

ESTIMATING THE INFLUENCE OF CONSUMERS' PREFERENCE FOR LEATHER CRAFT PRODUCTS

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ABSTRACT

The significance of collaborations and partnerships in promoting innovation has grown in the quickly changing business environment of today. The characteristics of successful partnerships in fostering innovation within industries are examined in this essay. It explores the best approaches that businesses may take to foster fruitful partnerships, highlighting the significance of trust, synergy, and common objectives.

Case studies provide instances from the actual world where strategic alliances have produced important discoveries and competitive advantages. This article looks at these observations in an effort to give researchers and business leaders a thorough framework for navigating and utilizing partnerships in the pursuit of innovation and long-term prosperity.

The article uses case studies from a variety of industries to demonstrate how strategic alliances have resulted in breakthrough technologies and improved market positioning. By combining these ideas, the paper provides practical ways for industry executives and researchers to form and manage collaborations that create long-term innovation and corporate success in today's competitive world.

Keywords: *Strategic collaborations, Partnerships, Innovation, Research and development, Industry perspective, Competitive advantage, Case studies, Synergy and Sustainable growth*

Introduction

Consumer perception is one of the essential elements in understanding consumer behavior, as well as in making a purchase. Essentially, it refers to the process that involves the selection, organization, and interpretation of information regarding an object, service, or brand to create an impressive picture. All manners of marketing strategies, product quality, price, packaging, social influences, and personal experiences influence such perception. Consumer perception refers to individuals interpreting and form opinions about a product or brand based on their experiences, marketing, and personal beliefs. Leather products, in particular, evoke diverse perceptions among consumers. Traditionally, leather has been

seen as a premium material associated with luxury, quality, and durability. Many consumers appreciate leather for its strength, longevity, and its ability to improve in appearance over time. Leather items such as handbags, shoes, jackets, and furniture are often perceived as high-end, making them desirable for consumers seeking products that combine function with style.

The perception of leather products is increasingly shaped by concerns around sustainability and ethics. As environmental awareness grows, more consumers are scrutinizing the production processes of leather, which can be resource-intensive and environmentally harmful due to the chemicals used in tanning. Additionally, ethical concerns about animal welfare have led to a growing demand for alternatives like vegan leather, made from plant-based or synthetic materials. Consumers who prioritize sustainability and cruelty-free practices may view traditional leather less favourably, opting instead for eco-friendly options. Fashion trends also play a significant role in shaping consumer attitudes toward leather. While leather is often regarded as a timeless material, preferences can vary depending on seasonal trends, cultural shifts, and the rise of conscious consumerism. As the fashion industry embraces more sustainable practices, brands are innovating with alternative materials and promoting transparency in their sourcing, further influencing how consumers perceive leather products.

In today's dynamic marketplace, consumer perception is more complex than ever due to increased access to information, online reviews, social media influence, and rising consumer expectations. As consumers become more aware of product attributes such as sustainability, ethical production, and innovation, businesses are under pressure to not only meet their functional needs but also align with their values and aspirations. Understanding consumer perception is essential for creating effective marketing strategies, building brand loyalty, and fostering positive customer relationships. Research into consumer perception helps companies tailor their products, messaging, and positioning to meet the evolving needs of the target audience, thereby gaining a competitive advantage in the marketplace. This study aims to explore the underlying factors that shape consumer perceptions of goods and their impact on purchasing behavior, offering insights into how businesses can better align their offerings with consumer expectations.

Consumer perception on leather goods refers to the way consumers view, interpret, and form opinions about leather products based on their personal experiences, values, cultural influences, marketing messages, and interactions with the products. It includes perceptions related to quality, durability, style, environmental impact, and brand reputation. Positive perceptions are often linked to high-end craftsmanship, luxury, and longevity, while negative perceptions may arise from concerns about ethical production practices, environmental sustainability, or pricing.

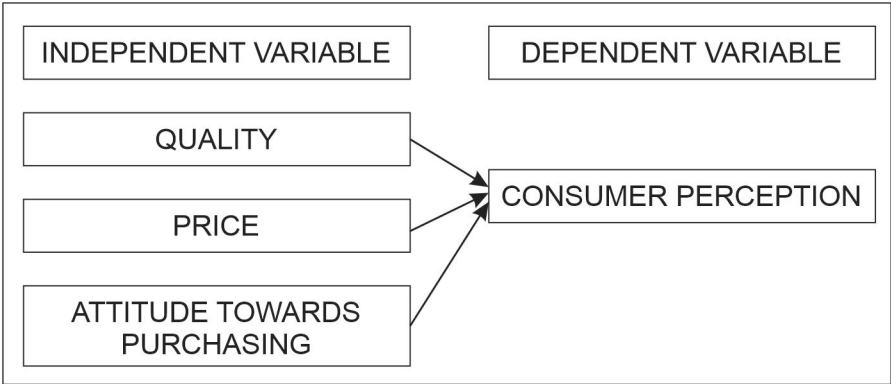
1.1 National Perspective:

In the United States, consumer views on leather items have evolved in the last several years due to a combination of changing fashion tastes, traditional values, and sustainability concerns. Leather has always been associated with elegance, quality, and longevity, making it a popular choice for customers looking for high-end, long-lasting goods. Because of their high price tags and classic appeal, luxury goods like furniture, coats, and handbags made of leather, and shoes are frequently seen as status symbols. Leather is a popular choice for this market sector, especially for individuals who appreciate the tactile qualities of natural materials and artisan craftsmanship. Thoughts about leather's sustainability have been clouded by its association with animal agriculture, which contributes to deforestation, greenhouse gas emissions, and water consumption; animal welfare concerns have also caused many consumers to reevaluate their position on leather, particularly in light of the growing vegan movement and the demand for cruelty-free products.

1.2 Global perspective:

Consumer opinions of leather items are changing on a global scale due to a variety of ethical, cultural, and economic considerations. Leather has long been associated with luxury, artistry, and toughness in a variety of contexts. In marketplaces throughout Europe, North America, and some areas of Asia, high-end leather goods like handbags, shoes, coats, and furniture fetch exorbitant prices. Leather is a desirable material for luxury items because it is associated with legacy, quality, and lasting value for many buyers. Leather continues to be a crucial component of the identities of many great businesses in nations like France and Italy that have vibrant fashion cultures. The problem is striking a balance between traditional leather manufacturing processes and the global push for sustainability in areas with strong cultural ties to leather, such as Latin America (home to a significant leather production industry) or India (renowned for its leather workmanship). In response to the global demand for environmentally friendly products, some of these locations are starting to implement more sustainable practices, such as tanning without the use of chrome and water-saving technologies. The opinions of leather items among consumers around the world are becoming more nuanced as worries about sustainability and animal welfare are balanced against the classic allure of luxury and durability. Although many people still find leather to be desirable, particularly in upscale and developing markets, an increasing number of customers are calling for ethical and environmentally sustainable substitutes.

1.3 Conceptual Flow Chart



2 Review of Literature:

De Klerk, H. M., Kearns, M., & Redwood, M. (2019). This article explains about the controversial fashion, ethical concerns and environmentally significant behaviour. The purpose of this paper is to report on the role played by luxury value perceptions and ethical concerns in environmentally significant consumer behaviour and purchase intent toward authentic leather products. A non-probability sampling was carried out and 429 males and females aged 26 years and above, who reside in a household income group that would afford them the purchasing power for authentic leather products, were administered the structured questionnaire. It revealed that the South African consumers have strong perceptions of functional and individual luxury value drivers leading to above-average purchasing intent for products made of authentic leather. Value perceptions at the individual scale were negatively associated with purchase intention. Respondents voiced very strong ethical concerns but hardly ever engage in environmentally significant behaviour. The results will have implications for the tanning industry and retailers and brands interested in penetrating the South African luxury leather market.

Dagger, T. S., & Raciti, M. M. (2011). This is an exploratory study proposed a test model for examining the congruence/incongruence between product category and country images perceived by consumers. It is whether there exists perception by consumers of favourable attitudes toward all products that originate from a given country simply because consumers associate such favourable attributes with that country or whether it cuts across certain categories of products only. A Small intercept was used in the administration of a structured survey. The sample collected consisted of 188 Australian consumers. The findings suggest that when a strong positive match exists between country and product image then COO will positively influence product evaluation and willingness to buy. In turn, when an unfavourable mismatch is evident COO would negatively influence consumers' product evaluations and willingness to buy.

Summers, T. A., Belleau, B. D., & Xu, Y. (2006). The purpose of this study is to determine, based on the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), whether wealthy female consumers would have a purchase intention toward an abusive luxury product, namely, apparel made from American alligator leather. Influence variables evaluated in the model were: attitude toward performing the behaviour (purchasing alligator leather apparel); subjective norm, involvement (fashion involvement); controversy perception (social acceptance and endangerment status of the American alligator); price perception (price-quality schema and prestige sensitivity); personality traits (self-confidence and self-consciousness); and demographics. A mail survey of 1,200 affluent female consumers residing in eight US metropolitan statistical areas defined as fashion centres was conducted. A total of 430 usable surveys were returned for a 36 percent response rate. The general linear model regression analysis revealed that attitude toward performing the behaviour, subjective norm, controversy perception (social acceptance), and fashion involvement were significant predictors of purchase intention.

Jiang, L., & Shan, J. (2018) this paper evaluates the relationships between Confucian Propriety and luxury value perception with the purchase intention of luxury brands, with a specific focus on how those relationships may vary between youth and elderly consumers in a Chinese context.

The findings of this study indicate the changes of luxury consumption values and behaviour of Chinese consumers, and therefore, marketers should not generalise the Chinese luxury consumers' behaviour again. Marketers of luxury are advised to: Even more, brands in China should change their attitude and behave in accordance with different generations' expectations.

Keech, J., Morrin, M., & Podoshen, J. S. (2020). The effects of materialism on consumer evaluation of sustainable synthetic (lab-grown) products. With increasingly indulged customers who want luxury goods that are socially responsible, and supplies remain somewhat unstable in consumer markets, many industries seek alternative sources to help satisfy its consumers. One alternative source that may eventually fulfill the needs of the future is lab-grown products. Marketers, therefore, should exercise extreme care while using particular appeals for different groups according to values of materialism levels among consumers. It will be importantly understood how consumers are going to react to this new emerging technology and to see how the promotion strategies can augment their evaluation if indeed the wave of the future will be lab-grown products.

Canziani, B., Watchravesringkan, K., & Yurchisin, J. (2016) this article discuss a theoretical relationship that exists among perceptions of consumer social class, perceived legitimacy of customer requests for service, and the delivery of intangible services. Evidence suggests upgrading service providers' efforts to reach out to the new rich and trading-up neo-luxury consumer markets as long as these focus on the intangible elements of the service delivery system.

3. Research Methodology

It involves specific techniques that are adopted in research process to collect, assemble and evaluate data.

4. Data Analysis:

4.1 Normality Test

Table: 01 - Descriptive

Study Variable	Statistics	Std. Error
Consumer Perception	2.79	0.042
Skewness	0.416	0.304
Kurtosis	0.895	0.599

Source: Primary Data

Inference

The normality test show that the mean of Consumer Perception is 2.7952. The skewness is 0.416 indicating left skew. The kurtosis is 0.895 (positive) suggests a leptokurtic distribution, meaning it has heavier tails than a normal distribution.

Table: 02 - Normality Test

	Kolmogorov			Shapiro – Wilk		
	Statistics	Df	Sig.	Statistics	Df	Sig
Consumer Perception	0.114	62	0.043	0.971	62	0.156

Source: Primary Data

Inference

The normality test for investor sentiment statistics shows that the data is not normally distributed. This is indicated by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, both of which have significant p-values (0. 043). The Positive skewness and positive kurtosis further confirm the deviation from normality.

4.2 Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis involves using graphical, mathematical, and textual operations to assess the effectiveness of a system by highlighting weaknesses and ranking available options when certain components fail. The analysis, based on a sample of 65 participants, revealed strong internal consistency among the scales.

Table: 3 - The Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's Alpha	No of Item
0.51	30

Source- Primary Data

Inference

Cronbach's alpha test was performed to check the reliability of 30 item. The usual reliability coefficient ranges from 0 to 1, the greater the internal consistency of the items in the scale. Henceforth, the result states that the overall score is 0.51 indicating internal consistency of the items which states more reliability.

Table: 04 - Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	No. of Items
87.63	70.66	8.40	30

Source- Primary Data

Inference

The above table states that the scale statistics were calculated for a total of 30 items where the mean is 87.63, variance is 70.66 and with a standard deviation of 8.40.

4.3 Factory Analysis

Factor Analysis is a statistical method used to describe variability among observed, correlates variable in terms of potentially lower number of unobserved variables called Factors. Factor Analysis is related to principal component analysis (PCA).

Table: 05 - Communalities

Factor	Initial	Extraction
CP1	1.00	0.80
CP2	1.00	0.55
CP3	1.00	0.67
CP4	1.00	0.69
CP5	1.00	0.56
CP6	1.00	0.65
CP7	1.00	0.59
CP8	1.00	0.76
CP9	1.00	0.69
CP10	1.00	0.73

Q1	1.00	0.70
Q2	1.00	0.60
Q3	1.00	0.50
Q4	1.00	0.63
Q5	1.00	0.58
P1	1.00	0.56
P2	1.00	0.71
P3	1.00	0.73
P4	1.00	0.66
P5	1.00	0.73
ATP1	1.00	0.72
ATP2	1.00	0.77
ATP3	100	0.58
ATP4	1.00	0.78
ATP5	1.00	0.65

Source- Primary Data

Inference

The highest extraction for the Consumer Perception is 0.80, Quality is 0.70, and Price is 0.73, Attitude towards Purchasing 0.78.

Table: 06 - KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	0.622
Barlett's Test of Sphericity	
Approx. Chi-square	706.79
Df	435
Sig.	0.00

Source- Primary Data

Inference

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy is a statistic that indicates the proportion of variance in the variables that might be caused by underlying factors. High values (close to 1.0) generally indicate that a factor analysis may be useful with your data. From the above table it shows a value of 0.622 which is a great measure for the variables.

Table: 07 - Total Variances Explained

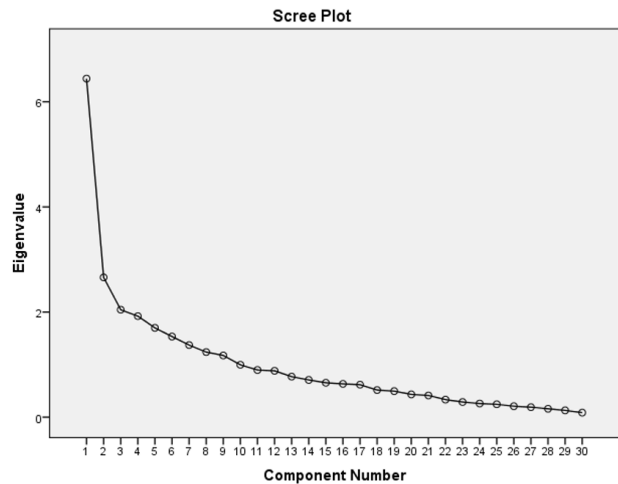
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6.44	21.47	21.47	6.44	21.47	21.47
2	2.65	8.86	30.33	2.65	8.86	30.33
3	2.04	6.81	37.14	2.04	6.81	37.14
4	1.92	6.40	43.55	1.92	6.40	43.55
5	1.69	5.66	49.21	1.69	5.66	49.21
6	1.53	5.11	54.32	1.53	5.11	54.32
7	1.37	4.57	58.90	1.37	4.57	58.90
8	1.23	4.12	63.02	1.23	4.12	63.02
9	1.17	3.91	66.94	1.17	3.91	66.94
10	0.99	3.31	70.26			
11	0.89	2.99	73.25			
12	0.88	2.94	76.19			
13	0.77	2.57	78.76			
14	0.70	2.36	81.12			
15	0.65	2.18	83.30			

Source- Primary Data

Inference

The highest percentage of variance in initial Eigen values is 21.47 percent which is equal to the extraction sums of squared, and also followed by their cumulative percentage is 21.47 percent.

Chart : 1 - The Scree Plot



Inference

The above plot X-Axis represents component number and Y-Axis represents Eigen value and its shows the items (variables) in the rotated factor space. It helps to see how the items (variables) are organized in the common rotated space.

4.4 CHI-SQUARE

Consumer Perception VS Attitude towards Purchasing

Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis - There is no association in between the implementation of Consumer Perception and Attitude towards Purchasing.

Alternative Hypothesis - There is an association in between the implementation of Consumer Perception and Attitude towards Purchasing.

Table: 9 Chi-Square Tests

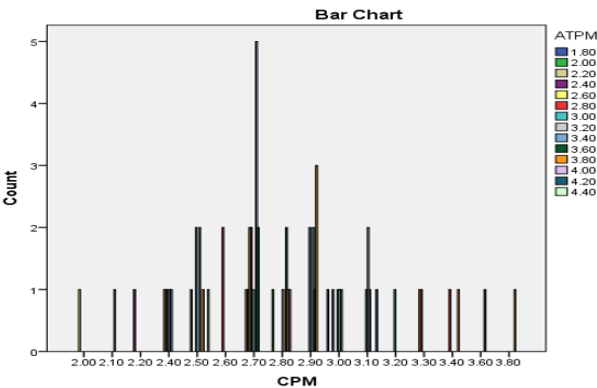
Variables of the study	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	178.72a	195	0.79
Likelihood Ratio	124.16	195	1.00
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.71	1	0.19
N of Valid Cases	62		

Source- Primary Data

Inference

The Chi-Square tests for this analysis also show no significant association between the variables. The Pearson Chi-Square ($\chi^2 = 178.72$, $p = 0.79$) and Likelihood Ratio ($\chi^2 = 124.16$, $p = 1.00$) have p-values well above 0.05, indicating the variables are independent. Additionally, the Linear-by-Linear Association ($\chi^2 = 1.71$, $p = 0.19$) suggests no significant linear relationship. With 62 valid cases, the results indicate no meaningful association between the variables in this dataset.

Chart : 2 - The Scree Plot



Inference

The bar chart illustrates the distribution of attitude towards purchasing values across various consumer perception ranges. The majority of attitude towards purchasing values cluster within the consumer perception range of 2.60 to 2.80, with a significant peak at 2.70. The overall distribution leans towards higher consumer perception values, suggesting a concentration of favourable attitudes towards purchasing in these ranges.

4.5 t-Test

NULL HYPOTHESIS: There is no significance difference among the variables of the study.

ALTERNATIVE HYPOTHESIS: There is significance difference among the variables of the study.

Table: 10 One Sample Statistics

Study Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Consumer perception	62	2.79	0.33	0.04
Quality	62	2.92	0.50	0.06
Price	62	3.44	0.60	0.07
Attitude towards purchasing	62	3.16	0.53	0.06

Source- Primary Data

Inference

The table shows the one-sample statistics for four variables. Consumer Perception has a total of 2.79, with a standard deviation of 0.33. Quality has a total of 2.92 and a standard deviation of 0.50. Price has a total of 3.44 with a standard deviation of 0.60. Attitude towards purchasing has a total of 3.16 and a standard deviation of 0.53. These values represent the central tendency and variability of the variables based on 62 valid cases.

Table: 11 - One - Sample Test

Study Variable	Test Value = 0					
	T	Df	Sig (2 – tailed)	Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
CP	65.49	61	0.00	2.79	2.70	2.88
Q	45.94	61	0.00	2.92	2.80	3.05
P	44.55	61	0.00	3.44	3.28	3.59
ATP	46.86	61	0.00	3.16	3.02	3.29

Source- Primary Data

Inference:

The t value of Consumer perception is 65.49, Quality is 45.94, Price is 45.55, and Attitude towards purchasing is 46.86. The P value for all the factors is less than 0.05, hence there is a significance between Consumer Perception and its variables.

4.6 One Way Anova

Table : 12 - Consumer Perception Vs Quality

Study Variable	Sum of Squares	df	Square	f	Sig.
Between Groups	0.527	11	0.048	0.377	0.959
Within Groups	6.361	50	0.127		
Total	6.889	61			

Source- Primary Data

Inference:

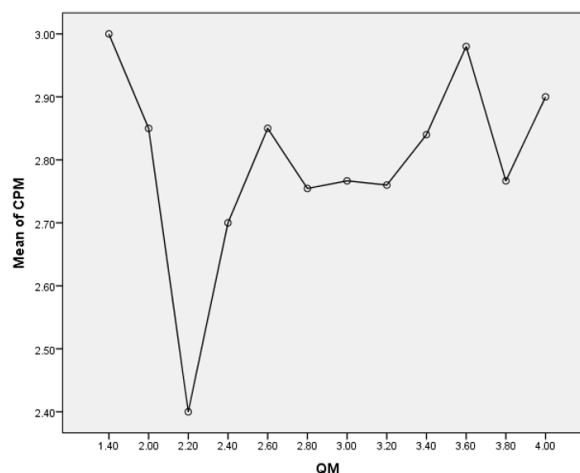
The table shows the ANOVA results for Consumer Perception vs. Quality. The Between Groups sum of squares is 0.527, with a square of 0.048. The Within Groups sum of squares is 6.361, with a square of 0.127. The f-value is 0.377 ($p = 0.959$), indicating no significant difference between groups.

Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis - There is no significance difference in between the Consumer perception and the Quality.

Alternative Hypothesis - There is a significance difference in between the Consumer perception and the Quality.

CHART: 3 Mean PLOTS



Inference:

From the above table, it is inferred that the P value of the variable equipment and attribute is less than 0.05. Hence, Null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Study Variable	Sum of Squares	df	Square	f	Sig.
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4.7 Correlation:

Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis: There is no relationship among the variables of the study

Alternative Hypothesis: There is relationship among the variables of the study

Table: 13 Correlations

Study Variable	CP	Q	P	ATP
CP	1.000			
Q	0.980	1.000		
P	0.982	0.714	1.000	
ATP	0.392	0.388	0.737	1.000

Source- Primary Data

Inference:

The table shows the correlation coefficients between four variables: Consumer perception, Quality, Price, and Attitude towards purchasing. All pairs of variables have a significant correlation, with the strongest correlation between Consumer Perception and Price.

5 Findings:

OBJECTIVES	HYPOTHESES	ANALYSIS	FINDINGS
To explore the association in between Consumer perception and the Attitude towards Purchasing	Null Hypothesis - There is no association in Consumer perception and the Attitude towards Purchasing Alternative Hypothesis - There is an association in Consumer perception and the Attitude towards Purchasing.	Chi - Square	There is a degree of association between Consumer perception and the Attitude towards Purchasing.

To examine the significance difference in between the Consumer perception and the Quality	Null Hypothesis - There is no significance difference in between the Consumer perception and the Quality. Alternative Hypothesis - There is a significance difference in between the Consumer perception and the Quality.	One Way Anova	There is a significance difference in between the Consumer perception and the Quality
To certify the relationship among the variables of the study	Null Hypothesis: There is no relationship among the variables of the study Alternative Hypothesis: There is relationship among the variables of the study	Correlation	There Exist Correlation relationship among the variables of the study.

6. Suggestion:

To succeed in the leather goods industry, businesses must prioritize product quality and craftsmanship, as these are key factors in consumer perception. High-quality leather products are often associated with luxury, durability, and status. By focusing on superior materials and production processes, brands can build trust and foster long-term customer loyalty. Sustainability is another growing priority for consumers. With increasing awareness of environmental and ethical issues, many are turning to eco-friendly alternatives like vegan leather. Brands that adopt sustainable practices, such as ethical sourcing or eco-conscious materials, can appeal to this conscientious market. Promoting these efforts can enhance brand reputation and attract environmentally conscious consumers. Pricing strategies should be diversified to meet the needs of different demographics. While some consumers value high-end luxury, others, especially younger buyers, seek more affordable options. Offering products at various price points allows businesses to cater to both markets, expanding their reach without sacrificing quality. Finally, ongoing consumer research is essential. Monitoring shifts in trends and preferences will help brands stay competitive and adapt to the evolving demands of the leather goods market.

7. Conclusion:

Based on the research findings, consumer perception of leather goods is significantly shaped by factors such as quality, price, and purchasing attitude. High-quality leather products are often associated with luxury, craftsmanship, and durability, which attract consumers who value premium goods. Therefore, businesses must prioritize quality to maintain consumer trust and loyalty. Pricing strategies also play a key role. Consumers are price-sensitive,

particularly among younger demographics, who seek a balance between affordability and style. Businesses should explore pricing models that cater to diverse income groups while maintaining product value. Targeting specific demographics based on these preferences can help businesses optimize their marketing efforts. Younger consumers may prioritize affordability and sustainability, while older consumers may focus on luxury and craftsmanship.

In conclusion, understanding these key factors—quality, price, and sustainability—allows businesses to better meet evolving consumer needs, enhance their market presence, and refine their product offerings in the competitive leather goods industry.

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