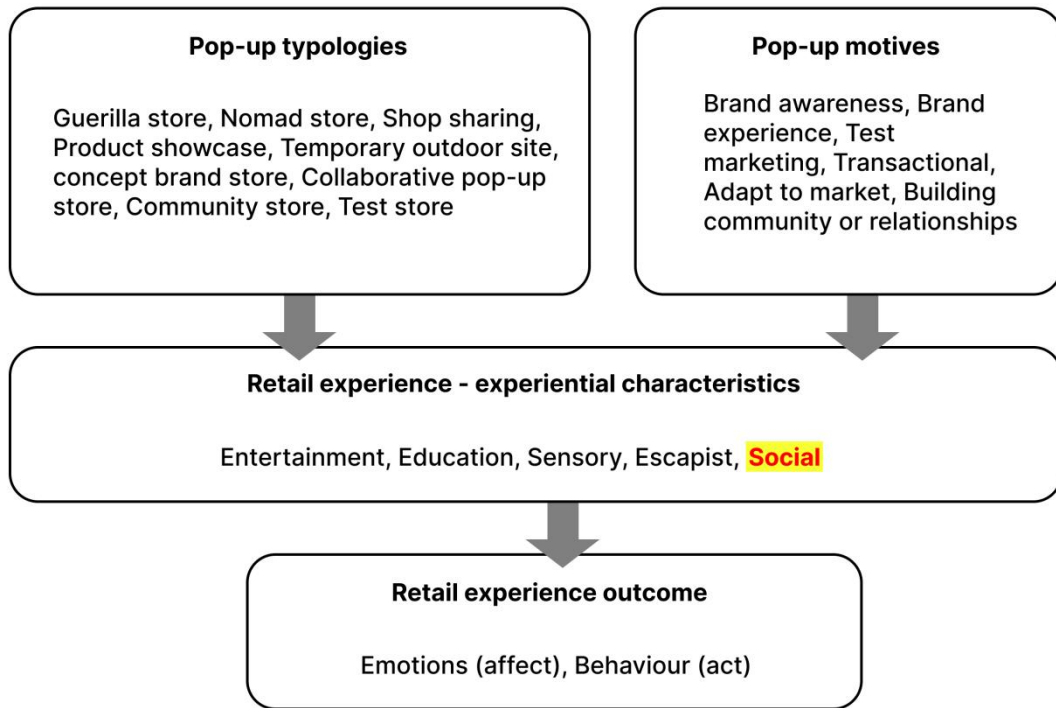


Figure 2.2 Adapted Multi-layered Framework of Fashion Brand Experience (based on Alexander and Ling, 2023)

With the advent of mobile internet and social media, considering that consumers inclined to rely on multiple channels to combine brand information (Yin et al., 2022), Frassetto-Deltoro et al. (2021), by contrast, developed a multi-dimensional scale consisting of nineteen items and eight dimensions. The four established dimensions include sensory, affective, intellectual, and behavioural aspects, while the four emerging dimensions are lifestyle, pragmatic, relational, and social (Figure 2.3). These outcomes broaden the brand experience construct outlined by Brakus et al. (2009) by reflecting the omni-channel retail environment, making it an ideal theoretical foundation to organise framework of primary research in this study.

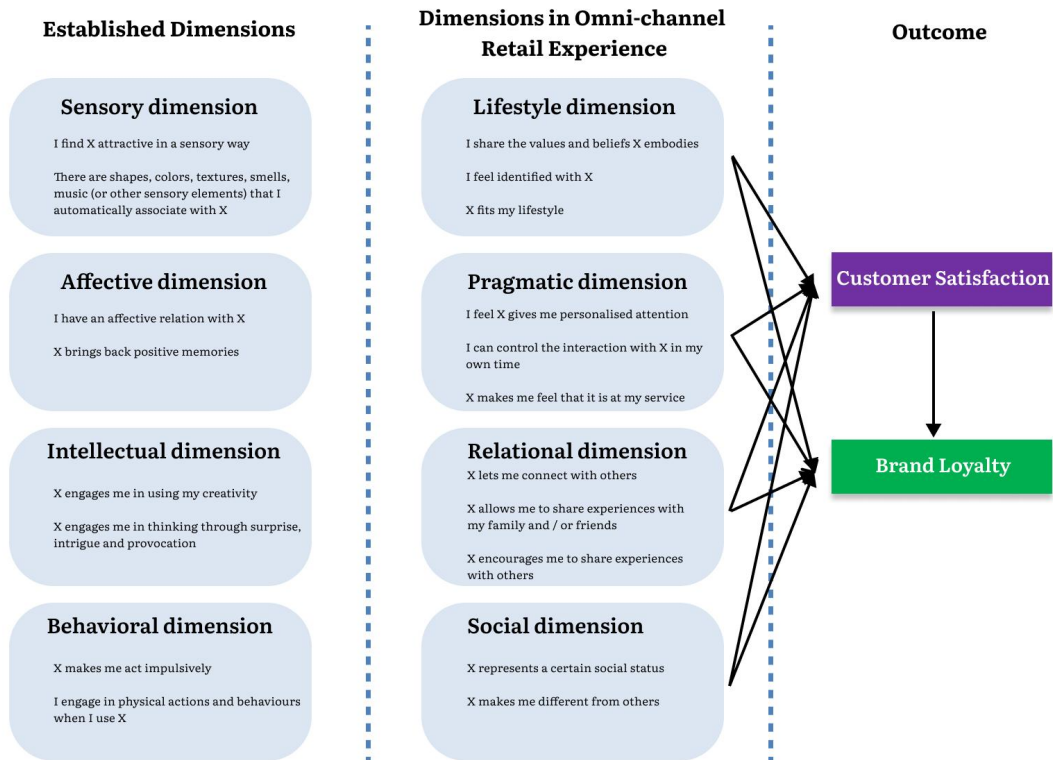


Figure 2.3 A Comprehensive Scale of Omni-channel Retailer Brand Experience (Frasquet-Deltoro et al., 2013)

### 2.2.2.1 Brand Experience in Luxury Fashion Retailing

Shahid et al. (2022) stated that customers in a luxury shop would express stronger emotional attachments and brand loyalty than customers in a non-luxury shop, whereas Kauppinen-Räsänen et al. (2019) pointed out that brand experience in luxury fashion store has the potential to inspire customers to realise and extend their experience of the self. These insights have clarified several unique values of luxury experience compared to mass-market brands (Atkinson and Kang, 2021). However, the bulk of existing literature has frequently adopted the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) theory to explore brand experience, which appears to have little to do with the unique characteristics of luxury (Gupta et al., 2023). Building on this, von Wallpach et al. (2020) further introduced the concept of 'moments' to describe the essence of luxury experiences recently, distinguishing the nature of luxury moments from everyday experiential qualities through four themes: growth and progress, bliss and happiness, unity with others, and awe and self-transcendence. These established themes shared similarities with several dimensions from the previous scales, of brand experience such as intellectual and relational dimensions, indicating that these dimensions remain applicable in the context of luxury fashion experiences.

According to a quantitative research by Kumagai and Nagasawa (2022), physical and hedonic customer experience are becoming critical to the marketing communications of luxury fashion brand nowadays. This suggests that, on one hand, successful luxury brands must appeal to a wider audience by offering more approachable experiences. On the other hand, physical luxury encounters are expected to convey rarity and scarcity, catering to consumers' aspirations for exclusivity. In this regard, the new concepts of retailing formats, such as flagships and pop-up stores emerged. As outlined by Jeong et al. (2025), flagship stores fulfill a dual pursuit for status and a desire to immerse in pleasurable experience. Through a series of focus groups, Wang et al., (2022) found that luxury flagships such as Louis Vuitton Maison attract consumers' attention by enhancing exclusivity and rarity perception among customers. Pop-up stores, by contrast, embody different elements of luxury brand's identity, adding to the mythical aspects of the brands' traits, such as informality and friendliness (Debenedetti, 2021). And this view reflected a netnographic study by de Lassus and Freire (2014), as pop-ups increase the likelihood of store visit by crafting a more relaxed atmosphere due to its smaller store design and less ostentatious environment. These ideas further confirmed that the concept of brand experiences in luxury fashion retailing rests on a 'paradox'.

To sum up, luxury fashion retailers should also emphasises authentic and personalised experiences when considering the marketing strategies, which help enhance the core value of brands as well as stimulate co-creation in digital era (Koivisto and Mattila, 2020). While prior scholars have confirmed the significance of these novel formats of retailing, existing knowledge of customers' experience in these stores is incomplete (Shahid et al., 2022), and few studies have explored how to strike a balance between exclusivity and availability in order to offer meaningful experiences for luxury consumers. This research investigates how luxury pop-up stores navigate this conflict by leveraging defining traits and curating brand touchpoints to engage with Chinese Gen Z consumers.

### *2.2.3 Brand Loyalty*

#### *2.2.3.1 Evolving Definitions of Brand Loyalty*

Brand loyalty toward a firm's brands constitutes a strategic asset and is widely acknowledged as a key driver of brand equity (Bernarto et al., 2020). Since the 1990s, brand loyalty has been defined

from numerous perspectives, with its definition remains contested. For several decades, researchers typically defined the brand loyalty as the extent to which a buying unit, such as a household, concentrates its purchases over time on a specific brand within a product category (Goyal and Verma, 2024). However, these conditions seem to be arguable, as most of primary research understood this term from a simple behavioural perspective and viewed it as patterns of repeated purchase or the likelihood of repurchase resulting from consistently positive experiences with the brand over time (Ebrahim, 2020). Based on this argument, the formation of brand loyalty has also been examined from relationship and psychological perspectives. For example, Fernandes and Moreira (2019) revealed that the connection consumer-brand connection was built on symbolic meanings, social expectations, and self-expression, beyond functional utility. Similarly, according to a key empirical study by Cossío-Silva et al. (2016), brand loyalty also entails a favourable attitude, which refers to consistent preference for a supplier, purchasing intentions, and recommendations to third parties, even when situational factors or marketing efforts may tempt a switch. In this regard, the development of brand loyalty can be understood as a process in which attachment, trust, and identification collectively drive loyalty-related behaviours (Diallo et al., 2021). These findings are pioneering, as they challenge the traditional focus on functional utility and product-centric approaches to brand relationships.

Considering the expanding boundary of branding theory and its new application in current industry, both approaches present their own limitation as they were not able to distinguish spuriously loyal from genuine loyal consumers(Mathew and Thomas, 2018). Falsely loyal customers are also likely to exhibit repeat purchase behaviour for several reasons including (i) deliberate inertia and cognitive lock-in, where consumers stick to familiar brands to avoid the effort of learning or adapting to alternatives (Shi et al., 2018), and (ii) peer or social influence, where individuals repurchase a brand to align with group norms or social expectations rather than personal preference (Mutum et al., 2020).

Additionally, the increasing prevalence of social media has significantly changed the marketing practices (Ebrahim, 2020), the drivers and consequences of brand loyalty in this omni-channel context have not been sufficiently addressed. Since the widespread adoption of the internet

facilitating a variety of new approaches to communicate, interact and involve consumers (Kamboj et al., 2018), brand loyalty can also be expressed via social transactions, such as text-based reviews, image sharing, hashtag-driven content, and video creation on social media platforms (Sohaib and Han, 2023). This highlights the urgent need for an expanding boundary of brand loyalty in this digital era. While Khamitov (2019) cautions that the definition of brand loyalty should be enriched from mere purchasing transactions to the relationship between stakeholders and the brands, which is expected to be manifested through social and/or economic exchanges. Kaur et al. (2020) by contrast, focus on the virtual brand communities, and acknowledges that engagement can result in higher level of brand loyalty. However, a critical limitation of this work is the omission of dynamics within online/offline hybrid interaction platforms, thus its applicability in omni-channel environment is subjective to further investigation.

Therefore, given that pop-up stores drive sales while stimulating consumer interaction, sharing, and co-creation, this study adopts an inclusive definition of brand loyalty as, 'Brand loyalty refers to relationships stakeholders develop with a brand that is exhibited by repeated purchases, active interaction, brand advocacy/promotion, and/or brand co-creation/shared ownership' (Parris and Guzmán, 2023).

#### 2.2.3.2 The measurement of brand loyalty

Although several attempts have been made to provide a thorough measure of brand loyalty, no consensus has been achieved. As a systematic literature review by Desveaud (2024) suggests, there are over 275 antecedents of loyalty and a substantial number of these concepts are closely related or even overlap, yielding a call for unified criteria of measurement of brand loyalty. Early in the literature, most practical measurement can be categorised as either behavior-based or attitude-based, depending on their relative emphasis on respectively, the purchasing or the cognitive component (Sari et al., 2023), whereas the advantages and disadvantages of both methods are also quite evident (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 Advantages and Disadvantages of Behavioral and Attitudinal Measures (Mellens, 1996)

|                      | Advantages   | Disadvantages  |
|----------------------|--|--|
| Behavioral Measures  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Based on actual behavior;</li> <li>(2) Non-incident;</li> <li>(3) Easy to collect.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Repeat buying not distinguish from brand loyalty;</li> <li>(2) More sensitive to short-run fluctuations;</li> <li>(3) Difficult to pick right decision unit.</li> </ul> |
| Attitudinal Measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Repeat buying <u>separated</u> from brand loyalty;</li> <li>(2) Less sensitive to short-run fluctuations;</li> <li>(3) Easy to pick right decision unit.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Valid representation of reality not guaranteed;</li> <li>(2) Incidental;</li> <li>(3) Harder to collect.</li> </ul>   |

Furthermore, as underlined by Wong (2023), brand loyalty represents an intense commitment to re-consume a favored brand. Hence, it is logical to assess brand loyalty based on the extent of a consumer's commitments towards a brand. This opinion gave rise to the concept of brand-oriented measurement. For example, direct ratings and indirect methods such as the degree to which a consumer is willing to recommend the brand to third parties, are frequently used during the data collection phase of several relevant literature. Correspondingly, brand loyalty is significantly influenced by consumers' personal traits and brand personality rather than mere evaluation of a particular range of brands. From this point of view, brand loyalty should be computed by a set of comments regarding general customers' behavior instead of statements about specific brands (Mellens, 1996). However, neither existing research nor the leading marketing experts achieve an agreement on the forms of customers-brand relationship constructs that cultivate brand loyalty (Anantharaman et al., 2022). Although supporting opinions above are the most commonly used measurements of brand loyalty (Parris and Guzmán, 2023), the prior literature review by Khamitov et al. (2019) has cautioned that the contribution of brand loyalty to strategic marketing inquiry has generally been fragmented, focusing on specific aspects.

With consumer involvement literature recently moving toward adopting an increasingly consumer-focused perspective (Husain et al., 2022), and brands are increasingly being regarded as

relationship assets, a more inclusive brand loyalty measurement framework is developed (Parris and Guzmán, 2023). However, the study simplifies brand loyalty as merely a repeated transactional outcome, overlooking its nature as a long-term relationship between consumers and brands (Khamitov, 2019). To thoroughly examine the effects of this relationship, Dapena-Baron et al. (2020) further proposed a 16-item scale (Appendix 4, p.163), which was refined and examined through a series of four surveys that validated various product categories. In these studies, the concept of brand loyalty has been classified into heart, head, and hand loyalty, and consider the outcome as engagement, advocacy and co-creation beyond re-purchase or patronage (Parris and Guzmán, 2023), thus making it an ideal choice for this study.

#### *2.2.4 Pop-up Stores in Luxury Fashion Context*

##### *2.2.4.1 The Emergence and Evolution of Pop-up Store*

Pop-up stores are not a new phenomenon. The concept is originally rooted in the field of marketing and was applied to temporary physical retail settings designed to create engaging, experiential shopping spaces (Alexander et al., 2018). Warnby and Shi (2018) noted that cities have ‘always been places of movement and transition,’ and pop-up retail is ‘a response to the inherent mobility of urban life and the need for brands to remain vibrant’. According to Rudkowski et al (2020), various urban phenomena that can be seen as precursors to pop-up retail, including markets, mobile vendors (e.g. flea markets, second-hand traders, and temporary stalls), touring theatre troupes, trade fairs and world expos, as well as American block parties (i.e., community celebration events). Despite the similar traits such as their limited lifespan, a market-like structure, and the combination of commercial/social functions (Murphy, 2011), a defining characteristics that separates modern pop-up stores from these other formats of temporary retailing is that, most represent brand-engineered experiences with high production value and strategic intent among today’s companies (Rosenbaum et al., 2021).

As stated by Henkel et al. (2022), in luxury fashion sector, its origin can be traced back to 2014, when the Japanese fashion label Comme des Garçons unveiled a series of temporary shops in a former bookstore in Berlin. Since then, luxury fashion pop-up stores have gained traction in both branding and consumer research for their ability to stimulate the five senses, create immersive and

creative atmospheres, as well as reinforce brand value and exclusivity (Ruiyu et al., 2025). However, the academic discourse on the role of pop-up store in the context of luxury fashion sector conceptually fragmented, leading the majority of research showing appreciation of specific key issues (de Lassus and Freire, 2014). For example, Lunardo and Mouangue (2019) highlighted that pop-up shops could help consumers avoid feelings of awkwardness or discomfort when shopping at luxury stores due to its approachable image. Hence, this qualitative research seeks to establish a comprehensive understanding by exploring how interactions with touchpoints in pop-up stores impact the formation of brand loyalty.

#### 2.2.4.2 The Defining Characteristics of Pop-up Stores

According to prior literature, fashion pop-up stores are differentiated from ordinary retail stores based on 4 key traits: (i) **ephemerality**, (ii) **immersive environment**, (iii) **brand promotion**, and (iv) **strategic differentiation**.

(i) Among all of these characteristics, the main distinguishing traits of pop-up stores are their **limited availability**, with operations typically lasting from one day up to six months (Zogaj et al., 2019). This characteristic is often underscored through deliberate design elements that stress spatial scarcity and temporal limitation (Henkel and Toporowski, 2021), for example, by retaining the unfinished layout of a vacant site or adding countdown clocks that signal the remaining days before closure (Surchi, 2011). In this study, ephemerality will be measured by asking participants how the store's temporary nature influenced their visit intention and perceived exclusivity.

(ii) Another key characteristic is its emphasis on generating **interactive and exploratory** experience for consumers (De Lassus and Freire, 2014). Different from traditional retailing formats, personalised customers experiences are crafted by incorporating specific interactive touchpoints, such as the introduction of the 'third place', captivating shop designs and novel interactive installations (e.g., vending machines), to trigger customer curiosity, stimulate social sharing, thereby reinforcing brand recognition and its market appeal.

(iii) A further characteristic of pop-up is its **promotional emphasis**. Previous research pointed out

that retailers use pop-up stores to pursue strategic goals, including enhancing sales performance (Mađarac et al., 2020), managing seasonal stock, or testing potential locations for permanent stores (Overdiek, 2018). However, promoting a brand or new product collection represents a more prevalent motivation and a significant source of value for luxury fashion pop-up store. This is because retailers are figuring out that pop-up store is a more viable means for delighting already-loyal consumers while introducing emerging consumers to a brand in less intimidating, more informal settings compared with a traditional boutique (Rosenbaum, 2021).

Meanwhile, pop-up stores are often linked to guerrilla marketing, as their limited duration and unconventional locations generate a sense of urgency that motivates consumers' purchase decisions (Gupta and Gentry, 2019). And simultaneously, customers are more likely to associate pop-ups' temporal scarcity with an offer of limited edition collections (Henkel and Toporowski, 2021), thereby attracting luxury consumer who has a strong desire for uniqueness.

(iv) Finally, pop-up stores possess a **differentiating** characteristic. From the perspective of marketing experts, pop-up stores contradict conventional business practices (Klein et al., 2016) in terms of shelf-driven paradigm, where this kind of retailing format is more appropriately perceived as a temporary event (Warnaby et al., 2015) instead of the brand's ordinary stores. Alternatively, pop-up stores in the fashion sector are commonly curated with an exclusive store concept. These distinguishing concepts enable luxury fashion brands to flexibly integrate local art and culture into their storytelling (De Lassus and Freire, 2014).

#### 2.2.4.3 Limitations and Criticisms of Pop-up Stores

As brick-and-mortar retail declines, fashion brands are moving to online channels, leading to more doubts about the application of pop-up stores (Chen, 2024). First of all, the biggest uncertainty comes from the rising costs of running pop-up stores. While some studies insist that pop-up store isn't too costly due to its impermanent trait (Henkel and Toporowski, 2022), the rising spending has made it unaffordable for even luxury fashion brands (Chen, 2024). One of the main reasons is that the success of pop-up stores relies heavily on access to temporary spaces in prime urban locations (Pomodoro, 2013). However, these spaces are often expensive, limited in availability, and difficult to

secure for long-term use. As rental and staff training costs continue to rise, the financial viability of pop-ups remains a subject of debate within the fashion industry.

Previously, in-store pop-ups were regarded as one of the most effective means of creating brand affinity. Nevertheless, some scholars argue that the transient nature and pronounced event orientation of temporary stores may undermine the long-term brand consistency (Rosenbaum et al., 2021), particularly within the high-end luxury segment. For niche fashion houses such as The Row and Goyard, which have cultivated loyal consumer bases through 'quietness', the adoption of pop-up stores remains uncommon due to the potential risk of diminishing the luxury brand's rarity and exclusivity.

#### *2.2.5 Proposed Theoretical Framework*

The figure below (Figure 2.4) summarise the key theories, framework and models discussed in the literature review, which highlight their relevance to this study and explain how they are applied to conduct the research in the context of luxury pop-up stores.

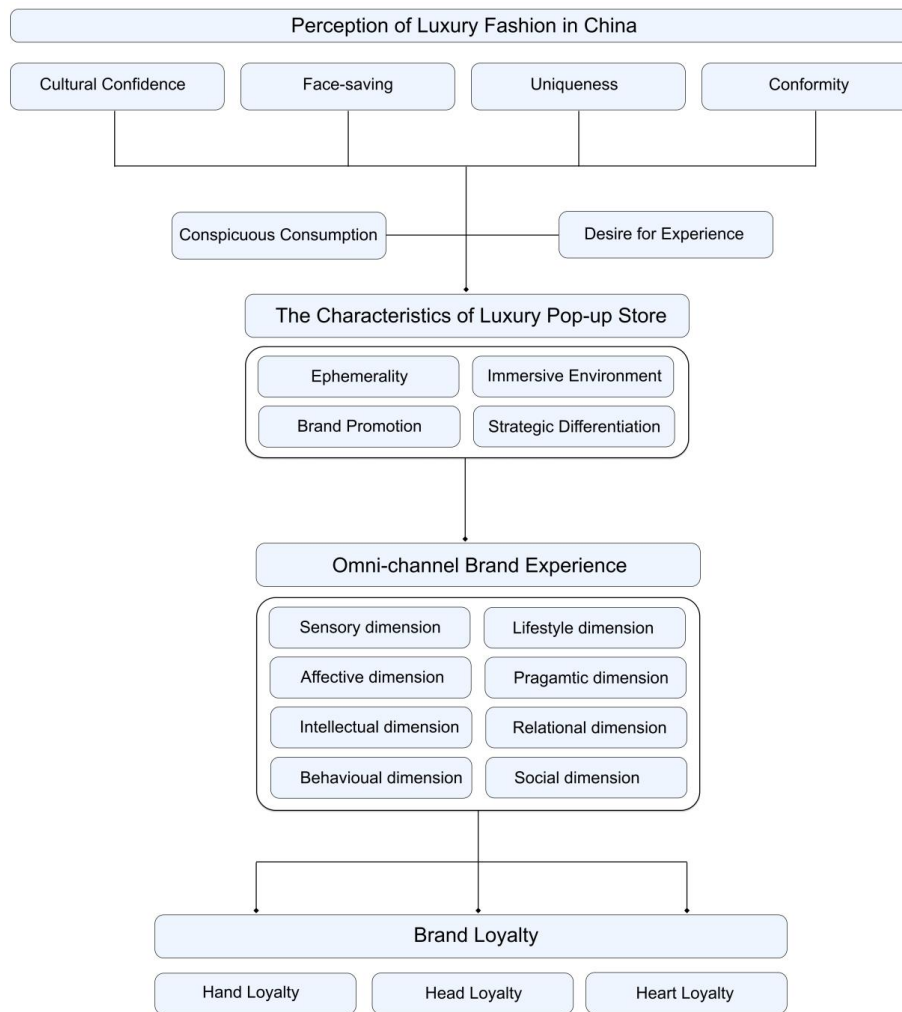


Figure 2.4 Theoretical Framework for the Study

### 2.3 Research Gap and Justification

First of all, rooted in a unique political, economic, and cultural context, young luxury consumers in China exhibit some distinct value perception, marketing preferences, and consumption behaviours (Diaz Ruiz and Cruz, 2023). However, although young Chinese consumers have become the primary target customer for most leading luxury fashion brands (Ye and Kim, 2024), the existing body of research on China, especially focusing on Gen Zs, falls short of reflecting its commercial significance. For example, Ngai and Cho (2012) found that, driven by China-chic movement, this group shows strong affiliations and loyalty to the Chinese culture, whereas Sun et al. (2021) highlighted that Gen Z consumers in China are tend to show off their status among their friends and peers, while enjoying discussing their experiences with luxury items within their social network. These findings suggested that these different behavior, attitude, and value are directly altering their ways of life, and reshaping the luxury consumption. Hence, a study that explores how Chinese Gen

Z's lifestyle traits such as cultural confidence will impact the formation of brand loyalty in the luxury fashion pop-up store's context is timely.

Also, as a low-cost guerrilla marketing tactic (Alexander and Ling, 2023), pop-up stores have been criticised for relying heavily on the element of surprise or the 'social media check-in effect', while neglecting the cultivation of long-term customer relationships (Surchi, 2011). Consequently, despite their ability to attract attention, pop-up stores have not yet demonstrated clear effectiveness in improving conversion rates and enhancing loyalty. This gap partly motivates the focus of this study on how pop-ups can build brand loyalty. Meanwhile, as a generation closely connected to digital communities (Lee et al., 2020), Gen Z consumers' visit to luxury pop-up stores might be driven by extended experience that can be share with others, instead of simply desiring for luxury goods. Therefore, measuring brand loyalty solely through purchase behavior is insufficient.

Finally, mass-marketisation strategy accompanied by an increasing middle-class segment, the thriving secondhand luxury market, booming popularity of social media and e-commerce, are leading to the democratisation of luxury brands (Shukla et al., 2025). The resulting challenge for luxury companies is to balance the massive luxury market, and thus new target audiences, without compromising the traditional expectations linked to luxury, namely rarity and exclusivity (Kastanakis and Balabanis, 2014). Although rich studies have addressed this risk from a supply chain perspective, such as through limited-edition production and controlled outlet channels (Rosendo-Rios and Shukla, 2023). A substantial gap still remains, as limited studies explored how emerging retail formats such as pop-up stores, along with experience marketing can enable luxury fashion brand reach wider audience while maintaining unique brand identity. Therefore, this study will fill the gap above by identifying the distinctive touchpoints, characteristics and motivations of luxury fashion pop-up stores, which might differ from other industries.

## **2.4 Summary of the Chapter**

To sum up, although Gen Z consumers' perceptions of luxury fashion have profoundly changed, luxury fashion pop-up store remains an effective marketing tool to leverage brand experience, given its defining characteristics and outstanding role of engaging customers with brand touchpoints.

However, limited studies takes unique Chinese cultural context and market traits in terms of luxury fashion consumption into consideration, and only scant attention has been paid on investigating the long-term goals such as building brand loyalty of pop-up stores.

In order to address the identified gaps above, this study particularly focuses on Chinese Gen Z luxury consumers, and examines the role of pop-ups in building brand loyalty by employing several metrics from established scales. Therefore, the study is distinct from prior research, as it directly responds to the growing doubts regarding the effectiveness of pop-ups in the current luxury fashion market, and gives a thorough explanation about the role of specific touchpoints in pop-up stores in the formation of brand loyalty, thus provides a timely and step-by-step guide for marketers and retailers in the industry.

# CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH DESIGN

## 3.1 Methodology Introduction

This chapter mainly aims to offer information about research design. The discussion begins by presenting the philosophical stance underpinning the investigation, followed by the research approach and strategy adopted to address the research objectives. The chapter then details the methods of data collection and analysis, explaining why multi qualitative techniques were considered most appropriate for exploring brand experience and loyalty formation in the context of luxury fashion pop-up stores among Chinese Gen Z consumers. Finally, ethical considerations are addressed, along with a brief reflection on the limitations of the research design.

## 3.2 Research Design: Research Onion

By adapting Saunders et al. (2023)'s research onion (Figure 3.1), the research design of this study was well-structured with a systemic guideline.

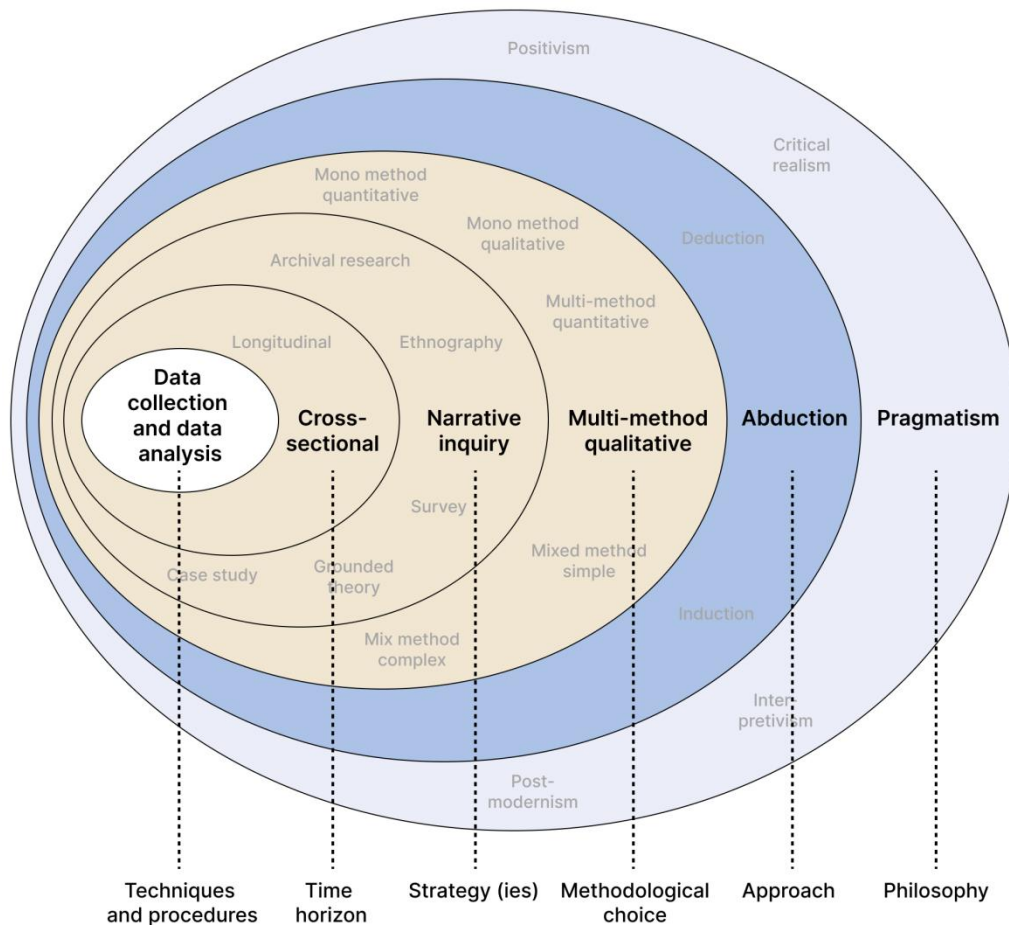


Figure 3.1 Adapted from Saunders et al. (2023) Research Onion

### *3.2.1 Research Philosophy: Pragmatist*

First of all, the outcome of this study was practical, as the concept of pop-up stores was closely linked to brand experience as well as real-life application, and heavily relied on current context. This reflected one of the inherent advantages of pragmatist philosophy as it was focusing on solving real-world problem and embracing changes (Alturki, 2021). Meanwhile, pragmatism held the basic principle that complex social phenomenon could be explained in different ways (Melnikovas, 2018). In light of the flexible nature of pop-up stores and diverse consumption preferences among Gen Z consumers, it was appropriate to adopt an interpretivist position under the pragmatist paradigm.

Additionally, this study was based on a relativist ontology, which acknowledged that reality was not an objective, independent entity but is constructed through human thought, interaction, and social processes (Pretorius, 2024). This was because the researcher understood the luxury pop-up phenomenon as a product of the broader luxury market and the Chinese cultural context, which was expected to evolve over time.

As for axiology, this study did not claim a completely neutral stance, as values were crucial in achieving research objectives (Pretorius, 2024). As a part of Chinese Gen Z consumers, it was inevitable for researcher to reflect personal background and preferences when interpreting the phenomenon of pop-up stores. Therefore, given the importance of reflexivity, this research required different data sources to establish a general understanding of luxury consumers' perceptions and to capture detailed experiences of their visits to pop-up stores.

### *3.2.2 Research Approach: Abductive Approach*

The adoption of abduction allowed for the flexible combination of both the exploratory and explanatory elements within this research. Comparatively, inductive approach tended to overlook differences among consumers, whereas deductive approach was unable to adequately capture the unique characteristics of young consumers within the Chinese cultural context (Amjad et al., 2020).

Although a great amount of literature had shed light on fashion marketing strategies, from topics such as how to generate meaningful brand experience through new formats of physical stores, and

how to form brand loyalty among growing young consumers, there was limited research focus on pop-up retailing from an experience marketing perspective, and take new luxury perceptions of Chinese young consumers, namely cultural confidence, status signaling, desire for both uniqueness and conformity into consideration. This suggested that established models, frameworks and theories might not fully explain the unique characteristics of luxury fashion pop-up stores within different context (Alexander and Ling, 2023). In this case, concepts and insights that emerged from primary research were needed to validate compelling theoretical contributions.

### *3.2.3 Methodological Choice: Multi-methods Qualitative*

This study employed a multi-method qualitative approach under careful consideration, which combined six semi-structured interviews and a focus group to enhance data triangulation. To begin with, qualitative data excelled in obtaining a contextualised understanding of behaviour, belief and motivation among Chinese Gen Z consumers. Moreover, given that pop-up stores were commonly defined by limited time, unique locations, and specific cultural context, most of existing literature on pop-ups adopted this method (Alexander and Ling, 2023), which provided invaluable reference for this study. Finally, it helped develop richer a understanding of unexplored areas such as the role of luxury fashion pop-ups in forming brand loyalty, as it allowed for emerging insights into this subject (Maxwell, 2008).

### *3.2.4 Research Strategy: Narrative Inquiry*

Cho et al. (2022) argued that Gen Zs were consuming cultures and crafting personality through their choices instead of simply purchasing products when it comes to luxury fashion consumption. In this case, narrative inquiry helped capture this nuanced symbolic meaning and identity cue, which were often difficult to uncover by quantitative survey (Clandinin and Caine, 2013). In addition, considering that the role of emotional attachment in developing progressive brand loyalty had been well established by previous studies (Theng et al., 2013), thereby, the application of narrative inquiry was considered appropriate for investigating how customers embed brands into personal stories. In contrast, case study was more suitable for analysing the organisational logic of pop-up stores, such as inventory management, event scheduling, team coordination, from a narrow retailer's perspective.

### *3.2.5 Time Horizon: Cross-sectional*

A cross-sectional study examined a population or phenomenon at a single point in time to capture its current characteristics (Melnikovas, 2018). Given that pop-up stores were deliberately temporary spaces designed to enhance immersive brand experiences, build unique brand images, and raise awareness, their short-lived nature implied that different cases may exhibit distinct characteristics affecting short-term objectives. Therefore, a cross-sectional approach was appropriate, whereas a longitudinal design would struggle to isolate these immediate effects. Moreover, this method effectively reflected the current values of Gen Z, whose digital empowerment and cultural confidence drove and reshaped the luxury fashion industry. Compared to previous generations in China, they showed distinct perceptions and behaviors, favored interactive, trendy, and playful luxury experiences over timeless, scarce, and purely physical products, thereby further expanded the traditional boundaries of pop-up stores (Kapferer & Michaut, 2019).

## **3.3 Instrument design**

### *3.3.1 Semi-structured Interview*

Semi-structured interview was the preferred technique for this research, as it helped realise individuals' views and opinions that quantitative data didn't provide (Akyildiz and Ahmed, 2021). Based on the scales reviewed in chapter 2, the measurements of brand experience and brand loyalty were subjective, which meant the success of pop-up stores could be only evaluated through the nuanced details and in-depth information provided by interviewees. Additionally, the lifestyle traits among Chinese Gen Z consumers were expected to be various and unique, and its impact on brand loyalty remained unclear. This suggested that semi-structured interview was particularly effective at capturing richest possible data, as it improvised follow-up questions flexibly based on participant's responses (Kallio et al., 2016). Therefore, semi-structured interview was considered well aligned with the research objectives.

#### **3.3.1.1 Interview Framework**

While developing the semi-structured interview framework, this study referenced The Four-Phase Process to Interview Protocol Refinement proposed by Castillo-Montoya (2016).

To begin with, prior knowledge provided a pre-determined framework for interviews (Kallio, 2016),

and the critical literature review on concepts including brand experience, brand loyalty and pop-up stores offered a conceptual basis for the interview. Several key questions were purposely linked back to the metrics from omni-channel brand experience scale (Frasquet-Deltoro et al., 2013) and Head-Heart-Hand Brand Loyalty Scale (Dapena-Baron et al., 2020), ensuring the responses from participants directly respond to research questions.

Aimed to construct inquiry-based conversations (Patton, 2015), most questions began with words such as 'how' or 'what' to encourage descriptive responses (Powell and Brubacher, 2020). In addition, semi-structured interview guide was considered to be flexible and loose, which incorporated two levels of questions, namely main themes and follow-ups (Adams, 2015). Main themes covered the core content of the research topic such as exploring the impact of specific brand touchpoints in creating meaningful brand experiences in a luxury pop-up shop. According to the interview framework, the questions initially began with the most accessible topic, namely the defining characteristics of pop-up store, followed by several aspects of brand experiences in the luxury fashion context. Finally, the main-theme questions progressively explored participants' brand loyalty through the three dimensions of Head, Hand, and Heart, moving from surface to deeper level of a truly loyal consumer.

Follow-up questions, on the other hand, were partly pre-planned in order to delve into topics that explore Objective 3 (as noted in Question 13) such as cultural confidence among Chinese Gen Z consumers, whereas others emerged spontaneously based on participants' responds. Also, at the end of the interview, the framework consisted of a final question as "does the participant want to add anything?", which offered an opportunity for participants to supplement anything they had not mentioned during the interview but considered important.

Overall, as a key limitation of semi-structured interviews, researchers might unintentionally influence participants' responses (i.e., repeatedly emphasise certain topics), which could introduce bias, the carefully designed questions in the interview framework were participants-oriented, non-leading, and also clearly worded (Kallio, 2016) to mitigate this risk. This meant the responses reflect the interviewees' genuine feelings and opinions, and allow for the discovery of unexpected

themes. For example, during the semi-structured interviews, several participants mentioned that the surprising location of luxury pop-ups elicited their willingness to visit, which was not anticipated before conducting primary research.

As for phase 3 and phase 4, after establishing the draft of interview framework, it was firstly sent to supervisor for obtaining feedback. The purpose of this process was to strengthen the reliability and validity of the interview protocol as a research tool (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). And the refined interview framework was then piloted under a condition close to real-life, with a UAL graduate student from China participating in the simulation. Since all of participants were not native English speaker, this step helped researcher to evaluate if the questions were easy to understand, and to identify any confusing aspects that require adjustment.

Above all, The complete interview protocol is presented below (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Semi-structured Interview Framework

| <b>Semi-structured Interviews Framework</b>   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <i>RQ: How do interactions with brand touchpoints in luxury fashion pop-up stores influence the formation of brand loyalty among the Chinese Gen Z focusing on their perceptions.</i> |  |  |
| <b>Main Questions</b>   | <b>Follow-up/Prompt</b>  | <b>Theory Application</b>                                |
| 1.What initially attracted you to visit this luxury fashion pop-up store?   | ●How did ephemerality (e.g., limited time/space) influence your decision?      | The Defining Characteristics - Limited Availability      |
| 2.How do interactive elements and experiential designs in luxury pop-stores shape your overall experience with the brand?   |  | The Defining Characteristics - Immersive Environment     |
| 3.How did any promotions, limited offers, or special incentives at the pop-up influence your decision to engage or buy?   |  | The Defining Characteristics - Brand Promotion           |
| 4.How do you think of event-like pop-up stores particularly when they was organised with an exclusive concept?  | ●What kinds of themes or formats stood out to you when you visited the pop-up? | The Defining Characteristics - Strategic Differentiation |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| 5.What sensory elements (sights, sounds, smells, textures, tastes) stood out to you most during your visit to the pop-up store?                          |  | Brand Experience - Sensory Dimension                        |
| 6.What feelings or emotions did you experience during the luxury fashion pop-up and in what ways did these emotions affect how you feel about the brand? | ●Can you describe a moment in the pop-up that particularly elicited those emotions?  | Brand Experience - Affective Dimension                      |
| 7.How did the pop-up store facilitate or encourage you to connect with others (friends, family, or even strangers) during your visit?                    |  | Brand Experience - Rationale Dimension                      |
| 8.How did the luxury pop-up stores shared values and beliefs that fits your lifestyle?   |  | Brand Experience - Lifestyle Dimension                      |
| 9.How easy or convenient was it for you to explore or interact with the brand in the pop-up touchpoints?   |  | Brand Experience - Pragmatic Dimension                      |
| 10. How likely are you to make a purchase at a luxury pop-up store?  |  | Hand Loyalty  |
| 11.What kind of impressions or evaluations of the brand did you form afterwards?   |  | Head Loyalty  |
| 12.How likely were you to recommend this pop-up or brand to your friends or family, or to follow the brand on social media afterwards?                   | ●What made you feel more (or less) inclined to recommend this brand or pop-up experience to your friends or share it online? | Heart Loyalty   |
| 13.How important was cultural or local relevance to your enjoyment or connection in the luxury fashion pop-ups?  | ●How does seeing local culture elements in a luxury fashion brand's pop-up affect your opinions or behaviors afterwards?     | The Lifestyle Traits of Chinese Gen Z Consumers Exploration |
| 14.What criticisms do you have of luxury pop-ups in China?   |  |   |
| 15.Final question – does the   |  |   |

|                                   |  |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| participant want to add anything? |  |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|

### 3.3.2 Focus Group

Focus group was commonly utilised when opportunities for data collection were restricted. (Akyildiz and Ahmed). Since May 2025, there were limited examples of luxury pop-up stores taking place in China, making it a suitable choice for gathering qualitative data in this constrained situation. Meanwhile, the sample of this study focused on Gen Z consumers, who placed high values on social associations (Gan, 2024). Given this behavior traits, the adoption of focus group allowed for the collection of collective views by facilitating interactions with each other (Nyumba et al., 2018).

However, the study recognised the risk of a ‘dominant voice’ in focus groups. Compared to one to one interviews, also known as the dominance effect, where a more assertive participant could steer the discussion (Nyumba et al., 2018). To mitigate this risk, the moderator asked each participant to answer in turn, ensuring everyone had a chance to speak and no single voice dominated the discussion.

#### 3.3.2.1 Focus Group Guide

As another crucial source of qualitative data, the instrument design of focus group shared several similarities with the interview framework in terms of questions design. Krueger (2014) offered a practical guidance on various types of questions, and discussed how they could be effectively applied during the focus group. Hence, the questions of the focus group guide were organised into 5 categories, namely opening, introduction, transition, key, and ending questions (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2 Focus Group Guide

| <b>Focus Group Guide</b>  |  |                           |
|---|--|---------------------------|
| <i>RQ: How do interactions with brand touchpoints in luxury fashion pop-up stores influence the formation of brand loyalty among the Chinese Gen Z focusing on their perceptions.</i> |  |                           |
| <b>Kreuger's categories</b>   | <b>Main Questions</b>  | <b>Theory Application</b> |
| Opening Question  | What was the most recent luxury pop-up store you visited, and what stood out to you? |                           |
| Introduction Questions  | What usually motivates you to visit a  |                           |

|                      |   |  |
|----------------------|---|--|
|                      | luxury fashion pop-up store?  |  |
|                      | What do you personally find appealing or unappealing about pop-up stores compared to other marketing channels?  |  |
| Transition Questions | How would you describe the overall experience you had during your visit to a luxury fashion pop-up store?   | Transition to brand experience                                     |
|                      | How has your visit to the pop-up changed your interest in the brand or what you might do with it in the future?   | Transition to brand loyalty  |
| Key Questions Part 1 | What aspects of the pop-up experience left the strongest impression on you, and why?  | Brand Experience Scale<br>(Frasquet-Deltoro et al., 2021)          |
|                      | How did you interact with the brand in the pop-up store?  |  |
|                      | What emotions or feelings did the pop-up space evoke for you?   |  |
| Key Questions Part 2 | How did the pop-up connect with your personal values, interests, or lifestyle?  | Head-Heart-Hand Brand Loyalty Scale<br>(Dapena-Baron et al., 2020) |
|                      | How likely are you to stay engaged with the brand after the pop-up, and in what ways?   |  |
| Ending Question      | Finally, is there anything else about luxury pop-up stores or your experiences with them that hasn't been discussed, but you feel strongly about and would like to add? |  |

The focus group began with an opening question designed to ease participants into the discussion by reflecting on a recent experience with a luxury fashion pop-up store. This warm-up was particularly important for this study, as group members were recruited through snowball sampling and unfamiliar with each other, which could otherwise lower their willingness to actively take part in.

Meanwhile, focus group offered a more inclusive environment that stimulated participants to discuss sensitive topics in groups (Guest et al., 2017). Hence, one of the opening questions was purposely focused on pop-up visitors' uncomfortable experiences and negative opinions, which helped obtain comprehensive advice for luxury fashion industry as Objective 4 suggested.

Then, the introduction questions explored Chinese Gen Z consumers' motivation and perceptions toward luxury pop-up stores, whereas two transition questions would direct participants conversation towards the key themes of brand experience and loyalty.

The defining difference between focus group and one to one interview was that the former was more efficient in stimulating new ideas created within a social context (Guest et al., 2017).

Therefore, in the stage of delivering key questions, the focus group moderator would encourage participants to exchange and compare their opinions, as well as discuss the areas of consensus and disagreement.

The session ended with a concluding question, giving participants a final opportunity to share thoughts on key themes and reflect on their overall views.

### **3.4 Data Collection and Analysis**

#### *3.4.1 Sampling Strategy*

As the samples required for this study are unique, participants were selected through the combination of convenience and snowball sampling. Above all, the interviewees' ages ranged from 22 to 26 years, and 75% (9/12) were female.

28 June 2025, Louis Vuitton's 'Visionary Journeys' in Shanghai stood out as the most iconic and latest case, making it an ideal choice to recruit participants. Accordingly, two respondents were randomly selected outside this pop-up store. As Gen Z had been described as 'online community builder' with strong demands to create, consume and share contents (Creevey et al., 2022), this made it possible to reach the target audiences by including those who followed the official accounts of luxury fashion retailers. Hence, four interviewees, on the other hand, were contacted via social

media platforms, namely Xiaohongshu and Weibo, over a period of three months. These online-recruited respondents showed close engagement with luxury fashion brands in their daily lives and had personally taken part in several pop-up stores since 2024.

The most compelling reason for using a dual sampling strategy was the need to save time. Given that snowball sampling had been widely used as a feasible means of recruiting participants when sought hard-to-reach population (Parker et al., 2019) such as luxury young consumers, assembling the focus group through the referrals from the previous interviewees of semi-structured interview was ideal. Moreover, according to the scale of omni-channel brand experiences (Frasquet-Deltoro et al., 2013), the social dimension referred to the concept of power relations, which linked closely to the fact the snowball sampling made use of natural social network (Noy, 2008).

All participants were asked about their educational background, occupation, and any experiences they had visiting luxury pop-up stores in the past two years before the interviews (Table 3.3) or focus group (Table 3.4).

Table 3.3 The Participant Table of Semi-structured Interviews

|                     | Participant 1   | Participant 2  | Participant 3                                       | Participant 4   | Participant 5                     | Participant 6                   |
|---------------------|---|--|---|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Gender              | Male  | Male   | Male  | Female  | Female                            | Female                          |
| Age                 | 25  | 22   | 23  | 25  | 25                                | 22                              |
| Location            | Shanghai  | Shanghai   | Hangzhou  | Beijing   | Chengdu                           | Hangzhou                        |
| Occupation          | Retail leasing executive  | College Student  | College Student                                     | Fashion Buyer Assistant   | PR Executive                      | Art Gallery Assistant           |
| Relevant Experience | Louis Vuitton's 'Visionary Journeys' (2025)<br><br>Louis Vuitton "Nóng Hó, Shanghai" (2023) | Louis Vuitton's 'Visionary Journeys' (2025)<br><br>Miu Miu Encounters (2025) | Burberry's Pavilion-Inspired Winter Boutique (2024) | Miu Miu Summer Reads (2025)<br><br>Loewe 'Hello Bike Golden Ride Experience' (2025) | LOEWE "草莓音乐节" (2023)              | Louis Vuitton X Murakami (2025) |
| *Notes              |   |  |   | Working experience in fashion industry  | Employed at a global luxury brand |                                 |

Table 3.4 The Participant Table of Focus Group

|                     | Participant 7                           | Participant 8                          | Participant 9                                 | Participant 10            | Participant 11                             | Participant 12              |
|---------------------|---|--|---|---------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Gender              | Female                                  | Female                                 | Female  | Female                    | Female                                     | Female                      |
| Age                 | 24                                      | 23                                     | 22  | 22                        | 25   | 26                          |
| Location            | Shanghai                                | Hangzhou                               | Beijing                                       | Guangzhou                 | Chengdu                                    | Chengdu                     |
| Occupation          | Fashion Content Creator                 | Fashion Content Creator                | College Student                               | College Student           | Marketing Trainee                          | College Student             |
| Relevant Experience | Hermès "Le Monde D'Hermès Kiosk" (2023) | Louis Vuitton X Yayoi Kusama (2023)    | Louis Vuitton "Beijing Fun City Guide" (2024) | Miu Miu Encounters (2025) | Chloe à la Plage Summer Activations (2025) | VERSACE 'La Vacanza' (2024) |
| *Notes              | Working experience in fashion industry  | Working experience in fashion industry |   |                           | Employed at a global luxury brand          |                             |

### 3.4.2 Data Collection Procedure

In terms of the participants recruitment and interview arrangements, apart from two participants who were recruited at the Louis Vuitton pop-up store in Shanghai, the remaining four interviews were conducted online via Teams to ensure convenience and accessibility. A total of six participants took part in the semi-structured interview. These interviews lasted over 30 minutes and reached the end until the respondents failed to give any novel views.

After that, the newly referred participants were invited to form a subsequent focus group. Since six participants were based on different cities in China, including Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen, the focus group was also conducted online via Teams. And the focus group lasted over a period of 1.5 hours to ensure a thorough discussion with detailed opinions.

### 3.4.3 Data Analysis Procedures

Qualitative data gathered would go through a cyclical and repetitive iterative process involving systematic coding steps, all of which were conducted manually.

First of all, primary coding would take place after the completion of the interview and focus group. During this phase, both structural coding and descriptive coding were combined by the researcher, to label text segments with terms relevant to the research questions. This combination reduced the

total number of codes (Belotto, 2018), as well as addressed common challenges in qualitative research with open-ended questions (Campbell et al., 2013), such as participants providing lengthy responses, digressing, or discussing multiple themes simultaneously.

Based on a list of initial codes, similar responses were condensed and then carefully grouped into several categories (Neuendorf, 2018) using different colors to construct a content analysis table (Appendix 3, p.149). For example, if Participant 1 mentioned the role of sensory marketing in forming meaningful brand experiences, the corresponding initial codes would be highlighted in pink. This process was then repeated for all transcripts. This process was then repeated for all transcripts, iterating three times to develop sub-codes, codes, and finally categories.

This step was followed by comparing these emerging themes against relevant theoretical frameworks from secondary research, in order to make modifications that responded to the research question.

Finally, the refined themes would form the basis of arguments regarding interpreting how brand touchpoints in luxury fashion pop-up stores impact brand loyalty among Chinese Gen Z customers in the next chapter.

### 3.5 Reliability and Validity Considerations

To ensure the quality and rigor of this qualitative study, considerations of reliability and validity were addressed across four key dimensions, as summarise in the table (Table 3.5) below.

Table 3.5 Trustworthiness Considerations in Multi-Method Qualitative Study

| <b>Credibility</b>   | <b>Transferability</b>  |
|--|---|
| A multi-method qualitative approach to enhance triangulation;<br>Detailed interview guides and focus group protocols were provided;<br>Pilot testing was conducted prior to the formal interviews; | Limited sample size;<br>Provide detailed contextual information about participants;<br>Participants were selected based on relevant work experience and 41.6% worked directly in the fashion industry to ensure the quality of respondents; |
| <b>Dependability</b>   | <b>Confirmability</b>   |
| The interviews and focus group were fully recorded;  | Coding was based on participants' own words rather than   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>A stable internet connection was maintained throughout the interviews and focus groups;<br/>A systematic coding process was employed;</p> | <p>the researcher's interpretations;<br/>The transcription and translation processes were documented and traceable (Appendix 3, p. 96);</p> |
|--|---|

### 3.6 Limitations of the Research Design

Nonetheless, some limitations of this research must be recognised.

First of all, all interviews and the focus group were conducted in Chinese to ensure a smooth process. However, transcripts were generated using Teams and translated into English with the assistance of AI (Appendix 3, p.96), which might have affected the accuracy of meaning. Hence, manual corrections were applied to mitigate this risk prior to coding.

Secondly, online interviews and focus groups also imposed constraints, due to their limitations in capturing non-verbal communication. Meanwhile, digital divide issues occasionally limited participants' engagement (Lobe et al., 2022). To address these risks of online environment, participants were given basic training on the software prior to the sessions, and participants were encouraged, but not required, to keep their cameras on during the discussion.

In terms of the design of the interview framework, researcher used predefined indicators, such as repeat purchases and social media sharing behaviors to identify whether visiting luxury pop-up stores contributes to the formation of brand loyalty. However, these metrics were not well-established in the context of luxury fashion, potentially overlooking subtle aspects such as the influence of cultural capital across different brands. In order to address this limitation, longitudinal methods could serve as a necessary supplement for future research. For example, delayed or unexpected brand responses that signified emotional attachment, long-term engagement, or shifts in brand preference, could be tracked through targeted retrospective interviews or longitudinal method.

### 3.7 Research Ethics

All primary research within this dissertation will be carefully conducted in line with the UAL Code of Practice on Research Ethics (2020). To elaborate, all descriptive data provided by participants were anonymised and treated with the utmost confidentiality, and subsequently stored on the

UAL-managed system, specifically OneDrive.

There were minimal risks anticipated for participants involved in this study, as the research topic did not include sensitive or potentially distressing content. Prior to commencing the study, ethical approval was formally obtained from the university, and a copy of the Research Ethics Approval Form was included in the appendix (Appendix 1, p.78).

A total of 12 participants were all provided with an informed consent form and a briefing information sheet outlining the research purposes, their rights, and data confidentiality procedures. It was clearly communicated that participation was entirely voluntary and that they were free to leave the study at any stage without consequences. Signed consent forms were also included in the appendix (Appendix 2, p.82) as documentation of participants' agreement to take part in the research.

## CHAPTER FOUR FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the primary findings of this study, and the outcome of thematic analysis directly respond to the research question (RQ).

The descriptive data were obtained through both semi-structured interviews and a focus group. English transcripts (Appendix 3, p.96) , as well as coding extracts (Appendix 3, p.149), are provided in the appendices for further reference. Through this approach, the study achieves data triangulation but also takes advantages of Gen Z consumers' social orientation and collective values, thereby providing a robust basis for the in-depth discussion of luxury marketing within the Chinese cultural context and the omni-channel environment.

In addition, as outlined in Section 3.7, this study adhered strictly to the UAL Code of Practice on Research Ethics (2020), which sets out ethical considerations and safeguards for participant confidentiality. Accordingly, each participant was assigned a coded label, for clarity, P1 refers to Participant 1, and so on.

### 4.2 Research Findings

**Research Question:** *How do interactions with brand touchpoints in luxury fashion pop-up stores influence the formation of brand loyalty among the Chinese Gen Z focusing on their perceptions?*

This research question explores the role of specific touchpoints in luxury fashion pop-up store in the formation of brand loyalty. Firstly, as a popular experience marketing tool, luxury pop-up stores can leverage immersive multi-sensory elements. Then, the second category illustrates the importance of cultural resonance and value alignment among sensitive Chinese Gen Z consumer. Finally, unlike other exclusive marketing campaigns of luxury fashion brands, pop-up stores are expected to become accessible and embrace public general.

Figure 4.1 provides an overview of the key themes and sub-categories identified through coding, which are used to structure the analysis and discussion below in relation to the research question.

**Research Question:** *How do interactions with brand touchpoints in luxury fashion pop-up stores influence the formation of brand loyalty among the Chinese Gen Z focusing on their perceptions?*

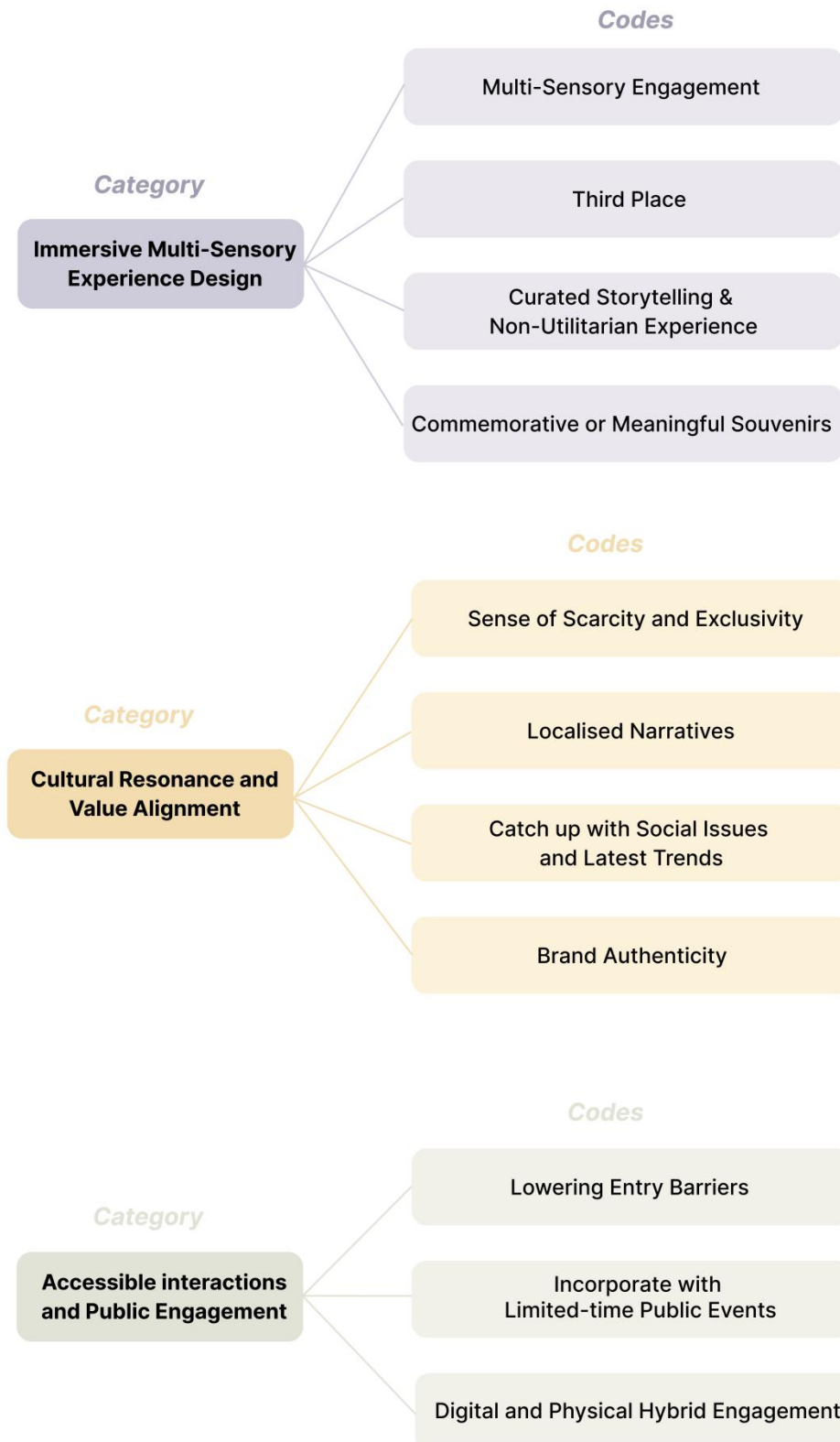


Figure 4.1 Coding Result for Research Question

#### 4.2.1 Immersive multi-sensory experience design

Participants overwhelmingly reported that multi-sensory experiences were far more influential in building lasting brand impressions and brand loyalty than transactional interactions. The shift from selling products to brands' storytelling was identified as a key differentiator for luxury pop-up stores nowadays (Figure 4.2).

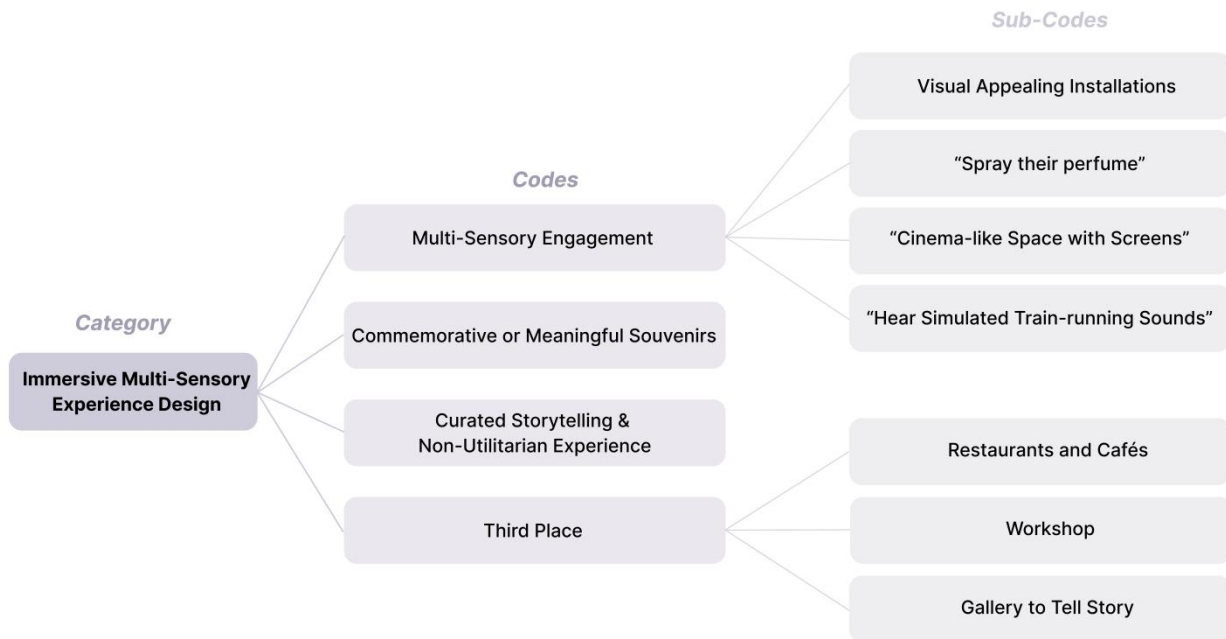


Figure 4.2 Key Theme 1: Crafting Immersive Multi-Sensory Experiences

##### 4.2.1.1 Multi-sensory engagement

First of all, multi-sensory engagement is crucial for forming brand loyalty in luxury pop-up stores among Chinese Gen Z consumers. All respondents agreed on the positive impact of sensory marketing in extending visit duration and enhancing brand perception. Immersive visual elements in luxury pop-up stores were still overwhelmingly mentioned as expected, with participants from both the interview (P1, P2, P6) and the focus group (P8, P11) highlighting that their appeal largely stems from their shareability on social media platforms.

P2: *“DATAIZED FUTURE’ pop-up installation previously at Sanlitun in Beijing gave me a strong visual impact and left a deep impression”* (Appendix 3, p.103)

P6: *“first of course visually is definitely the most important, everyone definitely looks first at*

*a glance*" (Appendix 3, p.127)

P8: *"Yayoi Kusama pop-up store has those polka dot mirrors, which are very visually attractive and special, very suitable to appear in the vlogs I edit"* (Appendix 3, p.145)

Surprisingly, although there's a wide range of visual elements in pop-up stores, mere visual appeals such as unique exterior design, are no longer capable of generating novelty among Chinese Gen Z consumers. Participants also noted the role of voices (P3), videos (P4), and smells (P5) respectively in shaping overall experience in luxury pop-up stores.

P3: *"[...] the site simulated natural bird sounds. Such sounds made me feel that the brand paid attention to details when planning this pop-up"* (Appendix 3, p.109)

P4: *"one of the rooms was transformed into a cinema-like space, with screens surrounding all sides playing films"* (Appendix 3, p.114)

P6: *"I feel that smell has a longer-lasting impact on me [...] there would be such an association in my mind"* (Appendix 3, p.127)

#### 4.2.1.2 Curated Storytelling & Non-utilitarian Experience

The second codes in this category illustrates the importance of curating storytelling and non-utilitarian experience. The main difference between pop-up store and other retailing formats lies in its exhibition-like space, which allow visitors to explore the brand's heritage and craftsmanship at their own pace. In other words, from Gen Z consumers' point of view, the main purpose of luxury pop-up stores is no longer achieving sales maximising (P1, P2, P4, P10) or trimming inventory.

P1: *"[...] hope to get fresh brand stories or culture through the pop-up store [...] If it is just about buying products, they can totally do it in regular stores"* (Appendix 3, p.98)

P2: *“offering direct discounts in pop-up stores is relatively rare, because that would damage their brand value”* (Appendix 3, p.103)

P4: *“I hope to check in at the pop-up store with an appreciative attitude, just like visiting an exhibition”* (Appendix 3, p.113)

Based on findings above, luxury fashion brands should adopt a curatorial approach to construct pop-up spaces, and the main purpose is to provide educational and inspirational value rather than driving direct sales. This ‘de-commercialised’ experience reduces Gen Z consumers’ defensive attitude toward consumption, which makes them more willing to immerse themselves and transfer their positive impressions of the space and culture onto the brand itself.

#### 4.2.1.3 Commemorative or Meaningful Souvenirs

In luxury pop-up stores, offering exclusive souvenirs that carry brand identity was highlighted by most of participants (P1, P2, P5, P6). These souvenirs serve as powerful, tangible reminders of the experience, with their perceived value deriving from their uniqueness and connection to the pop-up store, which create emotional attachments to the brand among Gen Z consumers. For example,

P2: *“some souvenirs...with a gift-like nature. I think that would make me want to share it in online communities, because there is something special and tangible”* (Appendix 3, p.105)

P5: *“it leaves a connection because it gives you a physical thing, and when you put that thing at home [...] secondly it makes you feel emotionally connected to the brand”*  
(Appendix 3, p.121)

It is worth noting that one of the respondents (P3) mentioned the application of digital souvenirs, such as the exclusive NFT of the pop-up store, as they are easy to share as well as taking environmental issues into consideration.

P3: *“I suggest these luxury brands can provide limited edition digital collectibles, I mean*

*the exclusive NFT of the pop-up store, or WeChat red packet covers”* (Appendix 3, p.111)

In order to explore whether such digital collectibles are more appealing to Gen Z consumers in China compare to traditional souvenirs, such as canvas bag, this emerging topic was thoroughly discussed in the following focus group.

The outcome of codes shows that, although respondents from focus group acknowledge the role of this emerging format of souvenirs in building brand loyalty, they placed greater importance on their social attributes (P10, P12). In this context, social attributes refer to the way souvenirs function as social currency, which facilitate and encourage interactions among visitors. More importantly, exclusive souvenirs are regarded as User-Generated Content (UGC) on social media, which can trigger secondary dissemination within digital environment. After that, Gen Z consumers feel recognised and valued these shareable contents received wide attention or is admired by peers, which in turn help the development of brand loyalty.

P10: *“when displaying these photos or personal insights on social media, it will trigger public curiosity, which in turn feeds back into the exposure of the pop-up store”* (Appendix 3, p.140)

P12: *“there were also some interactive kind of segments [...] to exchange some souvenirs”* (Appendix 3, p.134)

#### 4.2.1.4 Third place

Furthermore, luxury fashion brands find it more effective to create novelty by leveraging ‘third place’, as explained in section 2.4.2. Based on the codes from this category, the most defining feature of the ‘third place’ is its social function (P2, P4), where young consumers can interact with like-minded individuals within the pop-up store, thereby reinforcing a sense of community around the luxury brand. This suggests that luxury pop-up stores can create meaningful experiences by facilitating or encouraging connections with others. For example,

P2: *“What touched me more might be the communication with a group of like-minded people [...] I think the pop-up provides such a platform”* (Appendix 3, 104)

There are two participants (P2, P4) mentioned that the application of restaurants or cafés will extend the length of stay, thereby increasing the possibility of communicating with others. Whereas one of respondents (P3) showed strong interest if the ‘Third Place’ could provide hands-on experiences through workshops or tell the brand’s story through gallery.

P4: *“[...] like setting up cafés, which can give young people a place to sit down and chat”* (Appendix 3, p.115)

P3: *“I could inside make by myself a postcard with the Burberry logo [...] have more trust in its quality”* (Appendix 3, p.108)

In the focus group, similar hands-on experience was further explained as “getting to know the brand’s history and craftsmanship in an authentic way” (P7, P12). Though respondents held different opinions regarding the potential behavior afterwards, for example,

P7: *“allow me to understand the brand’s culture more deeply, and I post all of this content on my social media”* (Appendix 3, p.144)

P12: *“when choosing similar items, I might be more inclined to consider it”* (Appendix 3, p.144)

The former falls under head loyalty, as a positive impression has formed, while the latter builds a deeper heart loyalty through socio-emotional connection.

#### *4.2.2 Cultural Resonance and Value Alignment*

In order to cultivate brand loyalty, this theme underscores the critical importance of luxury pop-up store’s ability to authentically integrate into the local cultural context and align with the values of Chinese Gen Zs (Figure 4.3).



Figure 4.3 Key Theme 2: Achieving Cultural Resonance and Value Alignment

#### 4.2.2.1 Cultivate a Sense of Scarcity and Exclusivity

The first emerged codes concerns a sense of scarcity and exclusivity. This kind of scarcity is primarily rooted in ephemerality, as the temporary nature of luxury pop-up stores will create a sense of urgency, thereby attracting young shoppers to visit.

P1: *“there will be a kind of urgency, because I know that many luxury brands’ pop-up stores have different themes and products”* (Appendix 3, p.96)

P12: *“the attraction of pop-up stores lies in their scarcity, that is, they will disappear in a very short period of time”* (Appendix 3, p.137)

However, the exclusivity of luxury pop-up store itself, such as limited-edition products, truly drive brand loyalty. On the one hand, Chinese Gen Z consumers seek to express their individuality and self-worth (P8) through these uncommon items. Luxury pop-up stores, on the other hand, leverage consumers’ ‘fear of missing opportunity’ to prompt quick purchasing intention (P5). Such decisions are often not based on rational comparison or careful consideration, which indicates that consumers have developed hand loyalty, but have yet to form strong emotional attachment or value-based identification.

P8: *“I just mentioned, it mainly wanted to express individuality, creativity, and breaking conventions”* (Appendix 3, p.147)

P5: *“this thing can only be bought here, you might be influenced by the scene at that moment and make some irrational purchase decisions”* (Appendix 3, p.119)

#### 4.2.2.2 Localised narratives

Participants strongly favoured luxury pop-up store that utilise localised narratives, and similar topic was also thoroughly discussed in the subsequent focus group. If luxury pop-up stores successfully incorporate traditional Chinese elements, for example, situate at historical buildings (P1, P4) or operate during the traditional Chinese festival (P10).

P1: *“Like Jil Sander once rented a heritage building in Hangzhou as the venue of their pop-up store”* (Appendix 3, p.100)

P4: *“I remember once visiting a pop-up in a siheyuan (a traditional courtyard house) in Beijing [...] I think that kind of pop-up is successful, because it sparked my curiosity”* (Appendix 3, p.114)

This experience will go beyond scarcity-driven consumption, and is more likely to evoke cultural confidence and identity among Chinese Gen Z consumer, as participants perceived traditional cultures to be respected (P6) and the brand as approachable (P10). In this regard, heart loyalty will be established and demonstrated through deep personal connection with luxury fashion brands.

P6: *“searching for a kind of ‘root’ and ‘identity recognition’ [...] I shared them on my Moments, many friends were also attracted to go learn about that culture”* (Appendix 3, p.128)

P10: *“integrate Guangzhou’s culture with the brand’s art quite naturally, making the brand very down-to-earth [...] Then after this event, I felt more favorable toward the brand, no longer just buying because of the design, but also paying attention to other interesting marketing campaigns”* (Appendix 3, p.143)

However, localised narrative is always considered as a sensitive topic in China, as inappropriate

localisation might undermine brand loyalty. Roughly using overly common Chinese-themed elements, such as pandas or bamboo, fails to spark participants' curiosity or 'national pride' (P5), whereas another respondent reported that young consumers are willing to appreciate an integration of traditional Chinese culture and modern expression of luxury fashion (P4).

*P5: "I don't want to see some brands trying to do 'localisation', but it is rigidly applied [...] the constantly emphasised 'cultural confidence', are very hard to arouse curiosity or what's called 'national pride' anymore"* (Appendix 3, p.124)

*P4: "Luxury brands represent a kind of aesthetics, they always can, in a very natural way, draw inspiration from traditional culture, and then present it in a more modern way, pop-up is a very good medium"* (Appendix 3, p.117)

To sum up, in luxury pop-up stores, Chinese Gen Z consumers expect international luxury fashion brands show respect for local culture whereas maintaining their brand identity. Moreover, when the understanding of traditional Chinese cultures is superficial or the presentation becomes overly homogenised, there will be an increasing criticism as 'cultural appropriation' or 'exoticisation'.

#### 4.2.2.3 Catch Up with Social Issues and Latest Trends

According to the final codes in this category, luxury pop-up stores have to engage with social issues and catch up with latest trends among young consumers in terms of building brand loyalty. Although no consensus have been reached when it comes to the most popular topics in contemporary China and how pop-up stores should integrate into young people's lifestyles, this value alignment allows Gen Z consumers to feel respected and intrigued. The suggestions from respondents mainly focus on 2 key aspects of luxury pop-up stores, namely their concepts (P1, P6, P9, P10) and formats (P2, P4, P11).

Several example of the former are shown below,

*P1: "Miu Miu had a summer read pop-up store before [...] this pop-up event might*

*emphasize more of a 'literary atmosphere' and 'feminism'...it is a kind of lifestyle communication" (Appendix 3, p.99)*

P9: *"Louis Vuitton's Beijing Fun City Guide also has some connection with my lifestyle. I personally really like traveling and exploring cities, and it actually encourages people to walk and look around, to discover surprises in the city" (Appendix 3, p.147)*

P10: *"Dior's pop-up store used sustainable recycled cardboard to build a detachable retail mobile space [...] closely aligned with supporting handmade creation and sustainable values" (Appendix 3, p.148)*

Whereas examples of the formats include,

P2: *"Prada opened a pop-up event at a local vegetable market in Shanghai [...] like encouraging young people to pursue a healthy and organic lifestyle" (Appendix 3, p.105)*

P4: *"luxury brands collaborating with local cafes [...] maybe these tapped into young people's love for coffee" (Appendix 3, p.121)*

P11: *"Saint Laurent opened a pop-up store on Nanjing West Road in Shanghai, which is presented in the style of a bar" (Appendix 3, p.146)*

Overall, consumers utilise luxury fashion brands as a means of self-expression and perceive visiting pop-up stores as part of their identity or lifestyle, thereby enhancing heart loyalty.

#### 4.2.2.4 Brand Authenticity

Authenticity emerged as a recurring concern among respondents in terms of formation of trust and, consequently, brand loyalty, who criticised certain luxury pop-up as 'soulless' or lacking a coherent narrative. There was notable skepticism toward grand narratives around sustainability or social values that were not visibly integrated into the pop-up experience, as Gen Z consumers in China

show preference for substantive actions rather than symbolic claims. For example,

*P1: "I think many pop-up stores convey values or beliefs that are quite grand [...] But personally, I am not very interested because I feel it's just a gimmick" (Appendix 3, p.99)*

In contrast, positive cases still exist as,

*P5: "installation was made by craftsmen who used some handcrafted materials from Yunnan [...] I can feel the values and aesthetics that the brand conveys to me" (Appendix, p.120)*

What's more, beyond visually appeals, participants emphasised the importance of a thoughtful and cohesive narrative in shaping a meaningful pop-up experience.

*P6: "I think this kind of pop-up has no soul, no thought [...] many brands now doing pop-ups give me this kind of feeling, it looks very pretty on the surface, but the content is actually very empty" (Appendix 3, p.131)*

This desire for 'soul' or 'thought' refers to a curated and consistent narrative among the brand's heritage, the pop-up's theme, its design elements, and interactive activities. As elaborated by one of the participants, in June 2025, a limited-time cultural pop-up called 'Louis Vuitton City Guide', has been launched by Louis Vuitton in partnership with the Shanghai Postal Museum. As a historic building, the Shanghai Postal Museum embodies the city's communication heritage and aligns closely with Louis Vuitton's spirit of travel. In this luxury pop-up store, travel postcards and commemorative stamps replaced the classic leather goods and ready-to-wear collections as key touchpoints. These elements effectively evoked the public's memories of the city as well as reinforced Chinese Gen Z consumers' perception of the brand's authenticity.

*P2: "a collaboration between Louis Vuitton and the Shanghai Post Museum [...] let visitors interact with local culture through collecting stamps" (Appendix 3, p.103)*

### 4.2.3 Accessible interactions and Public Engagement

Thirdly, creating an approachable and publicly accessible space is crucial for luxury pop-up stores to enhance brand loyalty among Chinese Gen Z consumers (Figure 4.4).

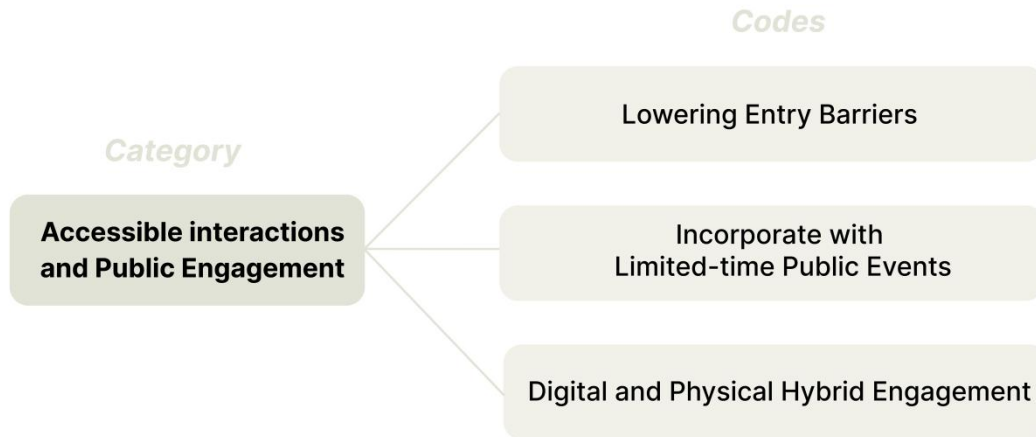


Figure 4.4 Key Theme 3: Enhance Accessible and Public Engagement

#### 4.2.3.1 Lowering Entry Barriers

In this regard, in order to counteract the discomfort caused by flagship stores or salons, lower entry barriers is considered as one of the unparalleled advantages of luxury pop-up stores among all participants.

P5: *"I think it should be facing the general audience, instead of like a VIP Salon only serving specific group of people"* (Appendix 3, p.125)

P10: *"it feels more like visiting and participating in an exhibition [...] which makes me feel more relaxed and not stressful as going to a luxury store"* (Appendix 3, p.141)

In order to further improve public accessibility, luxury pop-up stores are often preferred in urban spaces, such as neighborhood or squares, rather than atriums of shopping malls as usual.

P4: *"luxury brand pop-up stores are set up in markets, by the seaside, like in Aranya [...] more contrasting something is, the more people will remember it, and then it can be spread on social media"* (Appendix 3, p.122)

*P7: "if it's just a pop-up store in a square, or a pop-up store opened on the street, it will make many people walk in and have a look" (Appendix 3, p.139)*

These unexpected location choices can trigger affective experiences, as they evoke a sense of surprise among young consumers, and further stimulate social sharing. At the same time, by shortening the distance with the audience through interactive elements in luxury pop-up stores, Gen Z feels given personalised attention as a part of pragmatic experience, which in turn enhance heart loyalty.

#### 4.2.3.2 Incorporate with Limited-time Public Events

What's more, pop-up stores can stimulate broader public participation if they can wisely incorporate limited-time events. These temporary activities are often closely connected with themes and concepts of pop-up stores. For example,

*P2: "I know some pop-ups will set up workshops, allowing customers who book in advance to personally experience some production processes" (Appendix 3, p.115)*

*P4: "the previous Loewe and Hello Bike co-branded pop-up event [...] you can get a limited edition badge" (Appendix 3, p.117)*

*P5: "Prada and Rongzhai did something like a small market kind of concept, you could use something like medals to exchange" (Appendix 3, p.118)*

Young consumers are inclined to recommend such activities to their friends, as they provide a relatively low-cost way of relaxation (P3) and an opportunity to be there together with everyone (P5). This indicates that luxury pop-up stores create meaningful brand experiences on a relational level, which ultimately contribute to the formation of brand loyalty.

Although limited-time activities such as mini games or free sample giveaways are common strategies for luxury pop-up stores to attract visitors, highly homogenized or thematically unrelated cases can confuse or even frustrate consumers.

P2: *“you could get a perfume sample for free [...] it would dilute the sense of luxury of a luxury brand”* (Appendix 3, p.104)

And similar expression was also noted in focus group as,

P10: *“I feel that pop-up stores now are a bit too homogeneous [...]”* (Appendix 3, p.139)

#### 4.2.3.3 Digital and Physical Hybrid Engagement

The final codes in this category highlights the desire for a seamless online to offline journey. As noted by most of respondents (P2, P4, P5, P7, P8), luxury pop-up stores are not perceived as isolated offline marketing campaigns. The wide application of digital technology, extends the experience beyond the temporal and spatial limits of the physical touchpoints, thereby helping the formation of brand loyalty.

According to the interviews and focus group, young consumers are more likely to exposed to luxury pop-up stores through online channels, especially via social media platforms. This “discovery’ lowers the initial psychological barrier for Gen Z consumers. For example,

P2: *“maybe the publicity is not so adequate, like many pop-up stores I only knew through influencers, these luxury brands’ official accounts’ promotion strength is relatively limited”* (Appendix 3, p.106)

P4: *“I see on Xiaohongshu or WeChat public accounts that some brands may set up pop-up stores [...]”* (Appendix 3, p.112)

In addition, some participants also mentioned that digital elements in luxury pop-up stores provided convenience, which indicates that they fulfilled the pragmatic dimension of brand experience, and thereby contributed to the development of brand loyalty.

P6: *“there is a special guide booklet, scanning the QR code can listen to the brand story [...]”*

*I really like some VR or technology elements [...] 3D displays of the product's production process videos" (Appendix 3, p.129)*

Finally, insights from the focus group, particularly from two fashion content creators, clearly explained the crucial role of the internet in consolidating the connection between individuals and the brand after the physical visit has ended. Sharing carefully curated photos and reviews on social media was identified as a key part of participants' value proposition. And through this behavior, beyond recommend the brand, they embed personal memory with brand's aesthetics and values, which represents an advanced stage in the formation of loyalty.

*P7: "I also like that it combines digital and physical experiences, which is very helpful for my digital content creation" (Appendix 3, p.147)*

*P9: "leave their unique mark in the pop-up store [...] displaying these photos or personal insights on social media" (Appendix 3, p.140)*

#### **4.2.4 Main Findings from Thematic Analysis**

First of all, through immersive multi-sensory experience design, luxury pop-up stores have transformed from traditional retail concepts, which focus primarily on promoting sales, into temporary spaces for brand storytelling. By leveraging sensory marketing, Gen Z consumers view their visits to luxury pop-up stores as journeys to explore aesthetics and gather inspiration. After that, by maintaining exclusive souvenirs and turning these experiences into shareable content online, they form a stronger bond with the brands. In this case, brand loyalty exists by facilitating creation of the sensory, pragmatic and relational dimensions of brand experience.

What's more, brand loyalty will be built when luxury pop-up stores take Chinese Gen Z consumers lifestyles, values and social habits into consideration. In this regard, Chinese Gen Z consumers demonstrate characteristics distinct from previous generations in terms of their perception of luxury fashion. On the one hand, the short lifespan of pop-up stores and limited edition included helped created a sense of scarcity, which encourage young consumers wo exhibit impulsive purchasing

behavior (hand loyalty). And this reflects that the consumption of luxury goods has become a means of expressing individuality. On the other hand, if these luxury pop-up stores can authentically incorporate local elements or consider social issues, which fulfill young consumers desire for self-brand value congruence, and can thereby develop a more advanced stage of brand loyalty (heart loyalty).

Finally, accessible interactions and public engagement are considered another key dimension in the formation of brand loyalty. Inclusive atmosphere sets luxury pop-up stores apart from flagship stores and strengthen its ability to embrace general public. Public-facing activities, such as workshops, mini games and free sample giveaways with viral potential, will stimulate social buzz. Also, the application of digital technology will extends the experiences beyond the temporal and spatial limits of the physical environment, which might lead to the passionate involvement, as the defining of heart loyalty suggests.

#### **4.3 Summary of the Chapter**

Based on the result of thematic analysis, this chapter outlines how interactions in luxury pop-up stores contribute to the formation of brand loyalty among Chinese Gen Z consumers, which directly address the research question. The outcome confirms that loyalty is not cultivated through sales strategies such as offering discount, instead, but through the creation of an immersive, value-driven and socially engaging experience.

In general, the descriptive data from both semi-structured interviews and focus group enhance data triangulation, which provides a solid foundation for the next chapter to discuss these findings within the context of existing theoretical frameworks, and to explore their managerial implications as well as directions for subsequent research.

## CHAPTER 5 Discussion and Conclusion

### 5.1 Discussion

#### 5.1.1 Linking Findings to Aim

This dissertation aims to investigate the key factors regarding brand experience in luxury fashion pop-up stores that contribute to the formation of brand loyalty among Chinese Gen Z consumers. The findings presented in Chapter 4 and discussed in Chapter 5 directly address this aim by identifying three critical drivers of loyalty: (i) ***immersive multi-sensory engagement***, (ii) ***alignment with consumers' cultural values and lifestyles***, and (iii) ***opportunities for social interaction and co-creation***. These outcomes differ from any other previous studies, as this research focus on Chinese Gen Z consumers, rooted in current omni-channel environment, and acknowledge the role of pop-up stores in cultivating brand loyalty. Based on these arguments, the dissertation finally provides practical guidelines for luxury marketers.

#### 5.1.2 Linking Findings to Objective 2

**Objective 2:** *To identify how luxury pop-up stores leverage experience marketing to build brand loyalty in China.*

Drawing on the Scale of Omni-channel Retailer Brand Experience (Frasquet-Deltoro et al., 2013), the findings of this study reveal that luxury pop-up stores leverage multiple dimensions of brand experience to enhance loyalty. To be specific, an immersive environment combined with competent storytelling, a carefully curated sense of scarcity, and selective accessibility to the general public work together to create memorable and meaningful interactions.

Among them all, one of the most remarkable outcomes highlights the role of an immersive environment in enabling effective brand storytelling within luxury pop-up stores. Based on the results of the thematic analysis, Gen Z consumers favoured that luxury pop-up stores should function as temporary exhibitions where consumers can explore a brand's history, heritage as well as products through sensory marketing. This aligns with the defining characteristics of pop-up stores, namely their immersive environment (De Lassus and Freire, 2014) and strategic differentiation (Warnaby et al., 2015). More importantly, to protect the immersive experience from

the influence of utilitarian objectives such as driving sales, luxury pop-up stores should avoid offering direct discounts or focusing solely on product display areas. Interestingly, this finding contradicts Henkel et al. (2022), who argued that even these temporary shops not primarily intended for sales could still encourage consumer purchases within the store. These contrasting findings might be because pop-up stores have usually been seen as a sales-driven retail concept (Mađarac et al., 2020), rather than as a strategy for experience marketing.

In addition, scarcity is another source of meaningful brand experience in luxury pop-up stores. While previous studies primarily attributed this scarcity to the temporal and spatial limitations of pop-up stores (Henkel and Toporowski, 2021), this research, by contrast, identified that exclusive items (e.g., limited edition products) and the scarcity of concept itself are considered more crucial for Gen Z consumers. The former is expected to trigger impulsive consumption, which aligns with Xie et al.(2017) 's definition of behavioral brand experience, and lead to 'hand loyalty.' Whereas the latter can cultivate a higher level of 'heart loyalty' by leveraging the lifestyle dimension, if it enables consumers to 'share the values and beliefs the brand embodies' (Frasquet-Deltoro et al., 2013).

Lastly, luxury pop-up stores encourage young consumers to share their experiences with others by increasing accessibility and welcoming the wider public. This partly concurs with the qualitative research by Alexander and Ling (2023), who noted that pop-up stores allow for individuals to feel a sense of belonging to the culture or community they aspire to. However, Alexander and Ling (2023) mainly describe pop-up store as a physical space to exchange ideas, while this study focuses on omni-channel brand experience and find that the popularity of digital communities further alleviates the discomfort of offline socialising. For instance, luxury pop-up stores can effectively stimulate social sharing by offering limited-edition souvenirs, launching online check-in activities and challenges, and providing immersive interactive installations, all of which encourage visitors to share their experiences on social media. In this regard, advocacy, co-creation, and other forms of digital engagement can also be interpreted as kinds of brand loyalty. One possible explanation for this difference is that Alexander and Ling (2023) conducted their study before the COVID-19 pandemic, when retailers primarily interacted with consumers through physical activations and focused on UK Millennials. In contrast, this study reflects the contemporary omni-channel

experiential market and considers the higher digital fluency of Chinese Gen Z as digital natives.

### *5.1.3 Linking Findings to Objective 3*

**Objective 3:** *To explore how Chinese Gen Z consumers' new perception of luxury impact the formation of brand loyalty in the context of luxury pop-up stores.*

This study has underscored the role of different luxury consumption concept and lifestyle habits of Chinese Gen Z consumers in forming brand loyalty. To sum up, aspiration for experiences instead of physical luxury products, cultural confidence, the desire for self-expression, and the need for group conformity collectively drive Chinese Gen Z consumers to build emotional attachment beyond mere transactional relationships.

To begin with, compare to previous generations, young luxury consumers support the idea that accumulating meaningful experiences is more important than accumulating tangible luxury goods. They have started seeking novel, challenging, and culturally exploratory experiences (Atkinson and Kang, 2022), which explains the popularity of luxury pop-up stores in China, and reflect the shift of traditional notions of luxury from exclusivity or status signaling. When it comes to the impact of specific lifestyle traits in generating meaningful experience and cultivating brand loyalty, while a qualitative research by Gupta et al. (2023) suggested that emerging technology such as AI, AR, VR, has potential achieve seamless channel management as well as coordinate a consistent luxury experience across channels. This study, by contrast, identifies that these technologies are valued by Chinese Gen Z consumers especially when it enhances the experiential and narrative aspects of the visit. For example, the QR code on the brochure provided allows visitors to explore the 'dreamy world' immersively without any assistance from the staff.

Next, if luxury pop-up store can authentically utilise local narratives, such as incorporating Chinese cultural elements (e.g., historical architecture, traditional festival), will build emotional attachment with Chinese Gen Z consumers. An extensive quantitative study across six major luxury markets also shared similar perspective, as younger generations are more likely to identify with their national culture instead of a culture associated with their age group (Kapferer and Valette-Florence, 2022). Applied to China, their preferences for local culture, tradition, and heritage mutually reinforce the

previously mentioned concept of 'cultural confidence'. Hence, the findings of this study demonstrate this outcome is still applicable to Chinese Gen Z consumers. Meanwhile, prior work also emphasized that the cultural symbolism associated with the luxury brand can be meaningful for consumers, helping them build group identity, express personal identity, or gain recognition from others (Ting and Ahn, 2024). Paradoxically, the participants from this study indicated that the significance of local narratives was not intended to highlight personal uniqueness or to integrate into a community, instead, it helps bring the brand closer to local consumers and to convey the brand's authenticity.

The research additionally noted that Chinese Gen Z consumers strive to strike a balance between conformity and the expression of personal uniqueness when it comes to luxury consumption. In a collectivist cultural context, respondents still considered the formation of brand loyalty to rely primarily on interactions within social groups (Shin et al., 2022), as they regarded the experience in luxury pop-up stores as excellent material for sharing on social media and gaining others' recognition. However, Chinese Gen Z consumers also seek to showcase their personal value, individuality, and identity (Zhan and Ye, 2012) through the sense of scarcity created by pop-up stores. This confirms a cross-cultural study of Wang et al. (2022), which shows that both the private level (self-consistency and self-esteem) and the public level (social consistency and social approval) jointly shape brand preferences in terms of luxury consumption. In this study, sharing experiences across multiple social media platforms reflects the public level, whereas immersive experiences or personalised interactions correspond to the private level. This complex perception can be attributed to the 'bandwagon effect' driven by the widespread use of social media, while young luxury consumers are increasingly investing in luxury products and experiences that reflect their personal values, such as environmental sustainability and self-development.

#### *5.1.4 Managerial Implications*

In general, this study offers marketing suggestions to further enhance brand loyalty among Chinese Gen Z consumer through pop-up stores. Specifically, luxury fashion retailers should regard pop-up stores as an experience marketing strategy, not only to generate short-term buzz or achieve retail objectives, but also to strengthen cultural identification, enrich brand identity, and nurture consumer

community. These managerial implications are timely in today's digital era, as brand loyalty heavily depends on how brands deliver shareable, interactive, and co-created experiences.

The flexibility of pop-up stores allows them to serve as a platform for local culture, latest social issues, and unique aesthetics, which helps to evoke consumers' emotions as well as create a positive impression of the brand. From a retailer's perspective, pop-up stores can emphasise craftsmanship, heritage, and art to reinforce a luxury brand's value and reduce the risks linked to the industrialisation of luxury goods (Chailan, 2018). What's more, an editorial study from Osburg et al. (2020) cautioned that luxury consumers pay more attention on the brands that represent their values and lifestyles. Therefore, luxury pop-up stores are expected to help consumers pursue their ideal self by incorporating themes such as sustainability, feminism, and outdoor activities.

Another important insight for managing a luxury pop-up store is to consider how easily its content can be shared, which provides opportunities for viral spread on social media. As pointed by Ye and Kim (2024), as a generation closely connected with digital community, Gen Z consumers' luxury consumption is not only motivated by their desires to own luxury goods, but also the extended consumption experiences that they can share with others. These sharable experiences will serve as a form of social recognition and reinforce engagement with the brand. This reflects the inclusive view of brand loyalty in the digital era, where luxury fashion brands prioritise consumers' participation in co-created cultural interactions instead of a narrow focus on transactional repurchase behavior. In this regard, pop-up stores are recommended to incorporate interactive installations (e.g., photo booth) or workshops, enabling visitors to become part of the co-creation process, and thereby strengthening their sense of belonging to the brand community.

This study also challenges the traditional notion that luxury retail is always exclusive. When it comes to the role of luxury pop-up store in shaping more relaxing atmosphere, Klein et al. (2016) shared similar advice to the respondents in this study, as pop-up stores are an effective marketing tool to embrace both existing and new target audiences. For example, luxury pop-up store can lower the barrier of engagement with ordinary people by hosting temporary events or setting up in open, urban locations (e.g., square, neighborhood). This not only helps build a more inclusive,

exciting and attractive in-store environment, but also stimulates word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing. To augment the reach of luxury brands, Debenedetti et al. (2025) further suggest generating localised retail experiences to evoke a sense of 'closeness'. For example, the pop-up bookstores jointly created by the French luxury house Louis Vuitton and the Shanghai-based coffee brand Manner were frequently mentioned by young luxury consumers and regarded as a sensational case. However, the managerial challenge lies in avoiding diluting luxury brand values by keeping balance between its exclusivity and accessibility.

Finally, the findings of this study have implications for the creation of immersive environment in luxury pop-up stores. Since young consumers tend to show boredom and resistance with luxury pop-up stores designed to boost sales generations, luxury fashion brand has thus far preferred a non-commercial retail environment, and instead use sensory marketing to set up an "exhibition-like" space. For example, music, texture, scent, taste, and visual merchandising are widely used tools to immerse visitors in the experience of fashion pop-up shops (Surchi, 2011). In this regard, the introduction of the "Third Place" (Alexander, 2019), such as markets, galleries, cafés, and restaurants, offers luxury brands a new solution to create social, experiential spaces. These spaces encourage longer engagement and repeat visits, making them highly viable for luxury fashion retailers. In addition, pop-up stores should be appealing, and allow visitors to engage in unique, personalised interactions and experiences with the brand through innovative technologies and digital features (Henkel et al., 2022).

## **5.2 Final Conclusions**

### *5.2.1 Originality and Contribution to Scholarship*

This study is the first to conceptualise the role of interactions with touchpoints in luxury pop-up stores in cultivating brand loyalty, with a particular focus on Gen Z consumers' perceptions and the Chinese cultural context. Through qualitative research, it reveals that for luxury fashion brands to effectively leverage pop-up stores as a tool for experiential marketing in China, focusing solely on the in-store brand experience is insufficient. Attention must be given to differences between Chinese Gen Z consumers and previous generations in terms of luxury consumption perceptions. These findings advance the theoretical understanding of luxury brand marketing particularly on

pop-up stores, Chinese Gen Z consumers, brand experience, and brand loyalty.

### 5.2.1.1 Qualitative Conceptual Framework

Drawing on the main findings above, the most outstanding contribution for this study is to propose a comprehensive framework (Figure 5.1) for luxury fashion retailers to build brand loyalty through pop-up stores among Chinese Gen Z consumers, which considers the different luxury consumption concept and shopping habits of this target group, and rooted in the unique Chinese context.

Dimensions shown in green represent elements already identified in existing literature, those in blue indicate corroboration between the study's findings and prior research, while aspects in pink reflect new insights emerging from this study. This framework can be used by scholars for their research on related themes, while also offering practical guidance for the luxury fashion industry.

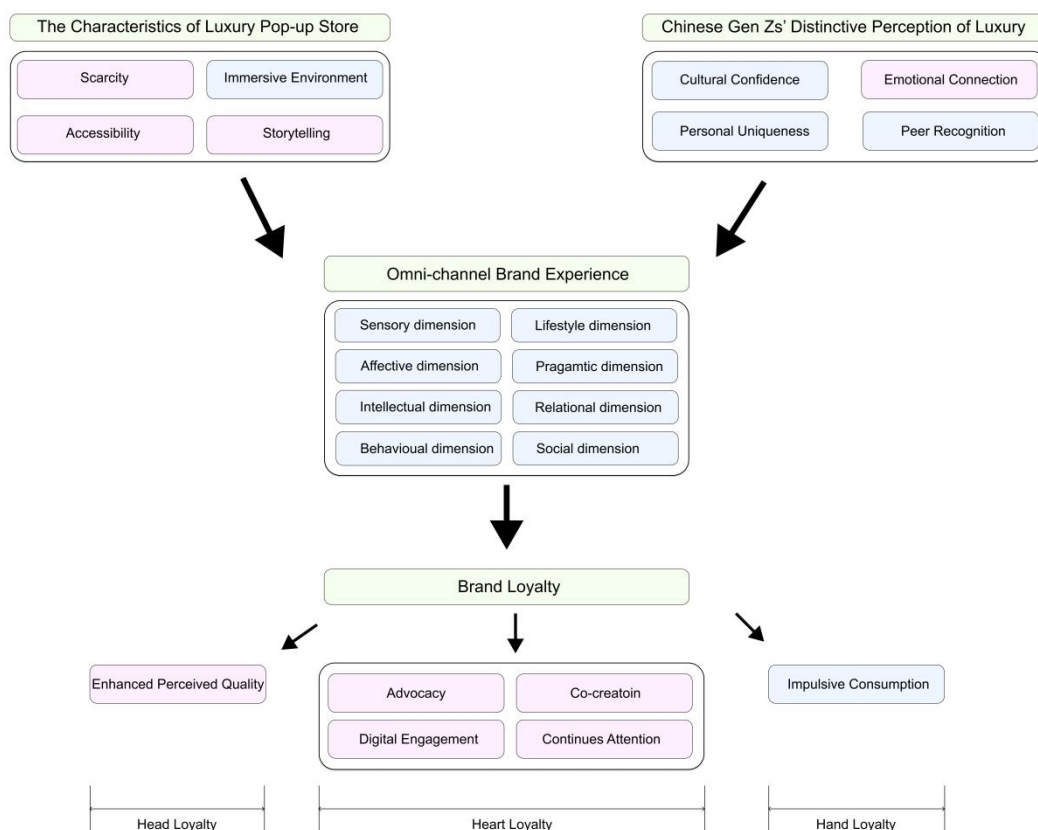


Figure 5.1 Conceptual Framework of Brand Loyalty in Luxury Pop-up Stores

### 5.2.1.2 Theoretical Contribution

First of all, the findings suggest that pop-up stores contribute to enhancing long-term relationships between consumers and brands. As a kind of experience marketing strategy, existing literature

mainly focuses on its role in triggering buzz and other brand-related outcomes (Henkel et al., 2022), which do not necessarily translate into brand loyalty (Alexander and Ling, 2023). However, this study shows that apart from impulsive consumption (hand loyalty) driven by scarcity, behaviors such as advocacy, co-creation and digital engagements reflect a deeper level of loyalty among Gen Z consumers. These outcomes differ from previous studies and thus help broaden the conceptual boundaries of brand loyalty within luxury fashion marketing environment.

Second, the omni-channel brand experience scale (Frasquet-Deltoro et al., 2013) was applied in interpreting our findings. Until now, previous research has only assumed that the established dimensions of brand experience, namely sensory, affective, intellectual, and behavioral, remain relevant in the context of luxury pop-up stores. This study not only confirms these links but also highlights the emerging dimension, particularly lifestyle and relational factors as significant influences. These findings are partly in line with Alexander and Ling (2023), and demonstrate that luxury fashion brands seek to encourage visitors' interaction with a range of activities in pop-up stores. To elaborate, on the one hand, pop-up stores leverage lifestyle dimension to cater to luxury consumers' aspiration for cultural development and other deeper meaning of their life. Relational dimension, on the other hand, is expected to create a kind of 'attention capital' (i.e., share personal perceptions online, cultivate and maintain a substantial followers), which can be regarded as status symbols in digital environment (Atkinson and Kang, 2021). These insights further support the concept of 'new luxury' and contribute to the existing literature on luxury consumption.

### *5.2.2 Limitations and Areas for Further Research*

This study is subject to several limitations, which provide valuable references for further research.

To begin with, this qualitative study might overstate the influence of pop-up store design, as the impact of core brand values, such as brand identity, brand heritage, and craftsmanship, was not considered when exploring the formation of brand loyalty. For example, the Loewe's longstanding dedication to art, tradition, and culture, rather than the temporary nature or immersive design of the pop-up itself, might contribute to the popularity of 'Loewe Crafted World' among Chinese Gen Z consumers. In order to offer more practical and applicable suggestions for the luxury fashion

industry, future research is expected to adopt a comparative case study approach to analyse multiple iconic luxury pop-up stores in China, as this would enable a more nuanced understanding of how core brand values interact with specific touchpoints in luxury pop-up stores to enhance brand loyalty.

In addition, the relatively small sampling size as well as the geographic restrictions of the respondents might be challenged. Although respondents were selected based on their experiences with luxury pop-up stores over the past two years. As most of these campaigns took place in first-tier cities such as Shanghai due to brand's strategic priorities in China, all participants were drawn from major cities. Consequently, regional differences in consumer behaviour and marketing preferences might restrict the applicability of these recommendations in other cities. Future research could use stratified sampling in tier-2/3 cities to examine the influence of local cultural elements (e.g., localised traditions) on luxury pop-up dynamics.

Finally, considering the limited time, this study adopts a cross-sectional time horizon, which refers to the collection of data at a specific point in time (Melnikovas, 2018). However, brand loyalty might require different loyalty metrics over time to predict future loyalty levels (Jai et al., 2022), whereas the behaviors measured in this study, such as immediate purchase, recommendations, co-creation, and social interactions, can only provide a superficial assessment of whether consumers develop brand loyalty immediately after visiting a pop-up store. Latent behaviors, such as consistently following the brand's marketing campaigns or showing less sensitivity to price in future purchases, cannot be adequately captured in a cross-sectional study. Hence, scholars could consider employing a longitudinal time horizon for further research, and explore whether consumers exhibit stable repeat purchase behaviors or increased emotional attachment to the brand over time after visiting luxury pop-up stores.

### **5.3 Overall Summary**

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore how luxury pop-up stores contribute to brand loyalty among Chinese Gen Z customers. Using a combination of semi-structured interviews and a focus group, participants provided in-depth descriptive data into their experiences in luxury pop-up stores

in China. By comparing thematic analysis findings with existing literature, the outcome underscores that immersive design, lifestyle alignment, and inclusive engagement play a central role in enhancing loyalty among target audience. Finally, this study enrich the knowledge of brand experience and brand loyalty as well as offering managerial implications for luxury fashion marketers by proposing a conceptual framework based on the Chinese cultural context and the omni-channel environment.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1 - Research Ethics Approval Form

|   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <b>NAME: Qianqi Yan</b>   |                                     |
| <b>COLLEGE: London College of Fashion</b>   |                                     |
| <b>IF YOUR RESEARCH INVOLVES PARTICIPANTS, PLEASE COMPLETE QUESTIONS 1 TO 9. IF NOT, GO TO QUESTION 10 BELOW.</b>   |                                     |
| <b>1. Will the participants be: (please tick as appropriate)</b>  |                                     |
| Students at the University  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Participants outside the University   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Other<br>(please specify)   | <input type="text"/>                |
| <b>2. How will participants be recruited and how many will be involved?</b>   |                                     |
| <p>This study will adopt both semi-structured interviews and a focus group approach. A total of 12 participants will be recruited through convenience and snowball sampling. In terms of semi-structured interviews, 6 interviewees will be involved. Among them, 2 participants will be randomly recruited outside Louis Vuitton's "Visionary Journeys" pop-up store in Shanghai, while the remaining 4 will be recruited via social media platforms Xiaohongshu and Weibo. The focus group, by contrast, will consist of 6 members, who will be recommended and screened based on suggestions from the first-stage interviewees.</p>  |                                     |
| <b>3. What will the participants be asked to do? (Explain in terms appropriate to a lay person)</b>   |                                     |
| <p>Participants will be asked to take part in either a 30-45 minutes semi-structured interview or a 1.5 hours focus group. A series of questions about their past experience visiting luxury pop-up stores, as well as their views on this retail format.</p>   |                                     |
| <b>4. What potential risks to the interests of participants do you foresee and what steps will you take to minimise those risks? (A participant's interests include their physical and psychological well-being, their commercial interests; and their rights of privacy and reputation).</b>   |                                     |
| <p>There are minimal risks anticipated for participants involved in this study, as the research topic does not include sensitive or potentially distressing content. Although all semi-structured interviews and focus groups will be fully recorded for research purposes including thematic analysis, the recordings will be securely stored and the sessions will be conducted in a respectful, voluntary, and non-judgmental environment.</p> <p>No identifying personal information will be disclosed in the final dissertation, and all data will be anonymised and stored securely. Social media users recruited from Xiaohongshu or Weibo will be contacted privately and respectfully, with no public reference made to their accounts.</p> <p>However, during the focus group, participants will be in the same (virtual) room, which may pose certain minimal risks. Some may feel uncomfortable or reluctant to share their honest opinions in front of others. To address this, all participants will be informed in advance that the discussion will remain confidential and not be shared or used by others, encouraging open and respectful dialogue. Additionally, since the session will take place via Teams, technical issues such as unstable internet may affect data quality. To minimise this risk, brief notes will be taken alongside the recording to ensure key information is retained in case of technical failure.</p> |                                     |
| <b>5. What potential risks to yourself as research student do you foresee and what steps will you take to minimise those risks? (e.g. does your research raise issues of personal safety for you or others involved in the project, especially if taking place outside working hours or off University premises)</b>  |                                     |
| <p>Considering that Louis Vuitton's "Visionary Journeys" pop-up store in Shanghai is a key and recent case, two participants will be recruited directly outside this location. This means the researcher will need to conduct fieldwork on-site in Shanghai. Potential risks include travel-related safety and working outside standard university premises and hours. To minimise these risks, the researcher will plan visits during daylight hours, stay in contact with supervisors or colleagues, and follow general personal safety precautions while on site.</p>  |                                     |

6. Please attach a copy of proposed written consent form and information sheet to be given to participants. If you are not obtaining written consent or supplying an information sheet, please explain the reasons for this.

The researcher has uploaded a template of the Participant Consent Form to OneDrive. It can be accessed via the following link: [MAP / Participant Consent Template.docx](#)

Attached:



7. Does your project involve children or vulnerable adults e.g. a person with a learning disability? YES/NO  
If YES, you must refer to the Guidance Note on Informed Consent in the [Code of Practice on Research Ethics](#) and obtain a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check.

Please tick to confirm this has been obtained:

Please refer to the guidance note on data protection available at <http://www.arts.ac.uk/research/researching-atual/researcher-support/> before answering the next question. Please consider the value of coding; the importance of secure storage and disposal of personal information, particularly sensitive data (e.g. records of health, origin, criminal record etc.)

**8. Will you be obtaining personal data from any of the participants? YES/NO**

**If YES:**

**(a) Give details:**

The qualitative data gathered for this study consists of rich, descriptive accounts of participants' personal experiences, perceptions, and emotional responses related to luxury fashion pop-up stores. All interviews and the focus group session were audio-recorded with informed consent and transcribed word for word for later analysis. The data includes detailed, first-hand stories from Chinese Gen Z participants about their sensory, emotional, and social experiences in luxury fashion pop-up stores. Additionally, personal data might be collected includes participants' names and contact information (such as phone numbers or social media handles) solely for recruitment and scheduling purposes. Additionally, demographic details like age and gender may be collected to provide context for analysis.

**(b) How will you store and use this information during the course of your research?**

All of data will be stored on UAL managed system, namely OneDrive.

**(c) What parts of this information will be confidential?**

All of this information will be confidential.

**(d) Will you separate personal identifiers from other (coded) personal data, and if so how will you safeguard the key?**

No

**(e) Will personal data be irreversibly anonymised or, if you have separated the data, will the linking code between the two databases be destroyed?**

Yes

**(f) At the conclusion of your research:**

**(i) Which of your data sets do you intend to retain personally for use in future research?**

None of the data sets will be retained personally.

**(ii) Which do you intend to archive for other researchers?**

None of the data sets.

**(iii) Which do you intend to destroy?**

All video recording and any other identifiers within one year.

**(g) Depending on your answers to (f):**

**(i) If you intend to destroy certain data sets at the conclusion of the research:**

**(ii.i) Explain why this is appropriate**

This is appropriate as all data will be used only for the completion of my MA Master's Project and is not required beyond this scope.

**(ii.ii) How will you ensure that the data will be disposed of in such a way that there is no risk of its confidentiality being compromised**

It will be deleted from UAL managed platforms.

**9. Will payments to participants be made? YES/NO**

(If YES, please state amount and whether payment is for out-of-pocket expenses, or a fee)

**10. Will any restrictions be placed on the publication of results? YES/NO**

(If YES, please state the nature of the restrictions, e.g. details of any confidentiality agreement)

11. I confirm my responsibility to deliver the project in accordance with the Code of Practice on Research Ethics of the University of the Arts London (the University). In signing this form I am also confirming that:

- a) The form is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.
- b) There is no potential material interest that may, or may appear to, impair the independence and objectivity of researchers conducting this project.
- c) I undertake to conduct the project as set out in the application unless deviation is agreed by the University and to comply with any conditions set out in the letter sent by the relevant College Research body and/or the University's Research Ethics Sub-Committee.
- d) I understand and accept that the ethical propriety of this project may be monitored by the relevant College Research body and/or the University's Research Ethics Sub-Committee.

Signature of Researcher: Qianqi Yan Date: 18/07/2025

12. I support this project and have reviewed it with the applicant:

Signature of

Supervisor:  Date: 28 - 07 - 2025

# INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

## PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Project Title: The Glory Days Are Over? A Pragmatic Study on How Luxury Fashion Pop-up Stores Generate Meaningful Experiences to Build Brand Loyalty among Chinese Gen-Z Consumers?

Student Lead: Qianqi Yan

Email address: [q.yan0220241@arts.ac.uk](mailto:q.yan0220241@arts.ac.uk)

Phone number: +86 15858657579

Dear XXX,

You are invited to participate in:

A dissertation exploring: How do interactions with brand touchpoints in luxury fashion pop-up stores influence the formation of brand loyalty among the Chinese Gen Z focusing on their perceptions. This study aims to understand the defining characteristics of luxury pop-up store and their role in generating brand experience. Additionally, considering the unique lifestyle traits such as cultural confidence of Chinese Gen Z consumers, their engagements and attitudes towards these novel marketing strategy and luxury fashion will be thoroughly investigated within this research.

Please read this sheet carefully and be confident that you understand its contents before deciding whether to participate.

### ***Why have you been approached?***

You have been invited because you fit the profile of individuals who are Chinese Gen Z consumer with a deep understanding of the luxury fashion in China. More importantly, you have personally experienced at least 2 luxury fashion pop-up stores within past two years.

### ***If I agree to participate, what will I be required to do?***

You are required to take part in a semi-structured interview or a focus group, where you will be asked a series of pre-designed questions. Most of these questions will focus on your perceptions of luxury fashion, your experiences in luxury pop-up stores, and your personal lifestyle traits.

### ***What are the possible risks or disadvantages?***

There is minimal potential risk or disadvantage. However, you may feel some discomfort when reflecting on certain topics or sharing personal opinions towards your previous experience in luxury pop-up stores. You are free to skip any questions or withdraw at any time without consequence.

### ***What are the benefits associated with participation?***

By participating, you will contribute to valuable research that may influence how luxury fashion companies shapes its future marketing strategies via pop-up stores in China. Your input will help offer practical guidelines when considering the unique lifestyle traits of Chinese Gen Z consumers regarding their luxury fashion consumption.

### ***What will happen to the information I provide?***

The information you provide will be used solely for research purposes, which will form the basis of the

thematic analysis (e.g., coding). Your responses provided will be anonymised and treated with the utmost confidentiality, and all of data will be stored on UAL managed system, namely OneDrive.

***What are my rights as a participant?***

- The right to withdraw from participation at any time
- The right to request that any recording cease
- The right to have any data withdrawn and destroyed, provided it can be reliably identified, and provided that so doing does not increase the risk for the participant.
- The right to be de-identified in any photographs intended for public publication, before the point of publication
- The right to have any questions answered at any time.

***Whom should I contact if I have any questions or want to withdraw my consent?***

Name: Qianqi Yan

Email Address: [q.yan0220241@arts.ac.uk](mailto:q.yan0220241@arts.ac.uk)

**PRIVACY NOTICE**

Your personal data will be processed by UAL on its managed systems for research purposes with your explicit consent.

Your personal data will be anonymised *between June and September 2025* and deleted on your request or *within 1 year* after the project end date.

You can find more information about UAL and your privacy rights at [www.arts.ac.uk/privacy-information](http://www.arts.ac.uk/privacy-information).

## CONSENT TEMPLATE - Participant 1

1. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the information sheet
2. I agree to participate in the research project as described
3. I agree to the items checked below:
  - to be interviewed
  - that my voice will be audio recorded
  - to take part in a focus group
  - that my photo / a film of me will be taken
  - to be observed and for field notes to be taken
  - that information obtained may be published in an anonymised form.
4. I acknowledge that:
  - (a) I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied (unless follow-up is needed for safety).
  - (b) The project is for the purpose of research. It may not be of direct benefit to me.
  - (c) The privacy of the personal information I provide will be safeguarded and only disclosed where I have consented to the disclosure or as required by law.
  - (d) The security of the research data will be protected during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published. Any information which will identify me will not be used.

### Participant's Consent

'I agree to the above as indicated and give my explicit consent under GDPR Art.6(1)(a) and Art.9(2)(a) for my personal data to be processed by UAL as indicated on this form, including any special category data I may choose to provide'

Participant:  Date: 20 - 08 - 2025  
(Signature)

**Participants should be given a copy of this after it has been signed.**

## CONSENT TEMPLATE - Participant 2

1. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the information sheet
2. I agree to participate in the research project as described
3. I agree to the items checked below:
  - to be interviewed
  - that my voice will be audio recorded
  - to take part in a focus group
  - that my photo / a film of me will be taken
  - to be observed and for field notes to be taken
  - that information obtained may be published in an anonymised form.
4. I acknowledge that:
  - (a) I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied (unless follow-up is needed for safety).
  - (b) The project is for the purpose of research. It may not be of direct benefit to me.
  - (c) The privacy of the personal information I provide will be safeguarded and only disclosed where I have consented to the disclosure or as required by law.
  - (d) The security of the research data will be protected during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published. Any information which will identify me will not be used.

### Participant's Consent

'I agree to the above as indicated and give my explicit consent under GDPR Art.6(1)(a) and Art.9(2)(a) for my personal data to be processed by UAL as indicated on this form, including any special category data I may choose to provide'

Participant: Shuyuan Xu Date: 05/08/2025  
(Signature)


**Participants should be given a copy of this after it has been signed.**

## CONSENT TEMPLATE - Participant 3

1. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the information sheet
2. I agree to participate in the research project as described
3. I agree to the items checked below
  - to be interviewed
  - that my voice will be audio recorded
  - to take part in a focus group
  - that my photo / a film of me will be taken
  - to be observed and for field notes to be taken
  - that information obtained may be published in an anonymised form.
4. I acknowledge that:
  - (a) I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied (unless follow-up is needed for safety).
  - (b) The project is for the purpose of research. It may not be of direct benefit to me.
  - (c) The privacy of the personal information I provide will be safeguarded and only disclosed where I have consented to the disclosure or as required by law.
  - (d) The security of the research data will be protected during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published. Any information which will identify me will not be used.

### Participant's Consent

'I agree to the above as indicated and give my explicit consent under GDPR Art.6(1)(a) and Art.9(2)(a) for my personal data to be processed by UAL as indicated on this form, including any special category data I may choose to provide'

Participant:  Date: 12 - 08 - 2025  
(Signature)

**Participants should be given a copy of this after it has been signed.**



## CONSENT TEMPLATE - Participant 5

1. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the information sheet
2. I agree to participate in the research project as described
3. I agree to the items checked below:

- to be interviewed
- that my voice will be audio recorded
- to take part in a focus group
- that my photo / a film of me will be taken
- to be observed and for field notes to be taken
- that information obtained may be published in an anonymised form.

4. I acknowledge that:

- (a) I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied (unless follow-up is needed for safety).
- (b) The project is for the purpose of research. It may not be of direct benefit to me.
- (c) The privacy of the personal information I provide will be safeguarded and only disclosed where I have consented to the disclosure or as required by law.
- (d) The security of the research data will be protected during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published. Any information which will identify me will not be used.

### Participant's Consent

'I agree to the above as indicated and give my explicit consent under GDPR Art.6(1)(a) and Art.9(2)(a) for my personal data to be processed by UAL as indicated on this form, including any special category data I may choose to provide'

Participant: \_\_\_\_\_



(Signature)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

20/08/2025

**Participants should be given a copy of this after it has been signed.**




## CONSENT TEMPLATE - Participant 7

1. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the information sheet
2. I agree to participate in the research project as described
3. I agree to the items checked below:
  - to be interviewed
  - that my voice will be audio recorded
  - to take part in a focus group
  - that my photo / a film of me will be taken
  - to be observed and for field notes to be taken
  - that information obtained may be published in an anonymised form.
4. I acknowledge that:
  - (a) I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied (unless follow-up is needed for safety).
  - (b) The project is for the purpose of research. It may not be of direct benefit to me.
  - (c) The privacy of the personal information I provide will be safeguarded and only disclosed where I have consented to the disclosure or as required by law.
  - (d) The security of the research data will be protected during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published. Any information which will identify me will not be used.

### Participant's Consent

'I agree to the above as indicated and give my explicit consent under GDPR Art.6(1)(a) and Art.9(2)(a) for my personal data to be processed by UAL as indicated on this form, including any special category data I may choose to provide'

Participant:  \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 21/08/2025  
(Signature)

**Participants should be given a copy of this after it has been signed.**

## CONSENT TEMPLATE - Participant 8

1. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the information sheet
2. I agree to participate in the research project as described
3. I agree to the items checked below:
  - to be interviewed
  - that my voice will be audio recorded
  - to take part in a focus group
  - that my photo / a film of me will be taken
  - to be observed and for field notes to be taken
  - that information obtained may be published in an anonymised form.
4. I acknowledge that:
  - (a) I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied (unless follow-up is needed for safety).
  - (b) The project is for the purpose of research. It may not be of direct benefit to me.
  - (c) The privacy of the personal information I provide will be safeguarded and only disclosed where I have consented to the disclosure or as required by law.
  - (d) The security of the research data will be protected during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published. Any information which will identify me will not be used.

### Participant's Consent

'I agree to the above as indicated and give my explicit consent under GDPR Art.6(1)(a) and Art.9(2)(a) for my personal data to be processed by UAL as indicated on this form, including any special category data I may choose to provide'

Participant: 蔡玄歌 Date: 20/08/2025  
(Signature)

**Participants should be given a copy of this after it has been signed.**







## CONSENT TEMPLATE - Participant 12

1. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the information sheet
2. I agree to participate in the research project as described
3. I agree to the items checked below:
  - to be interviewed
  - that my voice will be audio recorded
  - to take part in a focus group
  - that my photo / a film of me will be taken
  - to be observed and for field notes to be taken
  - that information obtained may be published in an anonymised form.
4. I acknowledge that:
  - (a) I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied (unless follow-up is needed for safety).
  - (b) The project is for the purpose of research. It may not be of direct benefit to me.
  - (c) The privacy of the personal information I provide will be safeguarded and only disclosed where I have consented to the disclosure or as required by law.
  - (d) The security of the research data will be protected during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published. Any information which will identify me will not be used.

### Participant's Consent

'I agree to the above as indicated and give my explicit consent under GDPR Art.6(1)(a) and Art.9(2)(a) for my personal data to be processed by UAL as indicated on this form, including any special category data I may choose to provide'

Participant: 周佳航 Date: 18/07/2025  
(Signature)

**Participants should be given a copy of this after it has been signed.**

### Appendix 3 - Interview Transcript and Iteration of Codes

| TRANSCRIPT - Participant 1   | FIRST CYCLE CODING  |
|--|---|
| <p><b>(Warm-up) 1. Could you please briefly introduce yourself, including your age, educational background, occupation, location, and any experiences you've had visiting luxury pop-up stores in the past two years?</b></p> <p><b>Interviewee:</b><br/> <i>I am 25 years old this year, for educational background I did my undergraduate studies in Beijing and my master's in Hong Kong, currently I work in MixC doing leasing, and I live in Shanghai. I have rich experience of visiting luxury pop-ups in the past.</i></p> <p><b>2. What initially attracted you to visit this luxury fashion pop-up store?</b></p> <p><b>Interviewee:</b><br/> <i>I think firstly it's the overall image of the pop-up store, whether the store design itself breaks the convention, and whether there are some installations that make people want to take pictures. Secondly, it's the theme of the pop-up store, whether this theme itself attracts me. For example, the Louis Vuitton pop-up "Nóng Hó, Shanghai" held in Shanghai last year was very interesting, and it had a kind of resonance with Shanghai's urban culture. I actually think it has little to do with the brand itself. No matter which luxury brand opens a pop-up, if the above two points attract me, I will go.</i></p> <p><b>3. So how did ephemerality (e.g., limited time/space) influence your decision?</b></p> <p><b>Interviewee:</b><br/> <i>I think there will be a kind of urgency, because I know that many luxury brands' pop-up stores have different themes and products in different seasons, and some limited decorations or souvenirs are scarce.</i></p> <p><b>4. How do interactive elements and experiential designs in luxury pop-stores shape your overall experience with the brand?</b></p> | <p>Visually striking photo-worthy installations</p> <p>Culturally resonant pop-up theme</p> <p>Demonstrate resonance with urban culture</p> <p>Create a kind of urgency</p> <p>Unique decorations for different seasons</p> |

**Interviewee:**

*This makes me think of the Louis Vuitton pop-up store that just opened at Hangzhou MixC, the “Louis Vuitton Express” limited-time space was shaped like a train carriage, I feel like it might give consumers a special shopping experience or visiting experience.*

**5.How did any promotions, limited offers, or special incentives at the pop-up influence your decision to engage or buy?**

**Interviewee:**

*I think especially for luxury brands, pop-up stores shouldn't directly offer discounts, this looks a bit “cheap”, attracting customers can be done by using some limited souvenirs. Although pop-up stores seem more “approachable” compared to flagship stores, I think luxury brands still need to have their “tone”.*

*Besides, I think nowadays luxury brand pop-ups purely for sales purposes are already very few, you can see many pop-ups not only have sales areas but also larger experience areas. Therefore, telling a good story is more important, because luxury goods are not really selling the products themselves.*

**6.You mentioned the storytelling via pop-up stores, so how do you think of event-like pop-up stores particularly when they was organised with an exclusive concept?**

**Interviewee:**

*I think of the recent pop-up that Vivienne Westwood opened in Shanghai Qiantan Taikoo Li, besides selling jewelry, it also opened a limited-time jewelry exhibition. Although I am not the target audience of this brand, I was still very willing to go and see it. Because the curated space presents the whole brand’s complete design language or a complete product line, then combined with some very stunning scenes and some explanations, I think, well, it suddenly makes me interested in the product. I think this kind of experience is completely different from regular stores.*

**7.How would you evaluate the relationship between**

“shaped like a trains carriage”

Eye-catching exterior design

“shouldn't directly offer discounts”

Provide limited souvenirs

“more approachable compared to flagship stores”

Shift from sales-driven to experience-driven pop-ups

Integration of limited-time exhibitions

Curate space with cohesive language

Break away from conventional shopping experience

**product selling and creating immersive experiences in luxury brand pop-up stores?**

**Interviewee:**

*I feel like immersive experience is more important, for the target audience of luxury brands, they hope to get fresh brand stories or culture through the pop-up store. If it is just about buying products, they can totally do it in regular stores, so I think selling should not be the primary purpose of this kind of pop-up store.*

**8.What sensory elements (sights, sounds, smells, textures, tastes) stood out to you most during your visit to the pop-up store?**

**Interviewee:**

*Participant's Answer: For luxury brands, maybe it's mainly the visual part, like unique pop-up store design or some limited art installations, but I know Giorgio Armani recently had a pop-up in Hangzhou's Hubin Yintai in 77, and they would spray their perfume in the store, so when customers approach, they can smell it, and maybe it will influence their willingness to visit. Taking the Louis Vuitton Express pop-up I just mentioned as an example, its train-shaped design makes people more willing to take photos compared to a square "box." If consumers could be inside the train and even hear some simulated train-running sounds, smells, etc., I think it would be more immersive.*

**9.What feelings or emotions did you experience during the luxury fashion pop-up and in what ways did these emotions affect how you feel about the brand?**

**Interviewee:**

*Because my profession is quite special, I come into contact with the implementation of some luxury brand pop-up events, so from the perspective of both a consumer and a business operator, some brands will introduce the original intention behind opening the pop-up, for example, out of love for a city's culture, they created a certain theme or launched some limited products. I think at that moment I feel respected, sometimes I even get goosebumps.*

Selling is secondary to storytelling and culture

Use scents to attract visitors

Create immersion through all five senses

Brand communicates cultural respect and original intent

"feel respected"

**10. So how did the pop-up store facilitate or encourage you to connect with others (friends, family, or even strangers) during your visit?**

**Interviewee:**

*I think for luxury brand pop-up stores, checking in or actually making a purchase mostly satisfies my vanity. I will share these experiences on social media, trying to resonate with others who are interested. In addition, I also hope to express my personal “uniqueness” through some special touchpoints, such as limited products and limited-time events.*

**11. How did the luxury pop-up stores shared values and beliefs that fits your lifestyle?**

**Interviewee:**

*I think many pop-up stores convey values or beliefs that are quite grand, such as sustainability or a certain lifestyle. But personally, I am not very interested because I feel it’s just a gimmick. For example, “environmental protection,” I didn’t really see how a piece of trash was “turned into treasure” in the pop-up store, right? But I did pay attention to the “Nóng Hó, Shanghai” pop-up before, which might truly cater to the needs of contemporary young people, whether it’s expecting the brand to pay tribute to Chinese culture or yearning for the fresh outdoor air. So I think the key still lies in whether the brand can engage customers through certain marketing campaigns.*

**12. How do you evaluate luxury fashion pop-up stores compared to other marketing channels in terms of the value it offers or the information it provides?**

**Interviewee:**

*Apart from what you mentioned above as more “immersive,” I think it is more condensed, because the brand needs to convey the image in a very limited space and time. For example, Miu Miu had a summer read pop-up store before. Before that, my impression of Miu Miu was only “girly” or “rich girl” kind of image, but this pop-up event might emphasize more of a “literary atmosphere” and “feminism.” The people attracted by this pop-up store and Miu Miu’s target audience are very aligned, mostly women, but besides that, it also gave the*

Share experiences to connect with like-minded others

Express personal uniqueness via limited products/events

Skepticism toward grand brand values as gimmicks

Desire for hands-on experience

Brand engagement through meaningful campaigns

Brand conveys condensed image in limited time and space

Inspired by youth social issues

brand a fresher temperament. How to say, maybe it is a kind of lifestyle communication.

**13.What made you feel more (or less) inclined to recommend this brand or pop-up experience to your friends or share it online?**

**Interviewee:**

Two kinds, I guess. One is that I indeed got good photos at this pop-up store, then I would definitely share on all kinds of social media platforms, because its look is very beautiful and very unique, like Louis Vuitton's "Visionary Journeys" was designed as a "giant ship" shape, including the iconic hard-sided trunks in the exhibition layer inside. Another is if the theme of this pop-up store really touches me, I would also go and check it out.

**14.How important was cultural or local relevance to your enjoyment or connection in the luxury fashion pop-ups?**

**Interviewee:**

I am expecting that the content delivered by luxury brands in China should be different from those abroad, because I think this would make me feel that the brand is really valuing the Chinese market, as China is a country with a long history and a lot of cultural materials that can be explored. Like Jil Sander once rented a heritage building in Hangzhou as the venue of their pop-up store, it might make local people feel a kind of emotional connection, and it is also a kind of cultural experience, after all, a simple retail store is too boring. Of course, I think this still depends on different situations. If it's a Coco Chanel series doing a pop-up, I would hope it's a 1:1 replica with Paris. But for some themed pop-ups, like environmental protection, traditional architecture, or lifestyle-oriented ones, I think different countries should have different approaches.

**15.If you had a meaningful experience in a luxury fashion pop-up store, in what other ways would you be willing to interact with the brand afterwards?**

**Interviewee:**

Irrespective of whether I would actually make a purchase, I

Willingness to share photos online

Attractive themes and concept

Expectation for localised brand content in China

Emotional connection via local heritage venues

"simple retail store is too boring"

Consider marketing differences in China

would pay more attention to the brand's updates, for example follow their official account on Xiaohongshu or Weibo, and I might also share these with my followers in the community I run.

**16.What criticisms do you have of luxury pop-ups in China?**

**Interviewee:**

I think most pop-up stores are still limited to a small group of people, such as the brand's VIC. Also, because the scale of pop-ups and the materials invested are generally limited, immersive formats like workshops, even if they exist, can only be experienced by a very small number of people. Additionally, I think many pop-up stores have very limited content; ordinary customers might finish touring in about 10 minutes and then leave. If there were some areas designed for customers to 'linger' longer, wouldn't the overall effect be better? For example, I know Louis Vuitton's 'Visionary Journeys' set up Le Café Louis Vuitton. Even if the brand doesn't do crossovers, some relatively low-cost installations could achieve a similar effect, like 'vintage photo booths' which young people nowadays really like.

**17.Would you like to add anything else?**

**Interviewee:**

Nothing further.

Follow official account  
Share experiences in online community

Limited scale and resources restrict immersive experiences

Need for spaces encouraging longer customer stay

| TRANSCRIPT - Participant 2  | FIRST CYCLE CODING |
|---|--------------------|
| <p><b>(Warm-up) 1.Could you please briefly introduce yourself, including your age, educational background, occupation, location, and any experiences you've had visiting luxury pop-up stores in the past two years?</b></p> <p><b>Interviewee:</b><br/>I'm 22 years old this year, currently a postgraduate student majoring in Cultural Industry Management at the University of Southampton and I live in Shanghai recently. In the past two years, I have had quite a few experiences visiting luxury pop-up stores. For example, in July this year, I just went to Louis Vuitton's "Visionary Journeys" at</p> |                    |

HKRI Taikoo Hui in Shanghai.

## 2. What initially attracted you to visit this luxury fashion pop-up store?

### Interviewee:

I think firstly it's the recognition of the luxury brand, because I myself am a loyal fan of Louis Vuitton, so I will especially pay attention to the pop-up stores it opens in different places. I think this is also a very interesting way for me to increase my understanding of the brand. Secondly, I feel that many luxury pop-up stores will display or sell some limited edition products, because after a certain period of time, maybe it will be very hard for you to see these products again. For example, the previous pop-up of Louis Vuitton and Takashi Murakami in Shanghai was very attractive to me.

## 3. So how did ephemerality (e.g., limited time/space) influence your decision?

### Interviewee:

I think maybe there will be some sense of urgency, because these kinds of opportunities are not very common. As for the location, many pop-ups might choose their location based on the creativity of the product itself, so it's not necessarily near the regular brand stores, I mean those stores inside shopping malls. But again, if I'm really interested in the luxury brand itself, the distance of the location won't affect my willingness to visit.

## 4. How do interactive elements and experiential designs in luxury pop-stores shape your overall experience with the brand?

### Interviewee:

What kind of elements does interactive elements refer to? Oh. What just came to my mind is that I seem to have heard Louis Vuitton previously sold chocolates in their pop-up stores. Did Maison Margiela also launch a café or ice cream? What I mean is, nowadays luxury brands might not only be selling leather goods or ready-to-wear; opening pop-up stores is more about conveying a lifestyle. I think this kind of cross-over is very interesting, and for young people, the consumption threshold is relatively

Brand recognition drives pop-up visit

Flexible locations

A novel way to understand the brand

"display or sell some limited edition products"

Location choice influenced by creative concept

Luxury fashion brands are entering F&B crossover

Convey a lifestyle for young people

lower.

Also, regarding immersive elements, I thought of Gentle Monster's art installations which went viral, although that brand might not be classified as luxury. Like the "DATAIZED FUTURE" pop-up installation previously at Sanlitun in Beijing gave me a strong visual impact and left a deep impression.

**5.How did any promotions, limited offers, or special incentives at the pop-up influence your decision to engage or buy?**

**Interviewee:**

I think limited products would attract me more. But of course, if the pop-up store is selling a product that I'm very interested in, and also offers some promotional activities, like giving free gifts, then why not? I think luxury brands offering direct discounts in pop-up stores is relatively rare, because that would damage their brand value.

**6.How do you think of event-like pop-up stores particularly when they was organised with an exclusive concept?**

**Interviewee:**

I previously wanted to go to the limited-time bookstore and stationery store in Shanghai, a collaboration between Louis Vuitton and the Shanghai Post Museum. You could buy Louis Vuitton stamps with the Shanghai magnolia printed on them when entering. I think this kind of pop-up may not be like traditional pop-up stores that are intended to sell products, but rather let visitors interact with local culture through collecting stamps. This might also echo the nostalgic mindset of contemporary young people and their growing respect for local culture. I also saw that many people shared this pop-up event on social media platforms.

**7.What sensory elements (sights, sounds, smells, textures, tastes) stood out to you most during your visit to the pop-up store?**

**Interviewee:**

Emmm, I think firstly still the visual aspect. Some pop-up

Blur boundaries between art and luxury

"gave me a strong visual impact and left a deep impression"

"give free gifts"

"offer direct discounts is rare"

"damage their brand value"

The collaboration between luxury brands and local cultural institutions

Encourage interactions with local cultures via pop-up events

"visual part"

stores have very special designs themselves, which make people want to take photos and share. Secondly, it also includes the display of some art installations. Other elements I don't really feel that much.

**8.What feelings or emotions did you experience during the luxury fashion pop-up and in what ways did these emotions affect how you feel about the brand?**

**Interviewee:**

Attending a pop-up store is not just about interacting with these brands. What touched me more might be the communication with a group of like-minded people. When these people gather together, there might be some collisions of ideas. I think the pop-up provides such a space, or you could say platform. I think this is also the purpose of many luxury brands opening pop-ups, because it seems to shorten the distance between each other.

**9.So how did the pop-up store facilitate or encourage you to connect with others (friends, family, or even strangers) during your visit?**

**Interviewee:**

Some brand pop-up stores would deliberately encourage visitors to interact through some little games, for example, I went to Chanel Coco Playground's pop-up with my friend before, there was a "put lipstick on each other" activity and you could get a perfume sample for free, I think this kind of interaction is especially low, the threshold is very low, it would dilute the sense of luxury of a luxury brand.

**10.How did the luxury pop-up stores shared values and beliefs that fits your lifestyle?**

**Interviewee:**

Emmm, I feel like this question is a bit hard for me to answer. I just remembered that Louis Vuitton once opened a limited-time space called "Beijing Style" in Beijing and launched the Louis Vuitton City Guide. I think this pop-up event more or less relates to the trend among contemporary young people who like citywalk, or who increasingly admire traditional culture, including ancient architecture, intangible cultural heritage, and so on.

Idea exchange and community building via pop-up stores

Facilitate spaces for shared brand experience beyond products

Enhance interaction through little games

Similar gamification experience dilutes luxury perception

"relates to the trend among contemporary young people who like citywalk"

*I just thought of another one — before, I think it was Prada or some brand that opened a pop-up event at a local vegetable market in Shanghai. During the event, all the vegetables had Prada logos. I feel like maybe this also fits with some of Gen Z's current values, like encouraging young people to pursue a healthy and organic lifestyle.*

**11. How likely are you to purchase from or engage with this brand in the future as a result of the pop-up?**

**Interviewee:**

*I think it still depends on my overall perception of the luxury brand. But if my experience in the pop-up is positive, then of course I would be more willing to follow some of the brand's future marketing activities or new products.*

**12. How do you evaluate luxury fashion pop-up stores compared to other marketing channels in terms of the value it offers or the information it provides?**

**Interviewee:**

*Compared with advertisements on social media, pop-up stores, especially this kind of on-site experience, can let me understand more clearly the brand's history and creative background. For example, through a series of pop-ups by Louis Vuitton in Shanghai and Beijing, I could truly feel that this French luxury brand is really committed to inheriting and protecting traditional Chinese culture. I can directly interact with these pop-up spaces and activities, and I can experience many things that are unexpected. I think this kind of "sense of novelty" is something that other marketing channels don't have.*

**13. What made you feel more (or less) inclined to recommend this brand or pop-up experience to your friends or share it online?**

**Interviewee:**

*I think firstly it's the overall design. Since it's a pop-up store, it shouldn't be the same as a regular store, just selling the same products as those stores, and then customers come out after walking around for 10 minutes and I think that kind of experience is not good. On the*

Fits with Gen Z consumers who pursue a healthy and organic lifestyle

Follow subsequent marketing campaigns  
Pay attention to new products

Establish a deeper and emotional relationship

"experience many things that are unexpected"

Requirements for rich content and experience

contrary, some pop-up stores might sell some souvenirs, small items with a gift-like nature. I think that would make me want to share it in online communities, because there is something special and tangible. Also, some brands might open multiple pop-up stores in different cities during the same period. Although these pop-ups have a common theme, each city has different limited products or some unique design ideas in the store. This might make me interested in exploring the stores in different cities.

#### 14. How important was cultural or local relevance to your enjoyment or connection in the luxury fashion pop-ups?

##### Interviewee:

I think this is very necessary, because in the past many Chinese people buying luxury brands may have some kind of 'worship of foreign things' mentality, thinking that foreign things are generally of good quality, or using luxury goods will make others envy. But for Gen Z, we desire to be respected, I hope to see luxury brands have made changes to cater to young groups. For example, now we may pay more attention to environmental protection issues, so when luxury brands organize pop-up events, if they integrate some sustainable designs, it can attract me more.

#### 15. What criticisms do you have of luxury pop-ups in China?

##### Interviewee:

Firstly, I think it is the on-site order, many pop-up stores are always overcrowded, causing me unable to quietly browse; but in order to control the flow of customers, like Louis Vuitton's 'Visionary Journeys' can be booked online, but the time slot has already been scheduled to late August, I think it also discourages many interested consumers.

Secondly, maybe the publicity is not so adequate, like many pop-up stores I only knew through influencers, these luxury brands' official accounts' promotion strength is relatively limited.

Finally, I don't know if it is because the Chinese

Offer special and tangible souvenirs

Shift from foreign worship to desire for respect

Changing motivations for luxury consumption among Chinese Gen Z

Overcrowding limits browsing comfort

Online booking with long wait times discourages visits

Brands have limited reach to the general public

government's control is stricter, many scene setups and art installations are not as good as Europe or Japan.

**16. Would you like to add anything else?**

**Interviewee:**

*No, that's all.*

| TRANSCRIPT - Participant 3  | FIRST CYCLE CODING   |
|---|--|
| <p><b>(Warm-up) 1. Could you please briefly introduce yourself, including your age, educational background, occupation, location, and any experiences you've had visiting luxury pop-up stores in the past two years?</b></p> <p><b>Interviewee:</b><br/><i>I am 23 years old this year, currently studying at university in Hangzhou, undergraduate. I count as a luxury lover, although I don't buy a lot, no money, but I will pay attention to the news of this industry, also including pop-up store.</i></p> <p><b>2. What initially attracted you to visit this luxury fashion pop-up store?</b></p> <p><b>Interviewee:</b><br/><i>The most direct reason is, if my friends invite me to go check in, I will follow and go together. Or sometimes if I am very tired from studying, and want to change my mood, maybe visiting a pop-up counts as a relatively low-cost way of relaxation.</i></p> <p><b>3. How did this ephemerality (e.g., limited time/space) influence your decision?</b></p> <p><b>Interviewee:</b><br/><i>I would feel that this is a kind of marketing gimmick, the brand uses this way to let consumers be driven by a kind of "fear of missing out," thus creating a kind of illusion of being very crowded, whether it is online or offline. I usually will wait until the heat passes, and one day when there are fewer people I will go, because I hate crowded environments. For luxury goods, I also think this kind of pop-up store should not be crowded, it needs to have a</i></p> | <p>Recommendation from friends</p> <p>"low cost way of relaxation"</p> <p>Create urgency and pressure</p> <p>Avoid peak periods</p> <p>Maintain a sense of mystery</p> |

kind of sense of mystery.

#### 4. How do interactive elements and experiential designs in luxury pop-stores shape your overall experience with the brand?

##### Interviewee:

More often, the interactive session brings awkwardness or discomfort, because people around are all taking photos, and sometimes even need to queue to experience. But if the interactive session is very delicate, for example, before when I was traveling in Shenyang I happened to encounter a Burberry pop-up store, there was a newsstand concept, I could inside make by myself a postcard with the Burberry logo and take it home, I would feel that this brand does things very seriously, this makes me have more trust in its quality, and not only feel that it is interesting.

#### 5. How did any promotions, limited offers, or special incentives at the pop-up influence your decision to engage or buy?

##### Interviewee:

I focus more on the brand concept and experience conveyed by the pop-up store. If the promotions are too obvious, it will weaken the brand's sense of luxury and cultural connotation. But if I particularly like a certain brand, sometimes limited-time offers will make me impulsive, but I tend to treat it as an experience and a memory, and will not consume frequently.

#### 6. How do you think of event-like pop-up stores particularly when they was organised with an exclusive concept?

##### Interviewee:

Many luxury brands might launch some "summer limited" pop-up activities in this season, because maybe everyone is on summer vacation, many young people go traveling, and I would feel it is closer to my life. Does event-like pop-up store refer to those limited-time exhibitions? Emmm, maybe it would make me feel that this brand is not too utilitarian. But I think there still needs to be a selling area, otherwise it cannot be considered a store.

Awkwardness or discomfort due to crowd

"delicate"

Personalised experience

Feel more confident about quality

Weaken the luxury and cultural connotation due to the promotions

"treat it as an experience and memory"

Closer to daily life

Require a selling area

**7.What sensory elements (sights, sounds, smells, textures, tastes) stood out to you most during your visit to the pop-up store?**

**Interviewee:**

*Previously Longchamp opened a "Longchamp Market" pop-up store at Zhongshan Park in Shanghai. Besides the rattan swing, the farming tool wall, and the giant vegetable inflatables, I also noticed that the site simulated natural bird sounds. Such sounds made me feel that the brand paid attention to details when planning this pop-up. In addition, this pop-up store had a "vegetable garden special" drink, and the taste of vegetables and fruits made me feel that this brand really knows how to create a lifestyle, rather than just selling bags.*

"stimulate natural bird sounds"

Recall the drink and its taste

**8.What feelings or emotions did you experience during the luxury fashion pop-up and in what ways did these emotions affect how you feel about the brand?**

**Interviewee:**

*Sometimes it makes me feel surprised and touched, letting me know that now pop-up stores have so many interesting ways to play, and are no longer just a shop.*

"feel surprised and touched"

"no longer just a shop"

**9.How did the pop-up store facilitate or encourage you to connect with others (friends, family, or even strangers) during your visit?**

**Interviewee:**

*I don't really have much idea. I feel more that it gave me a place to go with friends or classmates to hang out and pass time during holidays. Because in Hangzhou, luxury pop-up stores don't appear very often, so it can be seen as providing an opportunity to go out and have fun together. That's how I understand it.*

Provide a place to pass time

Do not happen frequently

**10.How did the luxury pop-up stores shared values and beliefs that fits your lifestyle?**

**Interviewee:**

*It's still the previous example of Longchamp, its setting still simulated a pastoral scene, maybe responding to contemporary consumers' yearning for natural life, following popular trends like 'light outdoor' and 'urban*

"yearning for natural life"

Align with "light outdoor" and "urban

escape,<sup>1</sup> so that's why it became very popular.

**11.How easy or convenient was it for you to explore or interact with the brand in the pop-up touchpoints?**

**Interviewee:**

*I think it is more convenient, because their guided tours are generally well thought out, so I don't feel confused when browsing. Many pop-up stores also introduce themselves through social media platforms, so you don't need to ask the staff, you can completely immerse yourself in browsing the exhibition and the store alone.*

**12.How likely are you to make a purchase at a luxury pop-up store?**

**Interviewee:**

*I'm more likely to purchase if the pop-up offers something unique that I can't get elsewhere, like customised products or collaborations. Otherwise, it feels similar to regular stores, so I don't feel the urgency to buy.*

**13.What kind of impressions or evaluations of the brand did you form afterwards?**

**Interviewee:**

*I noticed that some of the furniture and decorations in the pop-up stores were custom-made, with a kind of 'meticulousness in every stitch' and a sense of ceremony, very much like the attitude of craftsmen, which made me feel that the brand is really attentive. I even once encountered, maybe a senior executive of the brand, explaining the details of the pop-up store on site. This kind of direct contact made me feel that the brand is very transparent and more trustworthy.*

**14.How likely were you to recommend this pop-up or brand to your friends or family, or to follow the brand on social media afterwards?**

**Interviewee:**

*Actually, I usually don't actively recommend pop-up stores to others, unless the pop-up store is really very creative or has a particularly strong experiential feeling. But of course, if the pop-up store has done very good interaction through social media, for example letting me*

escape" trend

Clear guided tour

Search for introduction online

"customised products"

Sense of ceremony created by custom-made design

Transparent and trustworthy

Co-creation with customers

participate in the topic, I am also more willing to follow and spread this brand.

**15.How important was cultural or local relevance to your enjoyment or connection in the luxury fashion pop-ups?**

**Interviewee:**

For the presentation form, I mean if the image of the luxury brand itself and the local elements are integrated appropriately, of course I feel good. But actually this has always been a sensitive topic, like the previous DIOR's horse face skirt incident, a more secure approach or I should say a more common approach, might be that luxury brands do pop-ups during some Chinese traditional festivals, for example the Lunar New Year, because I will also be interested in how overseas brands view or use Chinese traditional culture.

**16.What criticisms do you have of luxury pop-ups in China?**

**Interviewee:**

It can only be counted as my personal suggestion, the fashion industry has always been criticized for causing huge environmental pollution, I might also care about after the pop-up store, where these discarded materials will go, whether many souvenirs will really be used by people, or just be thrown away. So I suggest these luxury brands can provide limited edition digital collectibles, I mean the exclusive NFT of the pop-up store, or WeChat red packet covers, rather than some canvas bags or refrigerator magnets and so on. On the one hand, the cost is relatively low, on the other hand, it is also convenient for young people to carry out online dissemination.

**17.Would you like to add anything else?**

**Interviewee:**

No.

“sensitive”

Reshape Chinese traditional festivals

“digital collectibles”

Pop-up exclusive NFT

**(Warm-up) 1. Could you please briefly introduce yourself, including your age, educational background, occupation, location, and any experiences you've had visiting luxury pop-up stores in the past two years?**

**Interviewee:**

*I am 25 years old this year, currently a part-time Fashion Buyer Assistant. I am now living in Beijing. In the past two years, I have visited or followed luxury pop-up stores on various social media platforms.*

**2. What initially attracted you to visit this luxury fashion pop-up store?**

**Interviewee:**

*Mainly divided into two situations, one is that I happen to see some brands setting up pop-up stores in shopping malls, and out of curiosity I may go in and take a look; the other situation is that I see on Xiaohongshu or WeChat public accounts that some brands may set up pop-up stores in parks or certain neighborhoods, and there are some limited-time activities, such as giving out ice cream, which will also attract me.*

**3. You mentioned the concept of limited-time activities, so how did this ephemerality (e.g., limited time/space) influence your decision?**

**Interviewee:**

*If it's just a space simply for selling products, I think the influence is not big, because going to a regular store is the same. For me, purchasing is not the main purpose, I hope that after visiting a pop-up store, I can share my thoughts, my experience, and provide a reference for others. Considering this point, maybe this kind of 'ephemerality' more or less will make me want to catch up with this trend.*

**4. How do interactive elements and experiential designs in luxury pop-stores shape your overall experience with the brand?**

**Interviewee:**

*I'm very impressed by the PRADA pop-up that was held in the vegetable market on Wulumuqi Middle Road before, it changed my traditional view of luxury brands, like being*

Pop-ups located in non-traditional spaces like parks and neighborhoods

"limited-time activities, such as giving out ice cream"

"purchasing is not the main purpose"

Desire for catching up with trends

mysterious and unattainable. On the contrary, actually in this era of information overload, I hope to see some more approachable pop-ups. I don't need to see their products directly in a pop-up store, but through a series of campaigns, let me know what kind of attitude or lifestyle this brand represents. Am I going off-topic a bit... but what I mean is that I hope to check in at the pop-up store with an appreciative attitude, just like visiting an exhibition.

**5. So why do you think these unconventional pop-up stores are able to frequently resonate with young people?**

**Interviewee:**

I think it's because it connects two things that seem unrelated. The "everyday vibe" of the wet market and Prada's "delicate and modern feeling" have a kind of clash, a kind of "sense of conflict". Another thing is, for people who go to pop-ups, they only need to spend a small amount of money to buy a limited canvas bag that Prada produced for this event, so the entry barrier is very low.

**6. How did any promotions, limited offers, or special incentives at the pop-up influence your decision to engage or buy?**

**Interviewee:**

I think discounts are not that tempting to me, because after all I don't buy luxury goods that often each year, definitely not as much as those VICs, so even if there's a discount I wouldn't really feel it's a good deal. Comparatively, I think limited-edition products might be more attractive to me.

**6. How do you think of event-like pop-up stores particularly when they were organised with an exclusive concept?**

**Interviewee:**

I feel like this is a very popular practice nowadays. For example, Miu Miu did a pop-up called 'Flower Boat Voyage' in Liwan, Guangzhou for the Lunar New Year 2025. It cleverly combined the 'Year of the Snake' theme, and the scene design also used some traditional Chinese

"don't need to see their products directly in a pop-up store"

Pop-ups as lifestyle and attitude communication platforms

View pop-ups as cultural or artistic exhibitions

Utilise the everyday vibe

Create a sense of conflict

Offer affordable products for selling

Discounts do not stimulate purchase for non-luxury enthusiasts

"limited-edition products might attract me"

The celebration of traditional Chinese festivals

cultural elements, such as Chinese knots. I think this makes the pop-up store more interesting in both form and content. For instance, for this pop-up, Miu Miu also filmed a special New Year short video and created a Spring Festival vinyl record. I feel it integrated online and offline experiences, so it was able to go viral on social media.

**7.How would you evaluate the relationship between product selling and creating immersive experiences in luxury brand pop-up stores?**

**Interviewee:**

I think the goal may not necessarily be to get young people to buy something at the pop-up store, but rather to create a sense of resonance through this kind of experience and leave a positive impression on the audience. It's more like a lifestyle guide by curating a series of activities around reading, for example, it leads people to live a more tasteful or refined life. That's how I see it.

**8.What sensory elements (sights, sounds, smells, textures, tastes) stood out to you most during your visit to the pop-up store?**

**Interviewee:**

I'm honestly tired of pure visual stimulation, it's often just some unusual shapes or eye-catching installations made for people to take photos. I prefer pop-ups held in community spaces, which give the brand more room to be creative. I remember once visiting a pop-up in a siheyuan (a traditional courtyard house) in Beijing, and one of the rooms was transformed into a cinema-like space, with screens surrounding all sides playing films. Although I found the content a bit confusing at the time, it didn't seem related to the product, maybe it was a collaboration, I still ended up looking up those films once I got home. I think that kind of pop-up is successful, because it sparked my curiosity and made me want to stay longer rather than leave quickly.

**9.What feelings or emotions did you experience during the luxury fashion pop-up and in what ways did these emotions affect how you feel about the brand?**

**Interviewee:**

Integration of online and offline experiences

Experiential marketing beyond sales

Guide consumers toward refined living

"tired of pure visual stimulation"

"pop-ups held in community spaces"

Spark curiosity through auditory experience  
"film"

"it didn't seem related to the product"

Not really. For example, when I saw the cruise ship-shaped pop-up by Louis Vuitton in Shanghai, I felt shocked. Maybe only such top luxury brands have the capability to create such a pop-up, but that's all.

**10. How did the pop-up store facilitate or encourage you to connect with others (friends, family, or even strangers) during your visit?**

**Interviewee:**

Are you asking how the pop-up specifically provided this social platform? I know some pop-ups will set up workshops, allowing customers who book in advance to personally experience some production processes; also, like setting up cafés, which can give young people a place to sit down and chat.

“set up workshops”

“give young people a place to sit down and chat”

**11. How did the luxury pop-up stores shared values and beliefs that fits your lifestyle?**

**Interviewee:**

Still using young people's curiosity psychology, like for me maybe I have gradually demystified luxury goods, now I may care more about some social value or cultural value these brands are taking, for example, HERMES's pop-up stores are often inspired by books, allowing people to shape a poetic and refined lifestyle through literature, many of Loewe's pop-ups would emphasize craftsmanship and the spirit of artisans, I think it would be much more interesting than just displaying products.

Literary influence on brand lifestyle  
“emphasize craftsmanship and the spirit of artisans”

**12. How easy or convenient was it for you to explore or interact with the brand in the pop-up touchpoints?**

**Interviewee:**

Let me give an example. If it's in a regular brand store, I wouldn't be able to take photos freely inside the store and then post them on Xiaohongshu or WeChat Moments, because that would make others feel like I'm showing off. But if it's in a pop-up store, especially those that are like galleries or exhibition-style pop-ups, I think there's nothing wrong with sharing it, because it's like you're just conveying a kind of culture, or making others feel that you're special and have good taste.

Approachable atmosphere stimulates social sharing

Convey culture via galleries or exhibition-style pop-ups  
Strong desire for self-expression and uniqueness

**13.How likely are you to purchase from or engage with this brand in the future as a result of the pop-up?**

**Interviewee:**

*I think it's possible. I went to the Louis Vuitton collaboration pop-up before. Although I didn't buy anything at that time, later when I returned to Beijing, I still bought the "white sancai" Speedy. If there are some exclusive styles or limited editions in the pop-up store that I usually don't have access to, which can help me better understand the product's quality and functions, I might make a purchase afterwards.*

**14.How do you evaluate luxury fashion pop-up stores compared to other marketing channels in terms of the value it offers or the information it provides?**

**Interviewee:**

*In terms of advantages, besides the offline space of the pop-up store itself, I also noticed that many brands have launched a series of pop-up events under the same theme to go with it, so it can reach a wider audience I think, many ordinary people who wouldn't buy luxury goods at all can also totally participate. But how to say, compared to the ads or celebrity endorsements I directly notice, most pop-up stores are actually very homogeneous, just some background boards, and they don't really combine the brand's own characteristics.*

**15.What made you feel more (or less) inclined to recommend this brand or pop-up experience to your friends or share it online?**

**Interviewee:**

*To be honest, I don't think I've recommended a pop-up store to my friends, maybe because there weren't many examples that left a deep impression on me. But if the values conveyed by the brand touched me, for example, if they emphasised environmental protection or female empowerment at this pop-up, which align with the things I usually care about, I would feel this is a brand with the same ideas as me, and then I would be more willing to actively recommend it to my friends or share it on social media. Because this is not just recommending a product,*

Purchase afterwards

Understand the quality and functions of exclusive products

"launched a series of pop-up events under the same theme"

Consider brand identity to combat homogeneity

Emphasis on environmental protection or female empowerment

Recommend as sharing lifestyle and values

but I am conveying a lifestyle and values that I identify with.

#### 14. How important was cultural or local relevance to your enjoyment or connection in the luxury fashion pop-ups?

##### Interviewee:

Yes, it is. For example, some panda elements, bamboo elements will make people feel a kind of closeness. Still the example of that pop-up store in Beijing before, it was placed in a traditional Chinese courtyard house... maybe before going there, I rarely had the chance to really enter this kind of historical site, maybe I would also become curious about how people in the past lived in it. Luxury brands represent a kind of aesthetics, they always can, in a very natural way, draw inspiration from traditional culture, and then present it in a more modern way, pop-up is a very good medium.

#### 16. What criticisms do you have of luxury pop-ups in China?

##### Interviewee:

One is the lack of localisation, sometimes the tribute to Chinese culture can be confusing, it feels like the aesthetic stays with the older generation, not the younger generation. Another is still the serious homogeneity, all brands' pop-up stores are more or less the same, no innovation. For example, the previous Loewe and Hello Bike co-branded pop-up event I thought was quite interesting, because it really involved the public. As long as you accumulate 3 km of riding, you can get a limited edition badge, and with the badge you can receive a coffee gift and limited edition pictorial at the limited-time store in Jing'an Kerry Centre.

#### 17. Would you like to add anything else?

##### Interviewee:

In the past, pop-up stores might have just been an offline space, a physical showroom, but now the truly viral "pop-up stores" are all combined with a series of limited-time events, so I think it is no longer just a pure retail concept, but an overall marketing strategy. I hope

instead of products

"feel a kind of closeness"

Luxury brands blending tradition with modern aesthetics

Lack of effective localisation in pop-ups

Gamified engagement via limited edition badges and rewards

Beyond a simply retail concept

the information I provided is helpful to you.

| TRANSCRIPT - Participant 5  | FIRST CYCLE CODING   |
|---|--|
| <p><b>(Warm-up) 1. Could you please briefly introduce yourself, including your age, educational background, occupation, location, and any experiences you've had visiting luxury pop-up stores in the past two years?</b></p> <p><b>Interviewee:</b><br/><i>My name is _____, I'm from Chengdu, and now I'm studying Strategic Fashion Marketing at LCF. I also worked in the PR department of Loewe before. About the experiences of luxury pop-up stores, I might be more on the work side, for example I was responsible for Loewe's pop-up store at Strawberry Music Festival before.</i></p> <p><b>2. What initially attracted you to visit this luxury fashion pop-up store?</b></p> <p><b>Interviewee:</b><br/><i>Oh, I think firstly maybe, for example, its concept this time would be more novel, like its theme, I think it's very interesting, I would be attracted by this theme. Secondly, I'm attracted by the format, for example like before Prada and Rongzhai did something like a small market kind of concept, you could use something like medals to exchange, like exchange for drinks, flowers, and then the whole thing was made into a very cute kind of spring market feeling. I think this kind of format is also very important to me, and would also attract me.</i></p> <p><b>3. How did this ephemerality (e.g., limited time/space) influence your decision?</b></p> <p><b>Interviewee:</b><br/><i>There is this kind of situation, like because it's about to end soon, or let's say its time limit is very short, you would think, emmm, whether you're more willing to go and take a look, because it is a, after all, it has a limited attribute in it.</i></p> <p><b>4. You mentioned the limited nature of pop-up stores, do you see this limitation as only related to time, or are there other aspects you consider to be 'limited' as</b></p> | <p></p> <p>Theme outweighs brand itself<br/>Organise pop-up around the concept of a market</p> <p>Leverage fear of missing out</p> |

well?

**Interviewee:**

*Not necessarily time, I think it's still the rarity of the content.*

**5.How do interactive elements and experiential designs in luxury pop-stores shape your overall experience with the brand?**

**Interviewee:**

*Loewe did one before, the Howl's Moving Castle collection, because it was a collaboration with Hayao Miyazaki's anime, and then firstly it gave me the understanding of this brand at that time, because before I used to think Loewe's tone might be more artistic, even saying sometimes Jonathan Anderson's design is a bit abstract. But that collection made me feel it's very childlike and very cute, and the setup of the pop-up store at Plaza 66 in Shanghai also carried the artistic things of their brand itself. The whole design and decoration were also the kind that makes you feel like you're in Miyazaki's movie world, very immersive. So I feel the style of pop-up stores is more changeable, and sometimes it really changes my impression of a luxury brand.*

**6.How did any promotions, limited offers, or special incentives at the pop-up influence your decision to engage or buy?**

**Interviewee:**

*About purchase behavior... oh, for example, in some pop-up stores there are limited products, and maybe after you're attracted by the theme, it tells you that this thing can only be bought here, you might be influenced by the scene at that moment and make some irrational purchase decisions. But about discounts, I feel for luxury brands it seems they rarely, like, do discounts or promotional events at pop-ups.*

**7.How do you think of event-like pop-up stores particularly when they was organised with an exclusive concept?**

**Interviewee:**

"rarity of the content"

Brand image reshaped through spatial design

Limited products sold exclusively at pop-up store

Stimulate irrational purchase decisions

Still the previous Loewe pop-up store at the Strawberry Music Festival. At that time we were actually doing an installation at the Strawberry Music Festival, and that installation was made by craftsmen who used some handcrafted materials from Yunnan, mainly to promote the summer straw-woven series inspired by Party history. I think the overall thing was quite interesting, and also because it was in a setting like a music festival which young people really like. Also, people could relax there, drink coffee, drink beverages, drink alcohol, and there were also some installations for interaction with the audience, like those Polaroid photo installations, similar to the popular “four-cut life photo booths” in Korea. So at that time I felt it was not like a retail place for selling goods, more like everyone was participating in this scene, and those who participated in the music festival would come to this place, for example, to try on some of the newest products, or to take photos, and the whole vibe was very good. It was not too limited to just the concept of buying and selling goods.

**8.What sensory elements (sights, sounds, smells, textures, tastes) stood out to you most during your visit to the pop-up store?**

**Interviewee:**

I think I once went to a Chanel pop-up, of course it was mainly the beauty line, but before you even went in, you would be attracted by the scent of its signature No.5 perfume. I remember the whole pop-up space was filled with that scent, because at that time the pop-up was also to promote an extended product of the No.5 perfume. Besides that, they would also give out small cards, and those cards also had the perfume’s scent on them. After you brought them home, the scent would still be there, and it would remind you that you once had this kind of experience.

**9.What feelings or emotions did you experience during the luxury fashion pop-up and in what ways did these emotions affect how you feel about the brand?**

**Interviewee:**

Like Loewe’s pop-up store at the Strawberry Music Festival, it’s just that you can be there together with

Art installations crafted by local artisans

Music festival-like setting appealing to youth  
Relaxed atmosphere with drinks

“Polaroid photo installations”

“ felt it was not like a retail place for selling goods”

“not too limited to just the concept of buying and selling goods”

Be attracted by the signature scents

Sensory reminders reinforcing memory of the pop-up

“Be together with everyone”

everyone, like me with my colleagues or my friends, and when taking photos inside, you would feel very happy, very relaxed. At that time there was a design called "Four-grid life," and every printed photo had a photo frame with the seasonal pattern of that collection, which was very interesting, and also very commemorative.

**10. Do you think having a tangible or physical takeaway, like a souvenir or memento, from a pop-up store contributes significantly to your overall experience with the brand?**

**Interviewee:**

Yes, it leaves a connection because it gives you a physical thing, and when you put that thing at home, firstly it is beautiful, aesthetically pleasing, secondly it makes you feel emotionally connected to the brand.

**11. How did the luxury pop-up stores shared values and beliefs that fits your lifestyle?**

**Interviewee:**

I can't think of anything immediately. I think many luxury brands now use movies, music festivals, or cultural and artistic elements to cater to the tastes of contemporary young people. For example, luxury brands collaborating with local cafes, like Heytea and FENDI, or Louis Vuitton's previous pop-up store at Shanghai's Manner Coffee, maybe these tapped into young people's love for coffee.

**12. So why do you think luxury brands create pop-up stores that seem unconventional or unrelated to direct sales?**

**Interviewee:**

Maybe it makes the brand feel closer to ordinary people's lives, but without seeming cheap. How to strike this balance is very important. For example, the Louis Vuitton and Manner coffee pop-up store, I thought it was okay because first, the whole visual effect matched the luxury brand's tone. Secondly, the offline sales and produced items, such as books and eco bags, were consistent with Louis Vuitton's emphasised philosophy or brand values. To put it bluntly, this kind of cultural and artistic aspect can further enhance the attraction of luxury brands.

Create a free and relaxing social place

Physical takeaway enhances brand connection

Luxury brands explore movies, music festivals, and arts

Pay attention to popular youth culture elements (coffee culture)

Feels closer to everyday life without losing luxury status

Cultural and artistic collaborations enhance brand appeal

**12.How easy or convenient was it for you to explore or interact with the brand in the pop-up touchpoints?**

**Interviewee:**

*Um, I feel that overall, for me, luxury pop-up stores are like a small-scale exhibition, the brand’s exhibition, and from visual design, music, and various interactive installations, they all make me feel very, very excited.*

*Um, many times the staff service is also quite attentive, but, um, sometimes I feel that my experience is not very good, because some pop-up stores have a relatively open format. Like HERMES’s pop-up last year, the newsstand one, it was in, um, a public area, like, um, a park, in the middle it had a pond, a water pool, and around it there were very, very many people. It was quite crowded. If I really want to explore a small pop-up event, um, I would need to wait for a long time. In addition, the shooting effect is not as good as I imagined, but when I really spend a lot of time moving through these installations and buildings designed by the brand, I can feel the values and aesthetics that the brand conveys to me. Overall, it’s still very good.*

**13.You have mentioned the accessibility and unconventional location, so how did these elements influence your overall experiences with brand?**

**Interviewee:**

*I’ve heard that many luxury brand pop-up stores are set up in markets, by the seaside, like in Aranya, these kinds of very petty bourgeoisie places. Firstly, I think it’s the differentiation that can create a viral point, right, the more contrasting something is, the more people will remember it, and then it can be spread on social media. And secondly, it’s about lifestyle, including the time PRADA held a market in Rong Zhai, where everything was in a series, and it looked like walking through a flea market. It felt very close to daily life, simulating, for example, going to the supermarket to buy pots and pans, or returning to a countryside life state. I think this kind of behavior, for luxury brands now, is also a way they try to make themselves not appear so high-up, right. They hope that, to some extent, they are approachable. The tone is*

Create an immersive exhibition through the five senses

Take place in public area like a park

“feel the values and aesthetics that brand conveys”

Pop-ups in markets and seaside locations for differentiation

Generate viral moments through contrast

Lifestyle-themed pop-ups simulating everyday life

elevated, but the connection with the audience is approachable.

**14. How likely are you to purchase from or engage with this brand in the future as a result of the pop-up?**

**Interviewee:**

*For me, pop-up stores only attract me to keep following a certain brand, but it won't directly lead to a purchasing behavior at that moment. Of course, unless you see an item you really like in that pop-up store, that's just a very rare situation. But in most cases, I think it's just a way to deepen the good impression of the brand, it will deepen the memory of this brand, and then afterwards you will pay more attention to this brand. Of course, it's possible that some purchasing behavior may occur indirectly from then on. But this purchasing behavior is not something that happens immediately.*

**15. How do you evaluate luxury fashion pop-up stores compared to other marketing channels in terms of the value it offers or the information it provides?**

**Interviewee:**

*I think pop-up stores move me more, still like what I said before, because they have more touchpoints, they have more, just like you said, visual, tactile, olfactory and many ways for you to feel it, instead of just simply coming across a post on the internet. It is more practical, allowing you to physically, directly touch this brand.*

**15. What made you feel more (or less) inclined to recommend this brand or pop-up experience to your friends or share it online?**

**Interviewee:**

*I think whether it is interesting or not is the most important thing to me. If I feel it is very boring, in other words, if the feeling I get from seeing it online is the same as seeing it in real life, if it doesn't have that kind of design that makes me feel amazed, or interesting installations or experiences, then I will feel that it is not worth it. After all, these are the unique features of a pop-up store as an offline touchpoint.*

**16. How likely were you to recommend this pop-up or**

Pop-ups increase brand followership instead of immediate purchase

Increased future attention

Multi-sensory and tangible brand touchpoints

Interesting concepts and formats

**brand to your friends or family, or to follow the brand on social media afterwards?**

**Interviewee:**

*For example, after I attended the Prada Rong Zhai market pop-up, I shared my experience of that afternoon on Xiaohongshu, and some of my good friends saw my post and asked me how to participate in this pop-up event.*

**17. How important was cultural or local relevance to your enjoyment or connection in the luxury fashion pop-ups?**

**Interviewee:**

*I don't want to see some brands trying to do 'localisation', but it is rigidly applied. If the theme of this pop-up just happens to fit with a certain traditional Chinese element, then of course I welcome it. So I feel like the key is not whether to connect with Chinese consumers through local elements, but whether the content is fresh. Because nowadays, young people in China are actually very picky, grand narratives, like the constantly emphasised 'cultural confidence', are very hard to arouse curiosity or what's called 'national pride' anymore.*

**18. What criticisms do you have of luxury pop-ups in China?**

**Interviewee:**

*I know that there are some pop-up stores in China that are only open to VIPs, and for ordinary visitors, they can only take a glance at the entrance, but it's very hard to participate in their activities, such as some souvenirs with commemorative value, or drinks and so on. And a lot of interesting interactive installations are actually only open to VIP and VIC, so I think when you are in a state of being interested in this brand's pop-up, it's a pity to know that you can't experience it in person, it will dampen the enthusiasm.*

**19. What suggestions would you have for solving this issue of luxury fashion pop-up stores in China?**

**Interviewee:**

*In China, the pop-up store has a very big purpose which is to attract consumer attention and trigger social*

Desire for peer recognition in online communities

Authentic localisation resonates with consumers

Emphasis on freshness and originality of content

Exclusivity limits access for ordinary visitors

Experience pop-up store in person

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>discussion, so I think it should be facing the general audience, instead of like a VIP Salon only serving specific group of people. One thing I can think of is, it can be opened to VIC first, like for two days, and then after that open to the public, and actually many brands are indeed doing this. Another one is, actually many activities don't have to be restricted by the space of the pop-up store itself, for example that Loewe and Hello Bike pop-up store, it is only used as a place to redeem drinks and sell a small portion of products, and the public only needs to participate in the cycling during that period to participate, this is also a kind of experience, it doesn't have to be that you have to visit inside the store or buy something or whatever.</p> <p><b>20.Would you like to add anything else?</b></p> <p><b>Interviewee:</b><br/>No, I think that's all.</p> | <p>"facing the general audience"</p> <p>Extending activities beyond physical pop-up space</p> |
|--|---|

| TRANSCRIPT - Participant 6   | FIRST CYCLE CODING  |
|--|---|
| <p><b>(Warm-up) 1.Could you please briefly introduce yourself, including your age, educational background, occupation, location, and any experiences you've had visiting luxury pop-up stores in the past two years?</b></p> <p><b>Interviewee:</b><br/>I am 22 years old this year, currently a university student in Hangzhou, and at the same time I am interning at the Tianmuli Art Museum in Hangzhou, working as a gallery assistant. I usually pay attention to luxury brands' pop-up events, and if I am very interested, I will also go.</p> <p><b>2.What initially attracted you to visit some luxury fashion pop-up stores?</b></p> <p><b>Interviewee:</b><br/>I was mostly drawn by the opportunity to see exclusive or limited-edition products that aren't available in regular stores. Sometimes the location itself is interesting, like when a pop-up is set in a historic building or an unusual space.</p> | <p>Opportunity to see products that are unavailable in regular stores</p> |

Also, if I go to a certain pop-up store, it is usually because I have seen related posts on Xiaohongshu beforehand, so I think promotion is very important. If there is no specific marketing channel letting me know, I would not pay special attention to these.

**3.How did this ephemerality (e.g., limited time/space) influence your decision?**

**Interviewee:**

It does influence my decision. I think it should be looked at from two aspects. On one hand, because it is quite limited, maybe if I don't go this time, next time there won't be the same thing, so that might motivate me to see it. But there is another reason, which is related to the location issue you mentioned. If it is very far from me, if it is in a city far away or in a different city, then I might not necessarily go out of my way to visit.

**4.How do interactive elements and experiential designs in luxury pop-stores shape your overall experience with the brand?**

**Interviewee:**

I prefer activities that I can complete independently, such as taking photos for social media check-ins. I don't like playing small games. For immersive understanding, I still need a space to be alone, allowing me to digest the experience by myself.

**5.How did any promotions, limited offers, or special incentives at the pop-up influence your decision to engage or buy?**

**Interviewee:**

In my impression, when I participate in or visit such pop-up stores, there are no particularly big discounts or benefits. Mostly, there are some small souvenirs or minor perks. I feel these are not enough to influence my purchasing decisions.

**6.So would incentives or small perks with a low barrier to entry influence your willingness to visit a pop-up store?**

The importance of promotion on social media platforms

Pop-up stores are more frequent in specific cities

“prefer activities that can complete independently”

“need a space to be alone”

Discounts or voucher are not enough to influence purchasing decisions

**Interviewee:**

*You mean activities like taking photos and checking in to get a drink or a small gift, would that attract me? I think it wouldn't, it still depends on whether the content itself is attractive.*

**7.How do you think of event-like pop-up stores particularly when they was organised with an exclusive concept?**

**Interviewee:**

*Let me give an example that left a strong impression on me. I went to Xuhui Riverside before and saw that Van Cleef & Arpels was doing a pop-up store there for a watch collection. Although you could also pre-order jewelry or watches in that temporary store, and you could make purchases there, most people saw it more as an exhibition to learn about the brand's history. I think this kind of format is really good, it doesn't come across as too utilitarian, and it takes both VICs and the general public into consideration. Another one, the most popular pop-up now should be Louis Vuitton's "Visionary Journeys", which seems to be a pop-up themed around "navigation", and the whole structure is also made into the shape of a "ship". Although opinions on it are mixed, and it looks quite abrupt on the street, it does have a high level of discussion.*

**8.What sensory elements (sights, sounds, smells, textures, tastes) stood out to you most during your visit to the pop-up store?**

**Interviewee:**

*I think yes, first of course visually is definitely the most important, everyone definitely looks first at a glance, and then in addition, I think not only pop-up stores, just all stores to me, their smell is quite, quite an important factor, I might indeed walk into a store because its fragrance is quite, quite pleasant. And I feel that smell has a longer-lasting impact on me, maybe I'm relatively sensitive in this aspect, like I would remember this scent, and then remember which brand this scent belongs to, there would be such an association in my mind, maybe after a period of time I would think of it again, like thinking of this smell would associate with this brand.*

Physical rewards do not motivate visitors

Prefer an exhibition to learn about brand

"takes both VICs and the general public into consideration"

"visually is definitely the most important"

"smell has a long-lasting impact on me"

Build association with scents

**9.What feelings or emotions did you experience during the luxury fashion pop-up and in what ways did these emotions affect how you feel about the brand?**

**Interviewee:**

*I think such strong emotions are still hard to have, because it's not like going to a store would make me feel very touched, but if you really want me to recall something, what I think of is a Chinese brand. Some time ago when I went to Aranya, I saw by the seaside that a Chinese local fashion brand GOODBAI had a "nomadic store", which combined some local characteristics, for example, it was set up next to the iconic church, and inside the store they used elements like "shadow puppetry" and ceramics, etc. I think the integration was done very well, with the environment and also with the brand's tone, at that time there was an aesthetic impact that hit me.*

**10.How did the unique location of the pop-up affect your impression of the brand or the experience?**

**Interviewee:**

*Yes, I think so, and I think it's best if it's combined with the local, like the environment it's in, if it's integrated well, then it will make me feel more interesting. So every pop-up store should make something special, it shouldn't be all the same, because the people you're facing, they are in different cities.*

**11.How did the pop-up store facilitate or encourage you to connect with others (friends, family, or even strangers) during your visit?**

**Interviewee:**

*I think it's often through some small interactive activities, game activities, this kind of setup, and then let everyone participate in it. For example, you all participate in some kind of mini games together, some kind of garden fair? Then maybe there will be some interaction between each other.*

**11.How did the luxury pop-up stores shared values and beliefs that fits your lifestyle?**

Utilise local landmarks

Fusion with local life scenes

Mini games and garden fair

**Interviewee:**

*I remember DIOR seemed to have done a pop-up at Zhangyuan in Shanghai before, and it was decorated like a beach, then they put up some parasols and deck chairs to promote their resort collection. At that time, I felt their whole setting was very dreamy, kind of like a fairy tale or that kind of fantasy feeling. Because I'm usually quite tired from work, I kind of really hope there's a place where I can slightly escape from reality, so I feel this kind of setting is especially attractive to me, and it's a bit close to my anti-involution and healing kind of lifestyle.*

“whole setting was very dreamy”

“Escape from reality”

**12.How easy or convenient was it for you to explore or interact with the brand in the pop-up touchpoints?**

**Interviewee:**

*It was very interesting and convenient. Usually after entering, there is a special guide booklet, scanning the QR code can listen to the brand story, and also can participate in mini games. I really like some VR or technology elements, for example, 3D displays of the product's production process videos. I have tried this before in a certain Louis Vuitton pop-up store.*

Technology facilitates interaction

**13.How likely are you to make a purchase at a luxury pop-up store?**

**Interviewee:**

*I am quite casual. If the experience is very good or the whole atmosphere exceeds my expectation, I might purchase on the spot, even if I had no expectation beforehand.*

**14.How do you evaluate luxury fashion pop-up stores compared to other marketing channels in terms of the value it offers or the information it provides?**

**Interviewee:**

*I think the biggest biggest difference, the biggest advantage should be in its interactivity and sense of experience, because usually when you watch ads or scroll social media, there is not much direct, immersive kind of interaction. But when you go offline to visit this kind of store, you interact with some of its designs, the sense of*

experience during the process of browsing, I think is stronger, including the impact it brings, and also the brand information you can get more, so the memory points afterwards also last longer.

**15. In what ways do you engage with this brand in the future as a result of the pop-up?**

**Interviewee:**

If I have a very good experience at a certain pop-up, in the future I will be more willing to attend their offline or online art exhibitions, podcasts, and similar activities, even if I am not buying things, I also want to participate in the lifestyle they convey. Sometimes I will specially follow the designers and artists they collaborate with, then repost their content on social media, feeling that this can maintain a 'spiritual connection' with the brand. I even collect their limited edition merchandise, feeling that this is not only a product, but also a kind of identity recognition.

**16. How important was cultural or local relevance to your enjoyment or connection in the luxury fashion pop-ups?**

**Interviewee:**

"Especially for our generation, we are more in the process of searching for a kind of 'root' and 'identity recognition', so when the pop-up cleverly integrates traditional culture, local art, or even lifestyle, I will feel that this brand understands me and also respects the culture and traditions of the nation. For example, once, there was a luxury brand doing a pop-up in Hangzhou, using embroidery and Jiangnan water town elements, that detail made me take a lot of photos, and even when I shared them on my Moments, many friends were also attracted to go learn about that culture. This kind of approach makes me feel it's not just about buying things, more like experiencing a kind of culture. Compared to just displaying products, it makes me feel more emotional resonance and also more willing to follow this brand for a long time.

**16. What criticisms do you have of luxury pop-ups in China?**

Direct touch enhances memory

"attend their offline or online art exhibitions, podcasts, and similar activities"

Share collaborator content to sustain brand connection

Collect limited edition merchandise as identity expression

"Search for a kind of 'root' and 'identity recognition'"

Show respect for local cultures and traditions

"I shared them on my moments"  
"My friend were also attracted to go learned about the culture"

Display goods but also cultures

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Interviewee:</b><br/> <i>I think a lot of pop-up stores are still a bit superficial, like it's just for doing a pop-up for the sake of doing a pop-up. It itself doesn't have a particularly interesting theme, and the whole layout also doesn't have a clear thread or concept running through. It's just putting together some flashy decorations, and then it's done. I think this kind of pop-up has no soul, no thought. To be honest, many brands now doing pop-ups give me this kind of feeling, it looks very pretty on the surface, but the content is actually very empty. For example, if it's just placed in the middle of a shopping mall atrium, and there's no atmosphere at all, then I won't feel anything. It's like an empty shell, looks good but has no memory point.</i></p> <p><b>17.Would you like to add anything else?</b></p> <p><b>Interviewee:</b><br/> <i>No, that 'all.</i></p> | <p>Consistent overarching concept</p> <p>"no soul, no thought"</p> <p>Empty content</p> |
|---|---|

| TRANSCRIPT - Focus Group   | FIRST CYCLE CODING                               |
|--|--|
| <p><b>(Warm-up) 1.Let's start with a quick round of introductions. Could each of you briefly share your name, age, what you do, where you're based, and whether you've visited any luxury pop-up stores in the past two years?</b></p> <p><b>Participant 7:</b><br/> <i>Hello everyone, I am [redacted], from Shanghai, also a fashion content creator. My usual work is to discover and experience various interesting brand activities, and then similar to on Douyin and Xiaohongshu these platforms through text, pictures, videos. Present the things I see to everyone, I myself am very interested in the creative marketing of luxury brands, because they are not only selling products, but more about telling stories, so I also often pay attention to those um relatively wonderful pop-up events. Before, last year I participated in a Hermès newspaper kiosk pop-up, it was all with orange as the main tone, um, the newspaper kiosk building, that time was a more profound experience for me, hope today there can be the opportunity to discuss more experiences together with everyone.</i></p> | <p>Tell stories rather than selling products</p> |

**Participant 8:**

*Okay, uh, hello everyone, my name is \_\_\_\_\_, 23 years old from Hangzhou, and my job is a fashion content creator. I am very glad to participate in this discussion on luxury brand pop-up stores and Gen Z brand loyalty, and also very thankful for Yan Qianqi's invitation. Next, I will try my best and seriously use my personal experiences, including some of my own feelings, to answer some of your discussion questions, hoping to bring something to your research. The pop-up event that impressed me the most personally was the one collaboration between LV and Kusama Yayoi, which left a relatively deep impression on me. The most impressive point was that when walking into the store, what came into my sight was its rather iconic polka dots and pumpkin installations. This gave people, first of all, a very strong impact, and also could bring people a different feeling in terms of atmosphere. It was even a little bit like a dreamy art space, but at the same time carried her own unique art, but this kind of art was integrated with LV's fashion style. This kind of fusion experience intertwined together, which made me feel very novel and interesting. Then the point that attracted me the most, or, uh, I think my feeling was that it could make some artistic things and fashion things go through a perfect combination, allowing people to reach a kind of eye-opening effect. Whether it was creativity or through this kind of immersive experience of the pop-up store, it could allow personal feelings in the beauty of art to be stimulated to the greatest extent.*

“a different feeling in terms of atmosphere”

“eye-opening effect”

**Participant 9:**

*My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and then I am 22 years old, I am a university student studying in Beijing, and then, uh, I am very grateful for Yan Qianqi's invitation, I will also seriously answer your questions, uh. My most recent experience of visiting a luxury pop-up, actually should be last year in Beijing the LV's Fun City Guide. And then, I think one of its more special points is, it, it not only exhibits its, its brand's products, but also combines with this city, takes the city's culture, and also some landmarks of the city, to interpret this city from different perspectives through the angle of the luxury brand, so I think it is a more interesting point. And then, um, and also it, it set up in several different places in Beijing, so I think its overall space arrangement,*

Exhibition that combines city's culture

uh, and everything, are all especially good.

**Participant 10:**

Well, hello everyone, my name is \_\_\_\_\_, 22 years old, I am a university student from Guangzhou, my most recent time participating in a luxury pop-up event was in this year January during the Spring Festival when I participated in the Miu Miu encounters Spring Festival pop-up event at Liwan Lake in Guangzhou. Then in this pop-up there were many very, um, distinctive activities, for example, um, the flower boat designed by Miu Miu as well as um um the handmade candy & tea shop and dessert shop prepared by their brand side. Very glad to be able to participate in this discussion.

**Participant 11:**

Okay hello everyone, my name is \_\_\_\_\_, currently um 25 years old working in Chengdu, um, now employed at a global luxury brand, and I'm very thankful for Yan Qianqi's invitation, I will also seriously answer all the following questions.

Um, and then? My experiences of visiting luxury, like this kind of pop-up brand, are not many, among them what impressed me more was, um, a few years ago, Chanel at an art center in Shanghai West Bund had an exhibition, it should have been to commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of its Chanel No. 5 perfume, I think, and then it was an overall exhibition set up for this perfume, and then, um, the overall environment atmosphere included many very dreamy elements, for example fountains, wishing pools, and things like chess, um these kinds of elements, just making the whole exhibition site's visual impression quite dreamy, and then also with Chanel itself, that is, the traditional, that is, everyone's traditional understanding of relatively elegant and intellectual style, had a little bit of small contrast, so that is what made me feel more impressed.

**Participant 12:**

Hello everyone, I am \_\_\_\_\_, and then currently I I am 26 years old, still studying in Chengdu ah, very thankful for today Yan Qianqi's invitation, emm, I will, I will, I will seriously answer your questions. The most impressive pop-up store experience in my memory is.

Integration of taste experiences

Visual impression was quite dreamy

Create a sense of contrast

Uh, probably it was in the winter of 2023 to 2024, a Burberry uh, pop-up theme, it continued the classic checkered English elements as well as some combination with seasonal themes. Mm, what impressed me more deeply is that we could be placed in just like as if in a London park to experience some of the arrangements in the store ah, could deeply feel the rich British style, and also could closely watch and touch Burberry's winter coats and accessories.

Uh, among them there were also some interactive kind of segments, for example checkers, chess-related some activities, and then could also stamp and check-in opposite uh to exchange some souvenirs.

## 2. What usually motivates you to visit a luxury fashion pop-up store?

### Participant 7:

I am a content creator, right, and then generally it is because of the nature of my work, I need to, um, understand this brand's trends and creative expressions, so I, I will often go to experience different, um, marketing, marketing modes, because for pop-up stores, they have a lot of realism and uniqueness. Every time in the visit and understanding I can capture a lot of the materials I want, and then these are very helpful for my content creation and also for my understanding of fashion culture.

### Participant 8:

Okay, for me personally, if I would be attracted to go to this kind of pop-up activity, mainly it is still because I want to experience this kind of immersive feeling of fashion and art, right? Because, uh, just ordinarily going to visit those luxury stores, ah, or just ordinarily going to see art exhibitions, cannot very well stimulate my interest towards this product. Or, let's say, my curiosity about this kind of artistic style.

But if, um, they combine these two together, instead it can

A set design imitating a London park

Set up interactive mini-games

"exchange some souvenirs"

Enhance understanding of fashion culture

Artistic style attracts customers

make me want to go more deeply to understand the brand's culture, or the artistic characteristics, and usually, uh, pop-up stores also will launch some, for example, limited editions or these co-branded designed products, and then, right? This kind of unique visiting feeling for me would also be relatively, um, attractive, right? And then apart from this, the service experience in this kind of pop-up store is also relatively special, that is, whether it is that kind of visual impact as soon as you open, as soon as you enter the door, right, and then about the staff, their service, compared with ordinary, for example, luxury stores, it is not ordinary marketing, it is more about introducing to you some history of this product, including some of the artistic styles they collaborated with. So these details make me feel that this is not just once a pop-up store experience, but even more of a kind of feast where art and fashion are intertwined, right. It can not only make me have more understanding of the brand, but also can let me, in the future, stimulate my curiosity, which will cause me to be able to pay more attention to the brand's trends and future product launches.

**Participant 9:**

Um, the reason I generally go to this kind of luxury pop-up store is mainly one, because I am very curious, I want to see how this kind of luxury brand conveys its concept, especially the pop-up store, this form itself carries a bit of experimental and uniqueness.

Then the second reason is related to my own major, because I study architecture, so, um, for me, a pop-up store is not just a temporary place to sell products, it is more like a temporary building or installation art, it allows me to observe how the brand uses spatial language to tell a story. So, for example, its interior layout, lighting, circulation design are all some places that are very worth my learning.

**Participant 10:**

Um, when I go to visit a certain luxury brand's pop-up store, first it is because this must be a brand I am very interested in, and then, um, maybe I see on social media this pop-up store's theme and layout, which makes me very interested. Um, it will be more attractive than regular stores.

Offer a place to explore brand's culture

Sell co-branded designed products

Introduce the history of products

Stimulate consumers' curiosity of exploring luxury fashion brands

"carries experimental and uniqueness"

"not just a temporary place to sell products"

Places worth learning

Uh, in addition, maybe, um, I will see that these pop-up stores offer some exclusive products, for example, limited co-branded, or seasonal special products, and maybe also give some limited souvenirs, these will attract me to go.

Another point is, sometimes the brand will invite some celebrities, and also their brand ambassadors, for example, in the Miu Miu event I participated in, they invited Zhao Jinmai, Chen Feiyu, and Liu Haocun, and during the event there was the opportunity to have close contact with them and take photos together.

**Participant 11:**

Okay, uh, I generally will go to visit some luxury brand's pop-up store, that is on social media, if I browse to related advertisements, or see some self-media bloggers, they post some posts some marketing, and if I am more interested in this brand or this theme, I will go to the offline channel to do a visit, I think this theme is, uh, more attractive, it is because every pop-up store's theme and location, including some of their offline exhibition designs, are a different way of presentation by the brand for the products they want to show at that time, it will give a kind of experience and design sense that is different from ordinary offline luxury brand stores, and also will make customers' feelings and understanding towards the brand more deep and rich. So I think this theme and the self-media bloggers', uh, that is, some of their marketing posts will make me go to visit offline this pop-up store, yes.

**Participant 12:**

Um, okay, actually I think everyone has already talked about this before, that is, what I want to add is that some pop-up stores' interior design may gather potential for check-ins, that is, can share these unique experiences on social media, and then the others are nothing more than, like, they have, uh, outside of the brand's regular stores, can present some unique creativity or freshness, or some exclusive products, benefits, uh, that's it.

**3.What do you personally find appealing or unappealing about pop-up stores compared to other marketing channels?**

Offer seasonal or special products

Limited souvenirs attract visitors

“exhibition design with fascinating themes”

“share unique experiences online”

“present unique creativity or freshness”

**Participant 7:**

*I think what attracts me is its sense of experience and social attributes, right, because I work in this field, and its pop-up stores are generally designed with care, quite original. I can shoot such scenes, take photos, record related videos to attract more people to understand this fashion culture, so that it can be widely spread on social media.*

*Um, the downside, as someone mentioned before, is the problem of too many people, because many pop-up stores limit the flow. A very small venue, only 4 to 5 customers can enter at a time. Then, when there are many people, you need to wait a long time, I think this will greatly affect the experience, this is my view.*

**Participant 8:**

*For me here, regarding the experience of the pop-up store, I think it generated a kind of resonance for my pop-up store journey with my lifestyle, right. As a fashion content, a fashion content creator, I pay more attention to the expression of personality and the display of creativity, and this LV and Yayoi Kusama pop-up store is precisely a perfect embodiment of this concept. Then, um, it through combining art and fashion, it conveys a spirit of bold innovation and pursuit of excellence. Although this kind of spirit sounds, uh, general, actually many, um, of these luxury stores, they are not very willing to absorb the artist's style, and also not very willing to combine it, So, the biggest feeling this exhibition gave me is that they were willing to combine the two styles.*

*In addition, the immersive experience of the pop-up store also matches my lifestyle of exploring or pursuing unique experiences, allowing me to gain inspiration and creative ideas while enjoying the fun.*

**Participant 9:**

*Actually I think my feeling about the advantages is the same as 's before, that is, I think the attraction of pop-up stores lies in their scarcity, that is, they will disappear in a very short period of time, so you will, that is, feel that if I don't go see it, I might miss it, that is, it will have a sense of urgency, a time urgency.*

Pop-up store experiences are highly shareable content

“pop-up stores limit the crowd”

“convey bold innovation and excellence”

“attraction lies in their scarcity”

“disappear in a very short period of time”

But I want to say that this form of pop-up store can actually also bring a bit of a downside, that is, its time is very short, but it may attract a large flow of people to see it, and a large flow of people in a short time, they may not have, that is, many pop-up stores may not have prepared well. Um, sufficient countermeasures, right, and then it will cause crowding, and actually many people are visiting because of its fame, but, uh, pop-up stores often may be just a very small display exhibition, so maybe everyone will feel a bit disappointed about it, that is, I think this form of pop-up store has some drawbacks, um.

**Participant 10:**

I think what attracts me to pop-up stores is because compared to traditional stores, they are more artistic and have a sense of design. Um, for example, like LOUIS VUITTON's recent train design. And also, when they hold this pop-up store in China, there is integration with Chinese and local culture. For example, the Spring Festival pop-up I attended had the flower boat design combined with Guangzhou characteristics, and also had Cantonese opera, and the Chinese knots were embroidered with the brand's logo, that is, combined with local culture.

Um, the unappealing part, I think, um, one aspect is that many activities require reservations, not everyone can participate. And another is that some staff do not have enough knowledge about the pop-up store products, which leads to a less satisfactory experience.

**Participant 11:**

Uh, I think apart from some, that is, some limited-time discounts and promotional activities that pop-up stores provide, uh, for me personally, for brands I like, this kind of pop-up is more attractive to me, because I think the limited-time sales model will give the products displayed in the store a higher time-value addition, and also provide a more unique shopping experience, and there may be some products that are only sold in the pop-up store, this to a certain extent will increase my desire to purchase.

At the same time, because I also work in fashion brands, these kinds of pop-up stores will also make me want to go offline to see what different brands have recently done in terms of new attempts and adjustments, that is in style,

"a small display exhibition"

Aesthetics & design

"integration with Chinese and local culture"

Pop-up events require reservations separate ordinary consumers

Interested in limited-time discounts and promotions

Give products a higher time-value addition

"increase desire to purchase"

including in design, which can also be incorporated into some of my future work content. It is also helpful for the improvement of my own work and artistic literacy.

**Participant 12:**

Oh, I think what attracts me is that some pop-up stores will launch some interactive activities, for example, I just, uh, I mentioned before attending that Burberry pop-up store, it launched interactive activities like checkers inside the store, and it allowed consumers to be immersed.

Then the part that is less attractive to me is that I feel that pop-up stores now are a bit too homogeneous, quite serious, that is, some pop-up stores, their design concepts including the interior space design, for example, uh, are relatively monotonous, uh, flower walls, mirrors, this kind of design is quite similar. It lacks a sense of truly unique creativity.

**4.How would you describe the overall experience you had during your visit to a luxury fashion pop-up store?**

**Participant 7:**

Yes, because, especially traditional luxury brand stores, they just give people a kind of relatively high-above feeling, I think for most ordinary consumer groups, um, they are more willing and it's easier for them to walk into a pop-up store in a public place, rather than a traditional store. Because traditional stores still have the barrier of luxury brands there, but if it's just a pop-up store in a square, or a pop-up store opened on the street, it will make many people walk in and have a look. I think the threshold is lowered, and then plus it might use some, for example, um, what we say is film elements, like some very interesting elements that fit the preferences of contemporary young people, uh, and also some interactive installations, will shorten the distance with the audience.

**Participant 8:**

Okay, for me, regarding the overall experience in a pop-up store, I think there are two keywords, one is interaction, and the other is curiosity. Interaction means that in such pop-up stores, uh, some pop-up activities will set up some interactive segments, for example, what impressed me was that they had an area with a polka-dot mirror room, so

Pop-up stores are sources of inspiration

Interactive activities allowed consumers to be engaged

Pop-ups are highly homogenized in concept and space

Traditional luxury stores feel intimidating and high-end

Ease of access encourages more foot traffic

Locating pop-up stores in urban public areas

Pop-ups reduce psychological distance to brand

customers could take photos inside. This unique interactive experience not only increases the interaction between the brand and art, but also no longer places luxury and art in a lofty position.

The second keyword is curiosity. Curiosity lies in the fact that many people visit pop-up stores not just for visiting, but more to leave their own photos, to leave their unique mark in the pop-up store. Then, when displaying these photos or personal insights on social media, it will trigger public curiosity, which in turn feeds back into the exposure of the pop-up store.

**Participant 9:**

I think, well, I feel that the experience that luxury pop-up stores give me is quite special. I believe that the main purpose of a pop-up store is not to sell products, but through the form of a pop-up store, in a tangible form that you can interact with, it presents its brand story.

Then, each pop-up store's theme has its own narrative, and it uses this narrative to show you the brand's story. So I feel that in this respect, the form of pop-up stores is very special.

Also, as a student, this kind of pop-up store is actually a very short-lived presentation of installation art, which gives me more opportunities to get in touch with such luxury brands and makes me think about how to create such spaces, allowing me to learn a lot. Thank you.

**Participant 10:**

I feel that the overall experience that luxury pop-up stores give me, one point is what the previous classmate mentioned, um, having a narrative. I don't feel like a customer, but more like, um, being invited to explore their brand story, to understand the artistic and design inspiration of the brand, and to learn a chapter of the brand's history.

The second point is that I feel it is interactive, meaning I can, um, gain a deeper understanding of the brand through participating in their workshops and similar photo-taking and check-in interactive experiences, and leave my own memories.

Take memorable photos

"leave their unique mark in pop-up stores"

"display photos and personal insights online"

Present brand's story

"get in touch with luxury brands"

"I don't feel like a customer"

Take part in workshops

Then I also feel that, um, the staff are not like usual with sales pressure, but more like guides who enthusiastically introduce the theme of this pop-up store. Um, it feels more like visiting and participating in an exhibition rather than just shopping in an accessory store, and I can experience very artistic design, whether it is in lighting, music, or artistic displays, which makes me feel more relaxed. It's not as stressful as, um, going to a luxury store.

**Participant 11:**

I think overall, my feeling about pop-up stores is quite novel and rather precious, because every time I visit different brands, including different pop-up stores of the same brand, their themes are basically different, so relatively speaking, each visit is a new experience and a new understanding of the brand. At the same time, some stores also have some of the brand's more precious historical materials, maybe stories of the brand's founder that are being made public for the first time, which can help me better review how the brand has developed step by step to now.

Also, some pop-up stores use different ways to attract customers. For example, the Chanel pop-up, it gives customers a small booklet. Throughout the exhibition, you encounter different new perfumes. When you want to try them, you can take the small scent card and keep each scent paper in this booklet. Even after the pop-up ends, every time you open this booklet, each page's scent makes you feel like you are back at the pop-up site.

**Participant 12:**

I feel that overall it is still very worthwhile to visit pop-up stores. First, it can cater to our senses, because generally, the environment of a pop-up store is quite exquisite, and the lighting and so on are very high-end. Like, as Zhu Kaiwen mentioned earlier, there can be fragrance as well. She said that in the Chanel exhibition there were cards with scents that could be kept as souvenirs, just like visiting a small exhibition, and the experience is relatively relaxed. It's not just about selling things; they tell their brand story, and with the interactions, we can slowly browse and slowly understand.

Then there is also a sense of identification. You can feel

"staff are not like usual with sales pressure"

Pop-up stores with different themes create various experiences

"present precious historical material"

Take scent paper in the booklet to evoke memories

"cater to our senses"

"cards with scents could be kept as souvenirs"

the brand's aesthetics and tone, and after we leave, we will still remember some details of the pop-up store. It's not simply selling things for the sake of selling. That's it, thank you.

**5. How has your visit to the pop-up changed your interest in the brand or what you might do with it in the future?**

**Participant 7:**

Last year, I attended the Hermès newspaper kiosk pop-up store at the Bund in Shanghai, and for me, it was a very novel experience, because it was the first time I learned that its pop-up setup was presented in a three-dimensional magazine format in front of everyone. This pop-up event was divided into four areas, and four stories connected the different locations of the pop-up. When I actually experienced all four areas, only then, through the interpretation of some literary works, did I see the spiritual world of the founder in his era, and at the same time, it gave me a very new understanding of Hermès. So after that, I often followed their products, followed their social media updates, especially those limited-edition items. Hmm, that's my thought.

**Participant 8:**

Okay, for me, the pop-up marketing approach has brought me an interest in the brand, or rather, a subversion of the brand's traditional image.

For example, the feeling Louis Vuitton used to give us, including in fashion creation, they have their classic monogram, and they have always adhered to that style. But through the collaboration with Yayoi Kusama in the pop-up, I was able to feel a sense of innovation and brand youthfulness, and this feeling was very surprising to me. Because the internet is very developed now, young people like to surf online and follow trends, and luxury brands should not be complacent; they still need to cater to young people's preferences for "trendiness."

**Participant 9**

I think the Louis Vuitton Fun City Guide pop-up I attended before really gave me a new understanding of LV. Because previously, my perception of Louis Vuitton's

"not simply selling things for the sake of selling"

Resonate with the founder's spiritual world

"follow their social media updates"

Subvert brand's traditional image

Cater to Gen Z's trend-chasing lifestyle attitude

*image was relatively singular, just some classic bags and such. But this time, the pop-up was actually combined with the Beijing city travel guide, integrating Beijing's urban atmosphere with Louis Vuitton's travel spirit, which made me feel that LV is actually making efforts in some youthful designs and attempts to appeal to younger audiences.*

*Then, this experience also made me realize that LV is not only selling products, but wants to convey a lifestyle and attitude through this event, especially after integrating Beijing's culture, I felt the event had more storytelling and a stronger sense of local intimacy. So I think it actually increases my attention to the LV brand, as well as its subsequent event trends, because I know this City Guide is also being held in different cities.*

**Participant 10:**

*Or the most recent Miu Miu pop-up event I attended. Miu Miu has always left me with the impression of being girlish, just pretty for the sake of being pretty. So previously, when I bought their products, I only looked at their designs and would buy them if I thought they were pretty. But in this event, I found that they could integrate Guangzhou's culture with the brand's art quite naturally, making the brand very down-to-earth, for example, inviting visitors to use melted sugar to draw their Miu Miu heart logo on a stone slab. And at that time, there was also a canvas bag with a flower boat pattern as a gift for spending a certain amount, which was very characteristic of Guangzhou. It was not only highly decorative but also very practical.*

*Then after this event, I felt more favorable toward the brand, no longer just buying because of the design, but also paying attention to other interesting marketing campaigns.*

**Participant 11:**

*Uh, I think, like the Chanel pop-up I mentioned earlier, its overall layout can be somewhat subversive. The initial impression this brand generally gives customers might be a relatively elegant and intellectual traditional impression, and this forms a small contrast with the brand's original tone, which makes my impression deeper, and also creates greater curiosity and interest in the brand's future development. It's like having a completely new*

Impressed by the brand's youth-oriented transformation

Create a sense of familiarity

Integrating Guangzhou's culture makes the brand down-to-earth

Provide a canvas bag

Form contrast with the brand's original tone

*understanding of the brand, and in the future, I might pay more attention to their brand trends, including their designs for ready-to-wear, jewelry, fragrances, and other different product lines.*

“pay attention to different product lines”

*Uh, of course, I have also had some not very pleasant experiences before, maybe in some pop-up store visits, which is also mentioned by previous classmates, such as some behaviors of the staff giving me relatively unpleasant experiences. This may lead to a slight negative impression of the overall brand, and in the future, I might not be very likely to purchase products related to the brand, nor pay much attention to the brand's future designs or trends.*

**Participant 12:**

*Okay, just talking about the Burberry pop-up I attended before. When I first entered, I was impressed by the interior British park-themed setup. Then visitors could, in an exhibition-like space, personally touch its trench coat fabrics and learn about some of the brand history behind its windproof craftsmanship. Secondly, as I just mentioned, there were some interactive elements, like playing chess, or postcard check-ins. At first, I might have only known Burberry as a British luxury brand, but gradually, I could associate it with its very vintage and elegant brand style. In the future, I might also be more proactive in paying attention to its winter new products, and when choosing similar items, I might be more inclined to consider it. Thank you.*

An exhibition-like place to learn about brand's history

Show increasing brand preference regarding purchase intention

**6.How did you interact with the brand in the pop-up store?**

**Participant 7:**

*When I visit a pop-up store, I almost participate in all the activities and interactive sessions available. I have tried products, taken a lot of photos and videos, and had long conversations with salespeople and other brand-related personnel. For example, when I visited HERMES pop-up stores, there were many interesting activities set up in the middle, such as painting, small games, coloring crafts, any activity I could participate in, I participated in. I would take photos of the activities and post them on my social media, tagging HERMES. These all-around activities allow me to understand the brand's culture more deeply, and I post all*

Comprehensive interaction

Hands-on activities

of this content on my social media.

**Participant 8:**

Okay, for me, it is more about interacting with the limited-time activities that cooperate with the pop-up store, including the installations they set up and the carefully designed interactive areas. For example, as I just mentioned, the Yayoi Kusama pop-up store has those polka dot mirrors, which are very visually attractive and special, very suitable to appear in the vlogs I edit.

There are also displays of some co-branded or very popular products in the pop-up store. Although most of them are not allowed to be photographed, I still like to stop there and take a look. Although this interaction may be one-sided, it can showcase the brand's innovative spirit and artistic pursuit, and also improve my aesthetic sense.

**Participant 9:**

Because the Louis Vuitton pop-up store in Beijing was actually selling books, and its theme was the meaning of travel, at that time I bought a Beijing City Guide. When I opened it, I actually found it very interesting. It recommended a lot of restaurants in Beijing, as well as some Beijing attractions. The recommended restaurants covered all price ranges, from high to low. In addition, it actually also gave some small tips about dining in China, for example, when someone invites you to a meal, you should not finish all the food, as it shows disrespect. It also popularized some basic knowledge about Chinese surnames.

But what I felt was very interesting is that this book, although sold in China to Chinese people and written in Chinese, feels more like it is aimed at foreigners, as a way to introduce them to traditional Chinese culture or customs. I feel it is very novel and creative.

**Participant 10:**

In the Miu Miu pop-up store in Guangzhou, I would particularly like elements that correspond with the pop-up theme, such as promotional short films and the songs they created. This allows me to be more immersed in their artistic experience and brand story.

Secondly, because I am a student, I feel that the desserts

Interaction with pop-up's limited-time activities

Offer co-branded or popular products

Engaging with brand-themed content that educates and provides cultural insights

Introduce Chinese culture to the West

Pop-up stores are accompanied with short films and songs

Serve desserts and coffee for young

and coffee in the pop-up store, which are suitable for young people to check in and experience, left a deep impression on me. Some of my friends went to the newly opened Louis Vuitton pop-up store at Shanghai's IFC Mall, and by purchasing coffee, they could get a Louis Vuitton coffee cup, which featured the classic tri-color pattern and a panda design created by an artist. Then when I saw it on social media, I thought, "This is really special, I also really want to go."

**Participant 11:**

Like the small booklet left at the Chanel pop-up store in Shanghai that I mentioned before, you can leave your impressions of the scents in the booklet while touring the store. I think compared to visual and auditory experiences, this might leave a special memory for the customers.

There are also some brands, for example, this year Saint Laurent opened a pop-up store on Nanjing West Road in Shanghai, which is presented in the style of a bar. Inside, there is a spinning wheel where customers can spin to different sections, and each section has a different special cocktail, with each drink corresponding to a lip gloss shade of the brand. I think such an experience also has a strong sense of interaction and provides a very special emotional value to customers.

**Participant 12:**

I can directly understand the core concept of the brand. For example, at the Burberry pop-up store, I can listen to the staff explain the design logic behind the windproof craftsmanship, and see how the plaid accessories on the display correspond to the British theme. Through touching and listening, the brand concepts, such as British style and practical elegance, become more concrete.

Then, I can also participate in the brand's scenarios. As I mentioned earlier, the pop-up store set up a British park scene, and I participated in some small interactive activities there, such as making tickets or postcards in small games. Although they seem unrelated to the brand itself, I think this kind of experience is "icing on the cake" and enriching for a pop-up store.

consumers

"get a Louis Vuitton coffee cup"

"leave impressions of the scents in the booklet"

Design a pop-up store inspired by a bar

Experience pop-up stores through touching and listening

"participant in brand's scenarios"

Engage with small games

**7.How did the pop-up connect with your personal values, interests, or lifestyle?**

**Participant 7:**

*I personally value creative expression and cultural depth, so I think Hermès' pop-up store did very well in both aspects. For me, it is not just about selling products, but more about telling a story. The four stories I learned about in the pop-up store introduced Hermès' culture, which aligns very well with my understanding of meaningful consumption. I also like that it combines digital and physical experiences, which is very helpful for my digital content creation.*

“value creative expression and cultural depth”

“combine digital and physical experiences”

**Participant 8:**

*I think it mainly depends on what concept the pop-up store wants to express. For example, the Louis Vuitton and Yayoi Kusama pop-up store I just mentioned, it mainly wanted to express individuality, creativity, and breaking conventions. For contemporary young people, especially those of us in Generation Z, we are in a period where traditional thinking and trend-oriented thinking intersect. I think it also guides young people not to deliberately oppose one way of thinking or embrace another. We have our own views on the current era and society, so everyone should be allowed to express their uniqueness.*

Showcase personal traits through visiting a pop-up store

**Participant 9**

*My experience with this pop-up store, first of all, I study architecture, so at the beginning I wanted to see how these temporary installations were made. I think one thing they did particularly well is that they set up pop-up stores in four different locations in Beijing, and the chosen theme color also matched very well with Beijing's red brick walls. I learned a lot about techniques for renovating historic buildings, for example, how to make a space more fashionable and refined while retaining the original form. In addition, Louis Vuitton's Beijing Fun City Guide also has some connection with my lifestyle. I personally really like traveling and exploring cities, and it actually encourages people to walk and look around, to discover surprises in the city. This matches my interests very well and also encourages me to do more of the things I want to do.*

“learn about techniques for renovating historic buildings”

Traveling and exploring the city are two major trends

**Participant 10:**

*I feel that pop-up stores align quite well with my personal values, one point being that they convey ideas related to environmental protection and sustainable development in many of their themes. For example, I saw online that Dior's pop-up store used sustainable recycled cardboard to build a detachable retail mobile space; and Loewe's pop-up store, by showcasing on-site artisans hand-weaving bag straps from recycled fibers, not only conveyed their craftsmen's intangible cultural heritage, but also closely aligned with supporting handmade creation and sustainable values.*

**Participant 11:**

*I think the experience of pop-up stores generally brings me many scenes and elements that I cannot frequently encounter in my daily life, and each visit allows me to have a new understanding and feeling about my usual lifestyle. Every experience is very novel, and it also makes me reflect on my current life situation. After the pop-up ends, the elements and exhibition design in the store make me want to try changing my lifestyle in different ways, for example, city walks. Visiting Chanel's pop-up store made me try to incorporate these elements into my life and work, and it subtly influences my creative inspiration and style. I think this kind of experience and emotional value can influence the lifestyle and attitude of the participants over a relatively long period of time, and it can also make people more accepting of new elements in life and willing to experience more different new things.*

**Participant 12:**

*My personal consumption view is to buy less but choose well. The winter items displayed in the pop-up store emphasize the durability of classic pieces, rather than simply piling up fast-fashion items. This makes me feel it is very fitting, that buying a piece that can be worn for many years is more meaningful than frequently changing styles. At the same time, I usually pay attention to fashion details, so the layout and arrangement of the store made me feel very interesting.*

**8.Finally, is there anything else about luxury pop-up stores or your experiences with them that hasn't been discussed, but you feel strongly about and would like to add?**

Gen Z pay attention to sustainability and environmental issues

Pop-up stores are a medium to showcase craftsmanship and cultural heritage

Shape consumers' usual lifestyle

The pop-up store serves as a space for learning and gaining inspiration

Gen Z is eager to embrace new experiences

"rather than simply piling up fast-fashion items"

Focus on fashion details and physical design of the store

(Respondent was silent)

**Iteration of Codes**

| <b>Initial Codes</b>   | <b>Grouped Codes (with similar meanings)</b>   | <b>2nd Stage Codes</b>  | <b>3rd Stage Codes (Sub-codes)</b>   | <b>4th Stage Codes (Codes)</b>   | <b>Category</b>   |
|--|--|---|--|--|---|
| Visually striking photo-worthy installations<br>Culturally resonant pop-up theme<br>Demonstrate resonance with urban culture<br>Create a kind of urgency<br>Unique decorations for different seasons<br>"shaped like a trains carriage"<br>Eye-catching exterior design<br>"shouldn't directly offer discounts"<br>Provide limited souvenirs<br>"more approachable compared to flagship stores"<br>Shift from sales-driven to experience-driven pop-ups<br>Integration of limited-time exhibitions<br>Curate space with cohesive language<br>Break away from | Visually striking photo-worthy installations<br>"shaped like a trains carriage"<br>Eye-catching exterior design<br>Curate space with cohesive language<br>Use scents to attract visitors<br>Create immersion through all five senses<br>Desire for hands-on experience<br>Limited scale and resources restrict immersive experiences<br>Need for spaces encouraging longer customer stay<br>Brand recognition drives pop-up visit<br>Luxury fashion brands are entering F&B crossover<br>"set up workshops"<br>"low cost way of relaxation"<br>"stimulate natural bird sounds"<br>Co-creation with | Visually striking photo-worthy installations<br>Spark curiosity through auditory experience<br>Be attracted by the signature scents<br>Pop-up stores utilise short films and songs<br>Take part in workshops<br>Integration of taste experiences<br>Curated exhibition rather than stimulating sales<br>Physical takeaways to evoke memory<br>Pop-up stores convey cultural depth and creativity<br>Leverage localisation strategies<br>position pop-up stores as platforms for lifestyle | Visual Appealing Installations<br>"Spray their Perfume"<br>"Cinema-like Space with Screens"<br>"Hear Simulated Train-running Sound"<br>Restaurants and Cafés<br>Workshops<br>Gallery to Tell Story<br>Set Up in Historical Buildings<br>Collaborate with Local Craftsman<br>Integration with Regional Cultures<br>Operating During the Chinese Festivals<br>Involvement in Social Issues<br>Demonstrate Personal | Multi-Sensory Engagement<br>Curated Storytelling & Non-Utilitarian Experience<br>Third Place<br>Commemorative or Meaningful Souvenirs<br>Cultivate a sense of Scarcity and Exclusivity<br>Localised Narratives<br>Engagement with Social Issues<br>Brand Authenticity<br>Lowering Entry Barriers<br>Incorporate with Limited-time public events<br>Digital & | 1.Immersive Multi-Sensory Experience<br>Design<br>2.Cultural Resonance and Value Alignment<br>3.Accessible interactions and Public Engagement |

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| conventional shopping experience<br>Selling is secondary to storytelling and culture<br>Use scents to attract visitors<br>Create immersion through all five senses<br>Brand communicates cultural respect and original intent<br>"feel respected"<br>Share experiences to connect with like-minded others<br>Express personal uniqueness via limited products/events<br>Skepticism toward grand brand values as gimmicks<br>Desire for hands-on experience<br>Brand engagement through meaningful campaigns<br>Brand conveys condensed image in limited time and space<br>Inspired by youth social issues<br>Willingness to | customers<br>Experiential marketing beyond sales<br>Spark curiosity through auditory experience<br>"film"<br>Be attracted by the signature scents<br>Multi-sensory and tangible brand touchpoints<br>"smell has a long-lasting impact on me"<br>Mini games and garden fair<br>Direct touch enhances memory<br>"eye-opening effect"<br>Integration of taste experiences<br>Visual impression was quite dreamy<br>A set design imitating a London park<br>"exhibition design with fascinating themes"<br>Aesthetics & design<br>Interactive activities allowed consumers to be engaged<br>Create an immersive exhibition through the five senses<br>"feel the values and aesthetics that brand conveys" | expression and cultural respect<br>By addressing youth-related social concerns<br>Express personal uniqueness<br>Provide limited products/events<br>Brand conveys condensed image in limited time and space<br>Create urgency and fear of missing out<br>Avoid offering direct discounts in pop-up stores<br>Making purchases is not the primary purpose of visiting a pop-up store<br>Telling a compelling brand story is the key to a successful pop-up<br>More approachable compared to flagship stores<br>Pop-up stores located in non-traditional/ community spaces<br>Interaction with pop-up's limited-time | Uniqueness Limited<br>Souvenirs<br>Generate a Sense of Scarcity<br>Beyond Sales-driven Focus<br>Incorporate with Temporary Exhibition<br>Offer a Place to Explore Brand's History and Story<br>Located in Public Area<br>Interactive Games<br>NFT<br>Souvenirs or Collections<br>Limited-time Events<br>Create Shareable Experiences on Social Platforms | Physical Hybrid Engagement |  |
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| share photos online  | Take part in workshops                                    | activities  |  |  |  |
| Attractive themes and concept                              | “cater to our senses”                                     | Provide Digital collectibles” / Pop-up exclusive NFT                                    |  |  |  |
| Expectation for localised brand content in China           | Comprehensive interaction                                 | Treat the pop-up store as an offline touchpoint   |  |  |  |
| Emotional connection via local heritage venues             | Hands-on activities                                       |   |  |  |  |
| “simple retail store is too boring”                        | Pop-up stores are accompanied with short films and songs  | A positive experience can stimulate social sharing                                      |  |  |  |
| Consider marketing differences in China                    | Serve desserts and coffee for young consumers             | Pop-up stores can trigger irrational purchasing behavior                                |  |  |  |
| Follow official account                                    | Experience pop-up stores through touching and listening   | Immersive interactions create a more favorable impression of the brand                  |  |  |  |
| Share experiences in online community                      | “combine digital and physical experiences”                | Following brand updates is a more common way for Gen Z consumers to demonstrate loyalty |  |  |  |
| Limited scale and resources restrict immersive experiences | Focus on fashion details and physical design of the store |   |  |  |  |
| Need for spaces encouraging longer customer stay           | Culturally resonant pop-up theme                          |   |  |  |  |
| Brand recognition drives pop-up visit                      | Demonstrate resonance with urban culture                  |   |  |  |  |
| Flexible locations   | Brand communicates cultural respect and original intent   |   |  |  |  |
| “display or sell some limited edition products”            | Inspired by youth social issues                           |   |  |  |  |
| Luxury fashion brands are entering F&B crossover           | Attractive themes and concept                             |   |  |  |  |
| Blur boundaries between art and luxury                     | Expectation for localised brand content in China          |   |  |  |  |
|  | Emotional connection via local heritage venues            |   |  |  |  |

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| “give free gifts”  | Consider marketing differences in China<br>The collaboration between luxury brands and local cultural institutions<br>Closer to daily life<br>“yearning for natural life”<br>Align with “light outdoor” and “urban escape” trend<br>Pop-ups as lifestyle and attitude<br>communication platforms<br>Emphasis on environmental protection or female empowerment<br>Authentic localisation resonates with consumers<br>Utilise local landmarks<br>“Search for a kind of ‘root’ and ‘identity recognition”<br>Exhibition that combines city’s culture<br>Places worth learning<br>“present unique creativity or freshness”<br>Pop-up store experiences are |  |  |  |  |
| “offer direct discounts is rare”                                 |   |  |  |  |  |
| Facilitate spaces for shared brand experience beyond products    |   |  |  |  |  |
| “set up workshops”   |   |  |  |  |  |
| Follow subsequent marketing campaigns                            |   |  |  |  |  |
| Pay attention to new products                                    |   |  |  |  |  |
| Offer special and tangible souvenirs                             |   |  |  |  |  |
| Overcrowding limits browsing comfort                             |   |  |  |  |  |
| Online booking with long wait times discourages visits           |   |  |  |  |  |
| “low cost way of relaxation                                      |   |  |  |  |  |
| Create urgency and pressure”                                     |   |  |  |  |  |
| Maintain a sense of mystery                                      |   |  |  |  |  |
| Weaken the luxury and cultural connotation due to the promotions |   |  |  |  |  |
| Closer to daily life   |   |  |  |  |  |
| Require a selling area   |   |  |  |  |  |
| “stimulate natural bird sounds”                                  |   |  |  |  |  |
| Do not happen frequently   |   |  |  |  |  |
| “yearning for natural life”                                      |   |  |  |  |  |

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| Align with “light outdoor” and “urban escape” trend                    | highly shareable content   |  |  |  |  |
| “customised products”  | “convey bold innovation and excellence”                                |  |  |  |  |
| Sense of ceremony created by custom-made design                        | “integration with Chinese and local culture”                           |  |  |  |  |
| Co-creation with customers   | Pop-up stores are sources of inspiration                               |  |  |  |  |
| “digital collectibles”   | “leave their unique mark in pop-up stores”                             |  |  |  |  |
| Pop-up exclusive NFT   | Pop-up stores with different themes create various experiences         |  |  |  |  |
| Pop-ups located in non-traditional spaces like parks and neighborhoods | Resonate with the founder’s spiritual world                            |  |  |  |  |
| “limited-time activities, such as giving out ice cream”                | Subvert brand’s traditional image                                      |  |  |  |  |
| “purchasing is not the main purpose”                                   | Cater to Gen Z’s trend-chasing lifestyle attitude                      |  |  |  |  |
| Pop-ups as lifestyle and attitude communication platforms              | Impressed by the brand’s youth-oriented transformation                 |  |  |  |  |
| Create a sense of conflict   | Create a sense of familiarity  |  |  |  |  |
| Integration of online and offline experiences                          | Integrating Guangzhou’s culture makes the brand                        |  |  |  |  |
| Experiential marketing beyond sales                                    | down-to-earthForm contrast with the brand’s original tone              |  |  |  |  |
| Spark curiosity through auditory experience                            | Engaging with brand-themed content that educates and provides cultural |  |  |  |  |

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| “film”  | insights   |  |  |  |  |
| “pop-ups held in community spaces”                                | Introduce Chinese culture to the West                                      |  |  |  |  |
| Understand the quality and functions of exclusive products        | Design a pop-up store inspired by a bar                                    |  |  |  |  |
| Consider brand identity to combat homogeneity                     | “value creative expression and cultural depth”                             |  |  |  |  |
| Emphasis on environmental protection or female empowerment        | Showcase personal traits through visiting a pop-up store                   |  |  |  |  |
| Luxury brands blending tradition with modern aesthetics           | “learn about techniques for renovating historic buildings”                 |  |  |  |  |
| Gamified engagement via limited edition badges and rewards        | Traveling and exploring the city are two major trends                      |  |  |  |  |
| Leverage fear of missing out                                      | Gen Z pay attention to sustainability and environmental issues             |  |  |  |  |
| Be attracted by the signature scents                              | Pop-up stores are a medium to showcase craftsmanship and cultural heritage |  |  |  |  |
| Physical takeaway enhances brand connection                       | Create a kind of urgency   |  |  |  |  |
| Luxury brands explore movies, music festivals, and arts           | Unique decorations for different seasons                                   |  |  |  |  |
| Pop-ups increase brand followership instead of immediate purchase | Provide limited souvenirs  |  |  |  |  |
|   | Express personal uniqueness via limited products/events                    |  |  |  |  |
|   | Brand conveys condensed image in limited time and                          |  |  |  |  |

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| Multi-sensory and tangible brand touchpoints                          | space   |  |  |  |  |
| Authentic localisation resonates with consumers                       | “display or sell some limited edition products”                       |  |  |  |  |
| Exclusivity limits access for ordinary visitors                       | Overcrowding limits browsing comfort                                  |  |  |  |  |
| The importance of promotion on social media platforms                 | Create urgency and pressure   |  |  |  |  |
| Pop-up stores are more frequent in specific cities                    | Maintain a sense of mystery   |  |  |  |  |
| Discounts or voucher are not enough to influence purchasing decisions | Do not happen frequently  |  |  |  |  |
| “takes both VICs and the general public into consideration”           | “customised products”   |  |  |  |  |
| “smell has a long-lasting impact on me”                               | Sense of ceremony created by custom-made Design                       |  |  |  |  |
| Utilise local landmarks   | Create a sense of conflict  |  |  |  |  |
| Mini games and garden fair  | Consider brand identity to combat homogeneity                         |  |  |  |  |
| Direct touch enhances memory  | Leverage fear of missing out  |  |  |  |  |
| Share collaborator content to sustain brand connection                | Luxury brands explore movies, music festivals, and arts               |  |  |  |  |
| Collect limited edition merchandise as identity                       | Exclusivity limits access for ordinary visitors                       |  |  |  |  |
|   | Physical rewards do not motivate visitors                             |  |  |  |  |
|   | Discounts or voucher are not enough to influence purchasing decisions |  |  |  |  |
|   | Collect limited edition merchandise as                                |  |  |  |  |

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| <p>expression</p> <p>“Search for a kind of ‘root’ and ‘identity recognition”</p> <p>Tell stories rather than selling products</p> <p>“a different feeling in terms of atmosphere”</p> <p>“attend their offline or online art exhibitions, podcasts, and similar activities”</p> <p>“eye-opening effect”</p> <p>Exhibition that combines city’s culture</p> <p>Integration of taste experiences</p> <p>Visual impression was quite dreamy</p> <p>Create a sense of contrast</p> <p>A set design imitating a London park</p> <p>Set up interactive mini-games</p> <p>“exchange some souvenirs”</p> <p>Enhance understanding of fashion culture</p> <p>Artistic style attracts customers</p> <p>Offer a place to explore brand’s culture</p> <p>Sell co-branded designed</p> | <p>identity expression</p> <p>Sell co-branded designed products</p> <p>Offer seasonal or special products</p> <p>“pop-up stores limit the crowd”</p> <p>“attraction lies in their scarcity”</p> <p>“disappear in a very short period of time”</p> <p>Give products a higher time-value addition</p> <p>Pop-ups are highly homogenized in concept and space</p> <p>“present precious historical material”</p> <p>Offer co-branded or popular products</p> <p>“shouldn’t directly offer discounts”</p> <p>Shift from sales-driven to experience-driven pop-ups</p> <p>Integration of limited-time exhibitions</p> <p>Break away from conventional shopping experience</p> <p>Selling is secondary to storytelling and culture</p> <p>“simple retail store is too boring”</p> <p>Flexible locations</p> <p>Blur boundaries between art and</p> |  |  |  |  |
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| products  | luxury   |  |  |  |  |
| Introduce the history of products                                 | “offer direct discounts is rare”                                 |  |  |  |  |
| Stimulate consumers’ curiosity of exploring luxury fashion brands | Facilitate spaces for shared brand experience beyond products    |  |  |  |  |
| Physical rewards do not motivate visitors                         | Weaken the luxury and cultural connotation due to the promotions |  |  |  |  |
| “carries experimental and uniqueness”                             | Require a selling area   |  |  |  |  |
| “not just a temporary place to sell products”                     | “limited-time activities, such as giving out ice cream”          |  |  |  |  |
| Places worth learning   | “purchasing is not the main purpose”                             |  |  |  |  |
| Offer seasonal or special products                                | Luxury brands blending tradition with modern aesthetics          |  |  |  |  |
| Prefer an exhibition to learn about brand                         | Gamified engagement via limited edition badges and rewards       |  |  |  |  |
| Limited souvenirs attract visitors                                | Physical takeaway enhances brand connection                      |  |  |  |  |
| “exhibition design with fascinating themes”                       | “takes both VICs and the general public into consideration”      |  |  |  |  |
| “share unique experiences online”                                 | Share collaborator content to sustain brand connection           |  |  |  |  |
| “present unique creativity or freshness”                          | Tell stories rather than selling products                        |  |  |  |  |
| Pop-up store experiences are highly shareable content             | “a different feeling in terms of atmosphere”                     |  |  |  |  |
| “pop-up stores limit the crowd”                                   | Set up interactive   |  |  |  |  |
| “convey bold innovation and excellence”                           |  |  |  |  |  |

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| <p>“attraction lies in their scarcity”</p> <p>“disappear in a very short period of time”</p> <p>“a small display exhibition”</p> <p>Aesthetics &amp; design</p> <p>“integration with Chinese and local culture”</p> <p>Pop-up events require reservations separate ordinary consumers</p> <p>Interested in limited-time discounts and promotions</p> <p>Give products a higher time-value addition</p> <p>“increase desire to purchase”</p> <p>Pop-up stores are sources of inspiration</p> <p>Interactive activities allowed consumers to be engaged</p> <p>Pop-ups are highly homogenized in concept and space</p> <p>Create an immersive exhibition through the five senses</p> <p>Take place in public area like a park</p> | <p>mini-games</p> <p>Artistic style</p> <p>attracts customers</p> <p>Offer a place to explore brand’s culture</p> <p>Introduce the history of products</p> <p>“carries experimental and uniqueness”</p> <p>“not just a temporary place to sell products”</p> <p>“a small display exhibition”</p> <p>Interested in limited-time discounts and promotions</p> <p>Present brand’s story</p> <p>“I don’t feel like a customer”</p> <p>“staff are not like usual with sales pressure”</p> <p>“not simply selling things for the sake of selling”</p> <p>An exhibition-like place to learn about brand’s history</p> <p>“participant in brand’s scenarios”</p> <p>“rather than simply piling up fast-fashion items”</p> <p>Prefer an exhibition to learn about brand</p> <p>“more approachable compared to</p> |  |  |  |  |
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| <p>“feel the values and aesthetics that brand conveys”</p> <p>Take memorable photos</p> <p>“leave their unique mark in pop-up stores”</p> <p>“display photos and personal insights online”</p> <p>Present brand’s story</p> <p>“get in touch with luxury brands”</p> <p>“I don’t feel like a customer”</p> <p>Take part in workshops</p> <p>“staff are not like usual with sales pressure”</p> <p>Pop-up stores with different themes create various experiences</p> <p>“present precious historical material”</p> <p>Take scent paper in the booklet to evoke memories</p> <p>“cater to our senses”</p> <p>“cards with scents could be kept as souvenirs”</p> <p>“not simply selling things for the sake of selling”</p> <p>Resonate with the founder’s spiritual world</p> | <p>flagship stores”</p> <p>Brand engagement through meaningful campaigns</p> <p>“give free gifts”</p> <p>Offer special and tangible souvenirs</p> <p>Online booking with long wait times discourages visits</p> <p>“digital collectibles”</p> <p>Pop-up exclusive NFT</p> <p>Pop-ups located in non-traditional spaces like parks and neighborhoods</p> <p>Integration of online and offline experiences</p> <p>“pop-ups held in community spaces”</p> <p>The importance of promotion on social media platforms</p> <p>Pop-up stores are more frequent in specific cities</p> <p>Create a sense of contrast</p> <p>“exchange some souvenirs”</p> <p>Limited souvenirs attract visitors</p> <p>Pop-up events require reservations</p> <p>separate ordinary consumers</p> <p>Take place in</p> |  |  |  |  |
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| “follow their social media updates”                           | public area like a park                              |  |  |  |  |
| Subvert brand’s traditional image                             | “attend their offline or online art exhibitions,     |  |  |  |  |
| Cater to Gen Z’s trend-chasing lifestyle attitude             | podcasts, and similar activities”                    |  |  |  |  |
| Impressed by the brand’s youth-oriented transformation        | Take memorable photos                                |  |  |  |  |
| Create a sense of familiarity                                 | “get in touch with luxury brands”                    |  |  |  |  |
| Integrating Guangzhou’s culture makes the brand down-to-earth | Take scent paper in the booklet to evoke memories    |  |  |  |  |
| Provide a canvas bag  | “cards with scents could be kept as souvenirs”       |  |  |  |  |
| Form contrast with the brand’s original tone                  | Provide a canvas bag                                 |  |  |  |  |
| “pay attention to different product lines”                    | Interaction with pop-up’s limited-time activities    |  |  |  |  |
| An exhibition-like place to learn about brand’s history       | “get a Louis Vuitton coffee cup”                     |  |  |  |  |
| Show increasing brand preference regarding purchase intention | “leave impressions of the scents in the booklet      |  |  |  |  |
| Comprehensive interaction                                     | Engage with small games                              |  |  |  |  |
| Hands-on activities   | “feel respected”                                     |  |  |  |  |
| Interaction with pop-up’s limited-time activities             | Share experiences to connect with like-minded others |  |  |  |  |
| Offer co-branded or popular                                   | Skepticism toward grand brand values as gimmicks     |  |  |  |  |
|   | Willingness to share photos online                   |  |  |  |  |
|   | Follow official account                              |  |  |  |  |
|   | Share experiences in online                          |  |  |  |  |

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| products  | community   |  |  |  |  |
| Engaging with brand-themed content that educates and provides cultural insights | Follow subsequent marketing campaigns                             |  |  |  |  |
| Introduce Chinese culture to the West   | Pay attention to new products                                     |  |  |  |  |
| Pop-up stores are accompanied with short films and songs                        | Understand the quality and functions of exclusive products        |  |  |  |  |
| Serve desserts and coffee for young consumers                                   | Pop-ups increase brand followership instead of immediate purchase |  |  |  |  |
| “get a Louis Vuitton coffee cup”  | “I shared them on my moments”                                     |  |  |  |  |
| “leave impressions of the scents in the booklet”                                | “My friend were also attracted to go learned about the culture”   |  |  |  |  |
| Design a pop-up store inspired by a bar   | Enhance understanding of fashion culture                          |  |  |  |  |
| Experience pop-up stores through touching and listening                         | Stimulate consumers’ curiosity of exploring luxury fashion brands |  |  |  |  |
| “I shared them on my moments”   | “share unique experiences online”                                 |  |  |  |  |
| “My friend were also attracted to go learned about the culture”                 | “increase desire to purchase”                                     |  |  |  |  |
| “participant in brand’s scenarios”  | “display photos and personal insights online”                     |  |  |  |  |
| Engage with small games   | “follow their social media updates”                               |  |  |  |  |
| “value creative expression and cultural depth”                                  | “pay attention to different product lines”                        |  |  |  |  |
|   | Show increasing brand preference regarding                        |  |  |  |  |

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| <p>“combine digital and physical experiences”</p>                                 | <p>purchase intention<br/>Shape consumers' usual lifestyle</p>                 |  |  |  |  |
| <p>Showcase personal traits through visiting a pop-up store</p>                   | <p>The pop-up store serves as a space for learning and gaining inspiration</p> |  |  |  |  |
| <p>“learn about techniques for renovating historic buildings”</p>                 |  |  |  |  |  |
| <p>Traveling and exploring the city are two major trends</p>                      |  |  |  |  |  |
| <p>Gen Z pay attention to sustainability and environmental issues</p>             |  |  |  |  |  |
| <p>Pop-up stores are a medium to showcase craftsmanship and cultural heritage</p> |  |  |  |  |  |
| <p>Shape consumers' usual lifestyle</p>   |  |  |  |  |  |
| <p>The pop-up store serves as a space for learning and gaining inspiration</p>    |  |  |  |  |  |
| <p>“rather than simply piling up fast-fashion items”</p>                          |  |  |  |  |  |
| <p>Focus on fashion details and physical design of the store</p>                  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Appendix 4 - Head-Heart-Hand Brand Loyalty Scale by Dapena-Baron et al. (2020)**

| Customer situation   | Head Loyalty  | Heart loyalty   | Hand loyalty   |
|--|---|---|--|
| Overall category interest                                  | Interest in doing comparative research about all brands in the category           | Interest in learning about what is new with the preferred brand only  | Low interest in acquiring new information for either the preferred or the other brands in the category   |
| Pre-purchase search behavior                               | Interest in detailed feature comparisons<br><br>Value-based choice                | Interest in points of difference to defend continued patronage of preferred brand<br><br>Emotionally charged choice | Interested only in convenience aspects (e.g., ease of access, ease of decision-making, ease of transacting, ease of use).<br><br>Habitual/routine choice |
| Relative willingness to search or wait for preferred brand | Weighed against cost of search or wait time<br><br>A cost–benefit-driven decision | High willingness to search<br><br>Resistance to substitution  | Low willingness to wait<br><br>High likelihood of substitution if unavailable  |
| Core brand value/benefit focus                             | Transactional/rationally based<br><br>Specific benefit/performance-driven         | Emotional attachment/ego-driven   | Repurchases drive cumulative value<br><br>Driven by habit and overall use of the brand   |
| Resistance to  | Competitive affront causes  | Competitive affront   | Uninterested in  |

|                            |   |  |   |
|----------------------------|---|--|---|
| competitive affront        | inquiry<br><br>Will consider competitive brands if performance/price ratio changes            | causes<br><br>counter-argument<br><br>Will not seriously consider competitive offers unless very vastly superior or coming from a <i>highly trusted source</i> | competitive offers. But if “noticeable” enough, they might cause a re-consideration of the brand preference |
| Service failure            | Will cause intent to switch on subsequent purchases when failure is on important attribute    | Will generate a service call if serious<br><br>Tolerated and forgiven if not serious   | Raises cognitive involvement which can cause intent to switch   |
| Price sensitivity          | Highly price sensitive as purchase is based on relationship between price and product benefit | Low price sensitivity due to emotional connection  | Low price awareness and low price sensitivity within a zone of tolerance                                    |
| Involvement level and type | Cognitive involvement with focus on functional product attributes                             | Passionate involvement<br><br>Seeks self-brand value congruence<br><br>Socio-emotional connection to others who use the brand                                  | Low involvement based on habitual purchase  |

## Appendix 5 - Generative AI Mapping Document

| Generative AI Mapping Document         |   |  |   |  |             |
|--|---|--|---|--|-------------|
| Gen AI tool<br>Which tool did you use? | What AI interaction does this tool have?          | What prompt did you use (please copy and paste)  | What output was generated from this prompt?   | How did you use this output in your work?  | Date of use |
| ChatGPT                                | Text-based AI generation for verbatim translation | Please retain the interview format and translate the following Chinese interview into English verbatim, without adding, polishing, or omitting any content, and without altering sentence structure. | The output generated was the English translation of the original Chinese interview transcripts. | The output was used to provide English versions of the interview transcripts in Appendix 3, which supported coding and thematic analysis in the study. | 2025-07-31  |
| ChatGPT                                | Text-based AI generation for verbatim translation | Please retain the interview format and translate the following Chinese interview into English verbatim, without adding, polishing, or omitting any content, and without altering                     | The output generated was the English translation of the original Chinese interview transcripts. | The output was used to provide English versions of the interview transcripts in Appendix 3, which supported coding and thematic analysis in the study. | 2025-08-02  |

|         |   |  |   |  |            |
|---------|---|--|---|--|------------|
|         |   | sentence structure.  |   |  |            |
| ChatGPT | Text-based AI generation for verbatim translation | Please retain the interview format and translate the following Chinese interview into English verbatim, without adding, polishing, or omitting any content, and without altering sentence structure. | The output generated was the English translation of the original Chinese interview transcripts. | The output was used to provide English versions of the interview transcripts in Appendix 3, which supported coding and thematic analysis in the study. | 2025-08-05 |
| ChatGPT | Text-based AI generation for verbatim translation | Please retain the interview format and translate the following Chinese interview into English verbatim, without adding, polishing, or omitting any content, and without altering sentence structure. | The output generated was the English translation of the original Chinese interview transcripts. | The output was used to provide English versions of the interview transcripts in Appendix 3, which supported coding and thematic analysis in the study. | 2025-08-06 |
| ChatGPT | Text-based AI generation for                      | Please retain the interview format   | The output generated was  | The output was used to provide   | 2025-08-08 |

|         |   |  |   |  |            |
|---------|---|--|---|--|------------|
|         | verbatim translation                              | and translate the following Chinese interview into English verbatim, without adding, polishing, or omitting any content, and without altering sentence structure.                                    | the English translation of the original Chinese interview transcripts.                          | English versions of the interview transcripts in Appendix 3, which supported coding and thematic analysis in the study.                                |            |
| ChatGPT | Text-based AI generation for verbatim translation | Please retain the interview format and translate the following Chinese interview into English verbatim, without adding, polishing, or omitting any content, and without altering sentence structure. | The output generated was the English translation of the original Chinese interview transcripts. | The output was used to provide English versions of the interview transcripts in Appendix 3, which supported coding and thematic analysis in the study. | 2025-08-13 |
| ChatGPT | Text-based AI generation for verbatim             | Please retain the focus group format and   | The output generated was the English  | The output was used to provide English versions  | 2025-08-20 |

|         |                          |   |   |  |            |
|---------|--------------------------|---|---|--|------------|
|         | translation              | translate the following Chinese transcript into English verbatim, without adding, polishing, or omitting any content, and without altering the sentence structure.  | translation of the original Chinese interview transcripts.                | of the interview transcripts in Appendix 3, which supported coding and thematic analysis in the study. |            |
| ChatGPT | Text-based AI generation | Please convert the following reference into Harvard format as: Surname, Initial. (Year of publication) 'Title of article', Title of Journal, Issue information, Page range. Available at: DOI<br><br>Reference:<br>[Paste the original reference] | Reference formatted in Harvard style according to the UAL required format | Used to reformat my reference list to comply with Harvard citation style                               | 2025-09-08 |