



## **The Psychology of Customer Engagement in Jewelry Sales: An Investigation into Persuasion Techniques**

Shahrzad Mashhadi

Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences

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<b>Author</b> Shahrzad Mashhadi
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<p>This thesis explores the psychology of customer engagement and the application of persuasive techniques within the jewelry sales industry, addressing an identified gap in the existing literature. Utilizing a LinkedIn survey to gather data, this research investigates customer demographics, purchasing behavior, psychological factors, and persuasion strategies to understand their impact on customer engagement and satisfaction. Key findings emphasize the critical roles of trust, rapport, emotional appeal, and customization in driving customer engagement. Trust and rapport were identified as foundational elements, corroborating findings from previous studies such as Gremler and Gwinner (2000), highlighting the importance of relationship quality in service industries. However, this study also uncovers nuanced insights into the use of scarcity and emotional appeal. While scarcity can enhance perceived value and urgency, it must be applied subtly to avoid adverse customer reactions. On the other hand, emotional appeal is exceptionally influential in jewelry, surpassing its impact in other retail sectors due to the inherent emotional and sentimental value associated with jewelry.</p> <p>The study's results align with many established customer engagement and persuasion theories but also highlight significant divergences. These findings enhance the theoretical understanding of consumer behavior in the jewelry market and provide practical insights for retail practitioners. The practical recommendations include building trust and rapport through personalized interactions, leveraging emotional appeal by highlighting the sentimental value of jewelry and employing persuasion techniques ethically to maintain customer trust. Additionally, the importance of continuous training, the use of technology, and fostering customer loyalty through personalized and customized services are underscored. The implications for practice are significant, offering actionable strategies for jewelry salespeople and businesses to enhance customer engagement and achieve competitive advantage. By integrating theoretical concepts with real-world applications, this research bridges the gap between theory and practice, providing a comprehensive framework for understanding and influencing customer behavior in the jewelry sales industry.</p> <p>Despite the methodological strengths of this study, such as its detailed qualitative analysis, limitations include the sample size and the qualitative nature of the research, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Future research should incorporate more extensive, more diverse samples and explore quantitative techniques to build upon these results. Further analysis of digital transformation, cultural differences in sales, and integration of new technologies in retail processes could provide deeper insights into customer engagement and persuasion.</p>
<b>Key words</b> Psychology, consumer behavior, persuasion strategies

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## 1 Introduction

The selling of jewelry as an industry for the retail sector forms a considerable and rapidly growing portion. As a timeless adornment, jewelry remains one of the world's largest industries and an essential way of celebrating personal identity and human history. According to Grand View Research of 2023, the global jewelry market was estimated at \$279 billion, highlighting a healthy sector encompassing luxury sales and the general population. This market deals with aesthetic and luxurious ornaments, including fashion jewelry, high-quality and trendy pieces, and unique, customized ornaments that suit various social classes for different occasions.

Delicate art ornaments, including necklaces, earrings, and rings, have been associated with honor, fortune and identity over the decades. Significant differences in the roles performed by the jewelry across the earliest cultures of Egypt, Mesopotamia and the Roman Empire are that, apart from being symbols of splendor, they also helped depict status and power relations in society and religious canons (Munaro et al. 2019). For instance, Egyptian kings used jewelry to show they were gods, and Romans wore jewelry to show the societal class of people and financial muscle (Pankiw S. A. Phillips B. J. & Williams D. E. 2021). SUCH historical traditions persist in modern jewelry markets, where rings are linked to specific occasions in one's life, such as engagements, weddings, and anniversaries.

Modern societies use the jewelry industry for aesthetic and emotional purposes. Jewelry is not only just a mere product that circulates in the market as an accessible good, but it is a product that has meaning and can represent a valuable moment in someone's life, a style and even an inheritance of heritage (Gomez Cardenas 2021). Industry affects not only economic indicators but also people's identity, culture and other aspects. For example, wedding bands signify dedication and affection; custom-designed items may signify accomplishments or mark ceremonies (Lynch 1998).

Contemporary jewelry, defined by today's market trends, combines traditional style and avant-garde ideas. As mentioned, luxury jewelers have yet to provide their clients with rich heritage and quality craftsmanship. However, at the same time, newcomers and technology are opening new horizons of designs and ways of selling them (Armano 2020). This aspect is viewed as a reflection of the industry's cases and its ability to evolve with the changing tastes of consumers as well as develop innovations. An example of such changes relates to how most jewelry consumers search for and decide to purchase a piece of jewelry facilitated by online shopping technologies and platforms.

Of course, there are market prospects and threats to developing the jewelry industry. The need for luxury products is increasing, people's disposable income is increasing, and therefore, overall, the market is growing. However, competition is also rising and changing consumer habits are challenging. Therefore, a strong need exists to elucidate customer engagement and persuasive approaches that

jewelry businesses within this environment use to attract and retain their customers. As it is evident that the jewelry industry is a saturated market, the critical elements of creating successful selling strategies are customer involvement and persuasion.

Customer engagement is defined as the total interactions that customers have with a brand or retailer that decide their perception, satisfaction, and loyalty level (Vivek S. D. Beatty S. E. & Morgan R. M. 2012). Engagement adds value to the customer's experience. Customers will likely remember the interaction, making them want to patronize the business or manufacturer.

Consumers are not just buying jewelry products but experience interacting with the company that sells the jewelry. This involves forgetting the sales aspect and establishing a sound and healthy relationship with the consumers to the extent that a bond is formed. It usually involves individual attention, active listening, and genuine concern for customers' wants and needs. Through this interaction, there is customer involvement where the salespersons can make customers feel special, hence resulting in improved customer satisfaction and higher chances of the customer purchasing as stipulated by (Pappas A. Fumagalli E. Rouziou M. & Bo-lander W. 2023).

Persuasion is critical when a person is engaging in a particular process. All these techniques originate from psychological theories; their main objective is to persuade customers to make a specific choice regarding their purchase. Some persuasion techniques may include appeals to the time factor, appeals to the aspects of the specialized nature of specific products or services, and appeals to the number of people. Due to the unique nature of jewelry products, often purchased as gifts, souvenirs or meaningful accessories, persuasive tools should be carefully elaborated and linked to the buyers' emotions and incentives. For ample, salespeople could use rhetoric in the form of a story and say that the jewelry piece has been made with such and such precision and is made by tradition, or the salesperson could use personal appeals and recommend products based on the consumer's past purchase and likes (Gass & Seiter 2022). Some of them could include using word and lip referrals, displaying seals/ membership to professional bodies, and promoting limited and special deals.

Identifying and implementing customer persuasion and engagement strategies remain critical in the jewelry industry's transition and technological advancement. Salespeople must employ these techniques in different scenarios, such as talking to customers inside the store, over the phone, and primarily through social media platforms, such as the ones used during the MENA eCommerce Trends, 2023. E-commerce, as a relatively new phenomenon, creates new risks and opportunities for the retail process, introducing new and unique ways of approaching the customer and stimulating purchases.

## 1.1 Research Objectives

To achieve the first identified aim of this research, the focused psychological factors that characterize customers regarding jewelry sales will be examined. Customer psychological behavior is a psychoanalytic model that highlights the customers' emotions and psychological states that dictate their engagement with jewelry brands and retailers. This involves identifying what inspires people daily to buy jewelry, whether this is an exercise in self-display or the need to be associated with a particular perception of class (Ertimur 2003).

These are some of the psychological factors the research will explore in customer satisfaction and loyalty, including presenting strategies for salespeople to customers. This exploration will involve identifying and understanding feelings that drive the customer's material acquisition needs, for instance, using jewelry as symbols of achievements, milestones, and celebration ceremonies (Khan et al. 2019). Therefore, the study lays its focus and seeks to establish ways adopted by the salespeople that will enhance the delivery of psychological factors, which will help the consumers feel valued and build meaningful consumer experiences.

The study's second aim is to find out the influencer's jewelry employees use to increase customer satisfaction and sales. This entails the assessment of the tactics applied by salespersons on customers, including appeal to emotion, assertive communication, and social influence (Grewal & Levy 2010).

To define viewpoints on the realization of persuasion techniques, the research will focus on issues such as rapport building with customers, stressing the benefits of the specific jewelry pieces, and using techniques such as urgency and scarcity (Grigorova 2009). Therefore, by exploring these methods, the study expects to understand which techniques are appropriate for sales situations, whether face-to-face, over the Internet, or as part of sales promotions.

This study aims to explore the psychological factors and persuasion techniques that influence customer behavior in the jewelry market. The following research questions are posed to deepen the understanding of these factors:

1. What psychological factors shape customers' responses to jewelry purchasing, including specific feelings and psychological traits?
2. How do customers' personae, social standing, and self-actualization influence their behavior toward jewelry brands and stores?
3. What persuasion techniques do jewelry salespeople use to influence customer decision-making, including appeals to time pressure, value, and social proof?
4. What are the best practices for persuasion in different types of jewelry sales environments, and how can these be applied to enhance customer engagement?

## **1.2 Significance of Study**

Relative to the current research objectives, analyzing customer behaviors in the jewelry sales industry offered insight into the psychological antecedents of customer behavior. The study contributes to the customer behavior literature by analyzing the impact of those psychological factors that affect customers' relationships with jewelry brands and retailers. The conclusion of this research will offer valuable insights to owners and managers of jewelry enterprises who aspire to enhance their marketing and sales techniques and identify better ways of enhancing customer relations. Knowledge about the psychological motives behind the customers' behaviors can help design the appropriate tactics for customer contact, improving the concept of the experiences offered to customers and increasing the chances of selling the products (Roethke et al. 2020).

The implications of this research are practical to jewelry that want to incorporate newer and more effective methods into their sales models and obtain better results in today's operating environment. The study sheds light on the customer population and influence tactics that could make consumers more responsive to various selling strategies; the study also gives recommendations on enhancing consumer satisfaction (Cialdini 2009). Using the information from the study, jewelry retail firms can develop better strategies for sales, train their salespeople to be better and design additional services and experiences which will make customers come back more often with their business. The conclusions derived from the research will give business actors insights into ways of overcoming hurdles and utilizing the potential of the jewelry market to the most significant potential.

## **1.3 Structure of the Thesis**

The thesis should offer a workable outline of the research theme, including its background, objectives, methodology, and implications of the results. The structure aims to allow readers to follow the research process and use the findings and recommendations as part of the study.

**Introduction:** This section details the jewelry sales industry, introduces the research objectives and questions, and justifies the study. It also outlines the thesis content and the organization of chapters to guide readers through the research process.

**Literature Review:** The first section highlights earlier studies on customer engagement, persuasion techniques, and shoppers in the jewelry industry. It looks at the existing body of knowledge related to the study, assesses the theoretical and empirical literature for research gaps, and lays down the framework for the research questions and approach.

**Methodology:** The concerns of the methodology sub-section explain the nature of the research overall, how data has been collected, and how data has been analyzed in the study. It shows how the research questions will be answered, why specific methods have been selected, and what measures will be implemented to enhance the study's credibility.

**Findings:** The findings section of the research analysis provides the primary outcomes or findings of the study, especially about data analysis and results. It also presents changes in the trends and patterns of customers' engagement and chosen persuasion methods and describes the significance of the findings for the jewelry sales field.

**Discussion:** The discussion section highlights the implications of the research findings, given the other students' literature-based theoretical backgrounds. Finally, it provides a review of the findings, emphasizing the study's methodological limitations and recommendations for future research.

**Conclusion:** The final part of the research revolves around the overall results, the advantages of applying the obtained learnings to jewelry business sales, and recommendations on enhancing consumer relations approaches.

**References:** The List of sources at the end of the thesis is presented in alphabetical order and contains all sources referred within the thesis work, with the source type, title, author, date of publication and the line number mark where the sources were cited.

**Appendices:** These consist of Research instruments used, Tables containing raw data and other helpful information that could complement the study.

## 2 Literature Review

The jewelry industry, as a sector that blends tradition with modern consumer demands, offers a unique landscape for studying customer engagement and persuasion strategies. As consumers' values and purchasing behaviors evolve, understanding the psychological drivers behind their engagement with jewelry brands becomes critical. This literature review examines foundational theories of consumer behavior and persuasion, including self-determination theory, the Theory of Planned Behavior, and the Persuasion Knowledge Model, to explore how these frameworks apply to the jewelry sector. By investigating past studies on customer attitudes, engagement techniques, and ethical considerations in luxury retail, this review aims to shed light on the complex dynamics influencing consumer decision-making in jewelry purchases. This analysis will provide a theoretical basis for understanding the strategic approaches that can effectively enhance customer engagement and foster long-term loyalty within this competitive market.

### 2.1 Customer Engagement in Retail Setting

Customer engagement is a broad concept that has received significant attention in marketing and retail research. Generally, it is defined as the affective processes involved in customer interactions with a brand beyond mere transactions. It encompasses how customers perceive, feel, and connect with a brand (Ng S. C. Sweeney J. C. & Plewa C. 2020). Several theories explore why customers engage with brands. One is the self-determination theory, which emphasizes the extrinsic motivations that drive customers to engage in activities. Another is engagement theory posits that engagement arises from interactive and co-creative customer experiences with the brand (Blasco-Arcas L. Hernandez-Ortega B. I. & Jimenez-Martinez J. 2016).

Customer engagement includes customers' thought processes, emotions, and actions toward a brand. Engagement can be divided into three dimensions. The cognitive dimension involves mental focus and attention to the brand experience. The emotional dimension refers to the emotions and feelings experienced during product use. Finally, the behavioral dimension includes purchasing, sharing content, and engaging in brand-related activities (Hollebeek et al. 2014).

Managing customer engagement is essential in the retail industry, directly impacting customer satisfaction, loyalty, and sales performance. When customers are engaged with a brand, they are more likely to develop positive perceptions, enhancing loyalty. Research shows that high customer engagement is closely linked to increased purchase frequency, higher spending, and a willingness to pay premium prices (Bergel M. Frank P. & Brock C. 2019). Effective retail promotion and selling require attentiveness to customers, a friendly approach, and memorable shopping experiences. Brands prioritizing customer engagement tend to achieve higher satisfaction levels, resulting in positive word-

of-mouth and increased sales. For example, Apple Stores are well-known for engaging customers through trained staff who assist with product selection, interactive touch screens offering product options, and an emphasis on creating a memorable shopping experience.

This importance of customer engagement has grown with the digital transformation of retail, where the focus has shifted to engaging customers effectively through technology. Studies indicate that online retail firms use recommendation systems, interactive websites, and social media to connect with customers and enhance their experiences. Employee tools, including analytics and customer relationship management systems, enable retailers to understand customer behavior better and tailor their engagement strategies accordingly (Reddy S. R. B. 2021).

## **2.2 Psychological Factors in Consumer Behavior**

Many cognitive and affective factors determine consumers' decisions and actions. Cognitive factors involve elements relating to mental processes, for instance, perception, memories and reasoning when deciding. These aspects influence the search for, processing of, and decision-making regarding information about goods and services available in the market. For instance, the availability heuristic, a person's tendency to make a judgment based on the ease of producing or recalling an example, can skew the decision to buy certain brands or specific goods and services. On the other hand, emotional elements comprise effects that consumers may go through during decision-making. Hence, emotions play a critical role in influencing consumer behavior and most commonly lead to impulse buying and brand allegiance. This makes consumer's emotions towards a brand impact the perceived value of the brand and, more so, how frequently they will be buying the brand (Chiu C. M. Wang E. T. Fang Y. H. & Huang H. Y. 2014). Emotions like joy, excitement and trust are positive emotions that, once experienced while shopping, can make the customers satisfied and loyal to the shopping centers.

Several theories have been developed in consumer psychology to describe and understand consumers' psychological traits and related behaviors.

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), proposed by Ajzen (1991), suggests that consumer behavior is influenced by three key constructs: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Attitude toward the behavior refers to the consumer's positive or negative feelings about performing a specific action, such as purchasing a product. Subjective norms encompass the perceived social pressure to perform or avoid behavior, reflecting the influence of others' opinions. Perceived behavioral control refers to the consumer's confidence or perceived ease of performing the behavior, including their belief in having the necessary resources and opportunities. Together, these constructs shape the consumer's intention to engage in a behavior, such as purchasing.

Another frequently used theory is the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model, which outlines stages in the purchasing process. In this model, stimulus refers to external marketing factors that affect the consumer, such as advertisements or store atmosphere. The organism represents the internal

emotional and cognitive responses these stimuli evoke in the consumer. The response is the outcome or action the consumer takes, such as the decision to purchase. This model is based on understanding how external factors, like advertising and store environment, interact with and influence the consumer's internal psychological state. By shaping perceptions, emotions, and thoughts within the consumer, these external elements can lead to the desired purchasing behavior. Retail firms can leverage these insights to strategically design environments and marketing approaches that positively impact consumer decisions.

The two-way classification of communication messages and consumer characteristics defines how consumers engage with persuasive communication, as Petty and Cacioppo's (1986) Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) presents central and peripheral routes for processing advertising. According to the Elaboration Likelihood Model, there are two routes to persuasion. The first is the central route, where consumers carefully evaluate the content of a message based on its relevance and quality. This pathway is followed when the message holds high significance for the consumer. The second is the peripheral route, where persuasion occurs through superficial cues, such as the attractiveness of the spokesperson or other external factors, especially when the consumer's involvement with the message is lower (El Hedhli et al. 2023, 10).

### **2.3 Persuasion Techniques in Sales**

The fundamental elements of persuasion are critical tools in a salesperson's arsenal. One common persuasion technique is social proof, which influences customers to alter their behaviors based on the actions of others. For example, testimonials or letters from other customers reassure potential buyers that others have purchased the product and had a positive experience, thus encouraging their buying decision. Another classic persuasion technique is scarcity, based on the idea that people value an item more when perceived as rare. Limited time offers exclusive prices, or statements such as "limited edition" or "only a few pieces left" can create a sense of urgency, pressuring customers to purchase.

Reciprocity is another powerful technique where the salesperson gives something to the customer in hopes of receiving something in return, usually a purchase. This might include small gifts, discounts, or extra services, which create a sense of obligation. In the jewelry business, for instance, offering free jewelry cleaning, complimentary gift wrapping, or personalized consultation for a specific occasion can increase the likelihood of a purchase, as customers feel inclined to reciprocate the gesture by buying.

These persuasion concepts are grounded in psychological theories that seek to understand how persuasion influences a customer's mindset. One widely recognized framework is Cialdini's Six Principles of Persuasion, which include reciprocity, commitment and consistency, social proof, authority, liking, and scarcity (Cialdini 2009). Together, these principles provide a basis for understanding how various persuasion methods can be effectively applied in retail sales.

In the Persuasion Knowledge Model (PKM), PQ and PE refer to two distinct components of how consumers process persuasive attempts. Persuasion Knowledge (PQ) is the consumer's awareness and understanding of the persuasion tactics used in marketing. Consumers develop an understanding of common strategies or cues that advertisers employ to influence them. When they possess high persuasion knowledge, they can more readily identify when an attempt is being made to persuade them and critically evaluate the tactics being used. This knowledge makes them less likely to be swayed by appeals they perceive as overt or manipulative. Persuasion Expertise (PE), on the other hand, is the consumer's ability to manage and respond to these persuasive attempts. It includes their strategies to resist, counter, or negotiate with persuasive messages, allowing them to react thoughtfully and strategically rather than passively accepting or rejecting the message.

Within the PKM framework, consumers are considered active participants who evaluate persuasive messages through their persuasion knowledge and expertise. This perspective highlights the importance of honesty and transparency in marketing because consumers with strong PQ and PE are more likely to respond negatively to advertising tactics they perceive as too manipulative.

## **2.4 Jewelry Sales Industry**

Compared with other segments of the retail industry, jewelry selling possesses unique characteristics due to the nature of the products and their meaningful role in people's lives. Jewelry is often purchased for major celebrations such as engagements, weddings, and anniversaries, making the purchase decision highly influenced by emotions. This factor underscores the importance of salespeople who can understand and meet customer needs, helping to build long-term relationships. Additionally, pricing is a key factor that distinguishes the jewelry industry from other retail sectors, as high-quality jewelry often requires a substantial financial commitment (Merk & Michel 2019). Given the significant investment, customers must feel assured of the product's quality and authenticity. Jewelry is among the most personal accessories, and so it should be both reliable and genuine. To address these concerns, jewelry retailers typically provide certification and warranties, which foster trust and credibility in both the products and the salespeople promoting them.

The jewelry industry embodies both tradition and innovation. While classic pieces and iconic stores uphold timeless traditions, the sector is also embracing modernity and advanced techniques. With cutting-edge materials and technology now available, intricate designs and personalized products can be crafted more easily than ever. Additionally, the rise of the internet and e-commerce has transformed jewelry shopping, making it more convenient and accessible, with a wider range of products available to consumers.

Several factors influence the jewelry market and shape its trends. One significant trend is the growing demand for ethically sourced jewelry. Today's consumers are more conscious of ethical concerns,

seeking products that respect environmental conservation and uphold social, cultural, and human rights for those involved in the jewelry production process (Moraes et al. 2017).

Another notable trend is the desire for personalized jewelry. Many consumers now prefer unique, avant-garde designs that reflect their identities and values. Technological advancements, including 3D printing and computer-aided design (CAD), have provided jewelers with greater flexibility in creating custom pieces, especially within the luxury segment, where customers are willing to pay a premium for one-of-a-kind designs.

However, the jewelry industry faces several challenges. Seasonal fluctuations and economic cycles impact consumer spending and, consequently, the demand for luxury items like jewelry. Additionally, variations in the cost of precious metals and gemstones affect manufacturing expenses and retail prices. Another challenge is the increasing prevalence of imitation jewelry, which poses risks for consumers and reputable jewelers alike, as customers may unwittingly buy counterfeit pieces, expecting them to be authentic.

## **2.5 Summary of Existing Literature**

Research on customer interaction and persuasion, especially in retail, emphasizes establishing closer and continual client-merchant relationships. Research has revealed that when consumers are active with the product or service, they will, in turn, become loyal and market the product, thus increasing its sales and profitability. Specifically, when it comes to selling jewelry, the customer's connection to the products is much more than merely functional, and the need for customization increases customer interaction to a higher level.

A literature review of persuasion in sales also supports the conclusion that strategies such as social influence, limited availability, and goodwill appeals significantly impact the buyers' decisions. These techniques have elements derived from psychological theories and work to increase customers' perceptions of both value and timing pressures (motivation) affecting a purchase (Flint D.J. & Woodruff R. B. 2001). It was found that the types of promotional appeals commonly employed in the jewelry industry, such as testimonials, limited-time appeal, and personal appeal, significantly influence sales results.

Many published papers investigate the underlying factors of customer engagement and persuasion in a general retail context. However, very few studies have addressed the jewelry sales industry specifically. Due to the specificity of the characteristics and the information invested in jewelry purchases, more attention should be paid to identifying the intricacies of using engagement and persuasion techniques in this process. This study examines the psychological aspects that impact customers' engagement in the sale of jewelry products and the persuasion strategies used by jewelers.

Furthermore, literature studies may provide guidelines and frameworks for understanding the problem. However, business knowledge and specific recommendations for organizations operating in jewelry are still being determined. As such, this research presents a backdrop of recommendations that jewelry firms would find specific and applicable for boosting their clientele interactions and sales. Therefore, by integrating theory with research data, this study seeks to add to the existing literature to enhance the understanding of the identified customers' purchasing behaviors in the jewelry sales context.

### **3 Methodology**

This chapter is dedicated to describing the methods selected for the exploration of customer psychology and jewelers use of persuasion strategies. Among these sections, the research design, data collection methods, data analysis process, ethical issues and concerns, and the research's data management plan are detailed explicitly, providing the reader with an overall understanding of the study's methodological framework.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The overall approach to this study is qualitative, focusing on the life history interview methodology, which will provide richness in the experience and tactics of the jewelry salespeople. Qualitative studies and research methods are highly relevant when documenting and analyzing psychological aspects and arguments within society as they let in deep, intricate knowledge of participants' views. This strategy stands by the interpretive paradigm, which deals with people's meanings and interpretations of events. In realizing the goals set before the analysis, 15 semi-structured interviews were carried out with jewelry salespeople featured in retail stores. Semi-structured interviews were preferred for the following reasons. These interviews allowed the participants to give voice to their views and feel or stay as much in touch with the events as possible while, at the same time, the researcher was able to ask follow-up questions as deemed necessary and push the interview in specific directions of interest. Its use allows for gathering dense data that reveals the details of customers' experiences and tactics of persuasion.

#### **3.2 Data Collection Methods**

In this research, purposive sampling was used to help choose indivisible individuals according to the research questions' characteristics. Participants were jewelry salespeople who claimed to interact with customers for at least seven hours daily and sell jewelry as their primary job. To draw participants from different business areas, participants came from all retail stores, such as jewelry houses, department stores, and jewelry chains. Some of the job specifications were at least three years of working in jewelry sales, the candidate's ability to engage with customers and the person's written and verbal consent to an interview would be necessary. Participant identification was carried out through professional connections, recommendations from the association of jewelers and jewelry makers, and personal invitations to jewelry shops (Manzi, M. J. 2019). The subjects were introduced to the study through an email or LinkedIn message in which the purpose of the study was explained to them, and they were asked to volunteer to take part.

The data collection procedure involved conducting semi-structured interviews with each participant. To maintain structure while allowing a natural flow, an interview guide was prepared to ensure all relevant

topics were covered, though the sequence and detail of the questions were flexible. The interview questions focused on several key areas:

1. Standard techniques utilized when interacting with customers
2. Techniques identified as effective in influencing customers to make a purchase
3. Perceived efficacy of diverse engagement and persuasion techniques
4. Common difficulties in communicating with and persuading customers
5. Personal experiences shared by customer service employees that they perceived as successful or, conversely, unsuccessful in engaging customers

The interviews were conducted face-to-face or online, depending on the participant's schedule and preference, and lasted between 30 and 50 minutes. Notes were taken for subsequent analysis.

### **3.3 Ethical Considerations**

This study considers one of the basic rules to ensure every person participating in research: informing them about the project, its aims, methods, and potential impact. Informed consent was obtained from participants by administering an information sheet containing information about the aims of the study, research activities to be carried out, risks and benefits of the study, and participants' rights. At the start of each interview, participants were asked to sign consent forms to participate in the study. The subjects were told to stop participating at any time without being penalized for doing so in case of any possible discomfort while participating in the survey.

Ensuring that the participant's identity and the identity of the data received were protected was important. Data gathered was personally identifiable information; therefore, the participants' identities were masked by replacing their names with pseudo-names and erasing any features that would identify them. The written scripts were kept safe, and only the research workers had the privilege to access the scripts. They were told that the information they would provide would be used for analysis and that no one would be identified in the study results report. Some of these measures complied with general ethical practices for research on human subjects cited in the literature.

### **3.4 Data Management Plan**

The data management plan considered data protection regulations such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the laws of the country where the research will be conducted. Discharged Compliance strategies included data minimization, anonymization of data, data security, and Proactivity. Nonetheless, much attention was paid to misconceptions about data collection, which involved gathering only relevant data for the provided research questions and anonymity for participants to shield them from identification. People in the study had full consent covering aspects like the handling and use of data and their disposal.

## 4 Findings

This chapter highlights this study's findings based on the data gathered from the jewelry salespeople who participated in the semi-structured interviews. The findings are organized into four main sections: a sampling of the participants, a summary of the main findings from the interviews, customers' responses and attitudes towards persuasion appeals, and strengths and limitations of jewelry selling. Each highlighted section further sheds light on the results to elaborate on the psychological aspects of the persuasive strategies in the jewelry-selling process using participants' quotations.

### 4.1 Overview of Participants

The participants included 20 jewelry salespeople from different calibers of stores, such as luxury brand jewelry stores, department stores, and chain stores. The sample was decided according to the participants' employment backgrounds, all of whom had at least three years of experience in jewelry selling. The participants' characteristics concerning gender, age, and education are also quite diverse, which is typical for the jewelry sales specialist sphere.

- Gender: 12 females and eight males.
- Age Range: 25 to 55 years, with an average age of 35.
- Education: Participants had varied backgrounds, ranging from high school graduates to bachelor's degrees in business, marketing, and design.
- Professional Experience: On average, participants had 10 years of experience in jewelry sales, with some having over 20 years of expertise.

The individual participants of the study included in the analysis of the qualitative data were people of a wide range of ages and from different parts of the world, which all together demonstrated enough experience to be enrolled in the study. Some had undergone professional training, and others improvised while looking for jobs. Thus, along with providing a theoretical background at the university level, this coursework also provided insight into various experiences in the jewelry sales industry, particularly in communicating with customers and persuading them. It would be helpful to indicate the countries from which the interviewees come.

### 4.2 Themes and Insights from the Interviews

#### Theme 1: Psychological Factors in Customer Engagement

A general idea highlighted in the interviews was that some participants focused on appealing to customers psychologically. Salespeople identified several psychological aspects crucial for customers' behavior and interactions in the context of jewelry sales and singled them out.

#### Insights into How Salespeople Understand and Leverage Psychological Factors

Building trust and rapport is crucial, as many participants noted that the success of any interaction with clients depends significantly on the level of trust established. This involves being open and attentive to the customer's communication and understanding their needs. One participant summarized their

perspective: "The most important thing is to establish rapport with the customer; if they're your customer, they will take whatever information you're giving them and buy whatever you're selling."

Emotional appeal is another crucial aspect. Jewelry often symbolizes unique feelings or significant value to its recipient. Salespeople effectively capitalize on this by focusing on the stories behind the jewelry collections. As one salesperson shared, "Jewelry is not an ornament; it's a piece of emotion; therefore, I always associate the piece with one emotion or another."

Understanding customer needs is essential for successful sales. Salespeople are observant of verbal and non-verbal cues, using every opportunity to gauge customer attitudes and preferences. One participant noted, "Each customer is unique, and realizing whether they want to buy a gift or a treat for themselves helps in adjusting the approach to how you work with them."

Creating a positive experience also plays a significant role in customer satisfaction. Salespeople aim to ensure the store environment is appealing and conducive to a pleasant shopping experience. One participant explained, "It is about creating an experience that they won't forget. If they leave the store happy, they'll return and refer others as well."

## **Theme 2: Persuasion Techniques in Jewelry Sales**

The study established several tactics used by jewelry salespeople to influence customers' decision-making through interviews. These methods are based on general practices and theories of influence and are oriented to the specifics of jewelry selling.

Some of the strategies that were used by the salespeople when preparing a customer to make a confident buying decision include:

**Social Proof:** Salespeople also commonly employ social proof to influence customers' decisions. This involves drawing the customers' attention to the frequency of selling their particular favorites, customers' recommendations, and good feedback. One of the participants said, "When the customers observe that a particular piece is on-demand or get to hear positive comments from other clients, they have to look at it."

**Reciprocity:** One of the many examples of using reciprocity is when you give them little presents like earrings, and you clean them for free or when you give them some gifts with pretty packaging and offer to wrap their gifts for free. This instils some form of pressure and precipitates a favorable response from the customers in the sense of give and take. For instance, one of the salespeople interviewed said: "When you give the customer something special, this makes the customer happy, and this normally leads to a purchase."

**Scarcity:** Another is to employ techniques to the effect of limited time, limited availability or similar things. In this case, salespeople tend to draw the buyers' attention to such items as limited editions or the availability of a particular product for a short period only. An interviewee said, "It was told that informing customers that an article is the last one in a particular series of items or that of a certain batch can catalyze the purchase."

**Authority:** The other related strategy we need to assume is showing that one has the authority to make decisions about the jewelry since one is knowledgeable about jewelry. Salespeople gain the customer's trust by explaining the origin of the raw materials, the artistry put into the creations, and the background of the product. A participant said, "Across customers, customer trust is found in us, and when you start giving reasons why this particular piece of artwork is of high quality and rare, the customer feels safe because he or she is investing."

**Liking:** Personal relationships and rapport ensure that individuals like you and/or your product. To achieve this goal, salespeople work hard to be warm and pleasant while meeting customers' needs. Another salesperson remarked, "It is easier for customers to trust someone they have a good feeling about and therefore being friendly is good business."

### **Theme 3: Customer Reactions to Persuasion Techniques**

The research question assessed customers' responses to different persuasive tactics used in service industries to gauge overall satisfaction and sales outcomes. This inquiry also evaluated consumers' reactions to various promotional techniques and their perceived effectiveness.

**Positive Responses to Personalization:** Customers generally responded positively to personalized attention, mainly when salespeople tried to understand their preferences and offer tailored recommendations. One participant shared, "Customers appreciate that we spend our time listening to them and providing solutions that fit their needs; this is because it is rather rare to be considered/valued."

**Mixed Reactions to Scarcity Tactics:** While scarcity tactics generated a quick response, some customers found them pushy. Salespeople emphasized the need to balance urgency with a genuine, helpful approach. As one interviewee noted, "It is an optimal strategy to create urgency out of the blue, but it should be done tactfully because if the anxiety is reflected in customers, it may prove counterproductive."

**Trust and Credibility:** Participants consistently highlighted trust and credibility as essential to customer satisfaction. Consumers appreciated salespeople who were knowledgeable and transparent and avoided misleading tactics. One participant shared, "The customers thank us for being truthful and knowledgeable, and they begin to trust and buy from us."

**Emotional Connection:** Promotional strategies that evoked emotions, particularly in the jewelry industry, were effective. Customers are valued when a salesperson associates an item with a significant event or feeling, increasing its perceived value. As one salesperson explained, "I find it rewarding to explain to a customer that a piece is worth more than just the price; it is part of the customer's life."

#### **Theme 4: Challenges and Opportunities in Jewelry Sales**

The interviews also helped identify various problems that jewelers encounter when dealing with their salespeople and prospective customers, particularly those related to customer relations and sales promotion measures.

The interviews highlighted several challenges salespeople face in the jewelry industry, from dealing with economic fluctuations and intense competition to managing high customer expectations and adapting to technological advancements.

**Economic Factors:** For instance, the instability of the economic cycles and changes in the spending behavior of the consumers proved to be quite tricky. Salespeople said that there was decreased sales and upward pressure on sales during managerial EPS. This is accurate regardless of the selling mode, and one participant quickly mentioned, "the economic situations in the society play a huge role in the sales, especially when they are harder; people become more rigid in their buying."

**Competition:** The sharp competition evident in the jewelry industry was the other challenge the entire team had to overcome. Before making a purchase, customers shopped around, and salespeople had to stress the features that set their products or services apart from those of others in the market. One interviewee said this: "It has become more competitive out of their respondents, and therefore, as much as we want to, they will not buy from us automatically."

**Customer Expectations:** Another aspect that could be problematic was managing and fulfilling great customer demands. The targets set by the customers were standard, which entailed quality services that a salesperson ought to provide and first-quality products at reasonable and affordable costs. One of the participants said, "Customers are expecting so much, and we must live up to that expectation. It is always a challenge trying to offer the best service while at the same time ensuring that you are offering value-added services."

**Technological Advancements:** In this case, e-commerce and technology enhancement bring threats and opportunities. Social media and internet exposure presented new opportunities to market products to consumers; however, the number of competitors that flocked to social media platforms also posed a challenge to the salespeople since consumer behavior evolved. As one of the salespeople observed,

the issue of online shopping and selling is on the rise, thus encouraging adaptation to the prevalent technological initiatives for sales promotion.

The interviews also revealed several opportunities for improvement, including the potential for enhanced training and development, leveraging technology for better customer engagement, fostering customer loyalty, and offering personalized services to meet specific customer needs.

**Enhanced Training and Development:** The area with a potential for improvement was the provision of regular training and development of the staff, mainly focusing on salespeople. Such knowledge contributes to the further development of the sales personnel, as well as the clarification of new products, strategies, and tips on how to increase sales or effectively deal with customers. One participant said, "Training is necessary for keeping up to date and upgrading our skills. A workforce needs to be trained in the trends and requirements of the customer."

**Leveraging Technology:** Applying digital tools and platforms was regarded as a significant opportunity. Applying customer relationship management (CRM) systems, virtual try-on technologies, and social networks can strengthen client engagement and increase customer base. One interviewee said, "It is so shocking what you can do with technology these days: CRM systems that help track down customers or utilize social networks for marketing purposes do make a difference."

**Fostering Customer Loyalty:** Building on the critical customer base was also isolated as a strategic area that needed utility since identifying strategies to sustain the constant inflow of clients would significantly boost the achievement of the company's objectives. Some ways that assist in building a block of loyalty include developing loyalty programs, offering superior after-sales services, and constant customer engagement. One of them said, "Loyalty programs and excellent after-sales services contribute to customer retention; regular communication with the customers ensures they patronize the firm again."

**Personalization and Customization:** In this regard, the best practices that would improve customer satisfaction and achieve competitive advantage were identified, including the following: Some salespeople mentioned that presenting a line of jewelry, which is tailor-made and personal suggestions for a particular customer, can significantly enhance the shopping experience. According to one of the salespersons, "customers like customization; providing specific jewelry and specific advice is likely to become unique and make the customers unique too." Again, make this into a complete sentence. The research question assessed customers' responses to different persuasive tactics used in service industries to gauge overall satisfaction and sales outcomes. This inquiry also evaluated consumers' reactions to various promotional techniques and their perceived effectiveness.

**Positive Responses to Personalization:** Customers generally responded positively to personalized attention, mainly when salespeople tried to understand their preferences and offer tailored recommendations. One participant shared, "Customers appreciate the fact that we spend our time listening to them and providing solutions that fit their needs; this is because it is rather rare to be considered/valued."

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### 4.3 Summary of Findings

The interviews make obtaining substantial data on psychological factors, and persuasion approaches jewelry selling easy. To capture the consumer's attention and convince him/her of his/her needs, salespeople employ concepts in social psychology, including trust and rapport, persuasion through appeal to the senses, and perceiving consumer needs. It entails using social proof, reciprocity, scarcity, authority, and liking to change customer buying habits and increase satisfaction.

People have different responses to these techniques, but it is seen that appeal to emotion is excellent, followed by personalization. Appeals to scarcity need special measures as they are considered high-pressure. Conditions like economic, competitive, customer-driven pressure, and technology compel salespeople to be assertive. Possible areas of improvement are training employees, increasing the use of technology, customer relations, and personalization.

In sum, the presented results demonstrate that knowledge of the psychology of a customer and the use of practical tools for persuasion plays an essential role in sales within the jewelry niche market. It

is possible to generalize the specific findings of this research toward predicting possible methods of addressing the identified problems and hence offering a solution to improve the sales and customer satisfaction of jewelry retail businesses.

## 5 Discussion

In this thesis, the findings identified in the previous section are discussed and explained in detail regarding how they respond to the research questions. Our argument is discussed considering the currently available literature on the topic of customer engagement and persuasion, precisely where they are similar and where they differ. Last, based on the theoretical framework, the future research agenda for investigating customer behavior in the retail context is discussed, along with suggestions for jewelry salespeople and firms.

### 5.1 Interpretation of Findings

This research has established that psychological factors significantly influence customers' participation in jewelry sales. Salespeople also fared well in other aspects. The respondents pointed out that the sales staff were always eager and frantic to establish good relationships and trust with the customers, identify their needs, and give them a positive shopping experience." (Kempfi, V. 2016). All these factors align with well-known theories from psychology, such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs, pointing to the fact that the satisfaction of emotional and social needs will go a very long way in increasing the customer's loyalty and satisfaction.

The inclination to trust and partner became an essential approach, and, according to the salespeople, the salespeople should emphasize listening and showing interest. The study can link this finding to the research question on psychological factors in that it illustrates how trust and rapport are essential to gaining customer attention. Furthermore, stressing that jewelry is linked to any emotions or events that make people buy jewelry reveals how salespersons build relationships with consumers by identifying the sentimental value of the jewelry. During the analysis, the authors determined some persuasion tactics employed by salespersons focusing on jewelry products. In this study, popular persuasion strategies, for example, social proof, reciprocity, scarcity, authority and liking. Nevertheless, the results in the current study can be explained by using Cialdini's Six Principles of Persuasion, which are familiar to the literature of sales and marketing.

For example, social proof entails presenting customers with evidence of high demand for specific commodities or use of positive word of mouth, which applies the impact of other customers' conduct. Reciprocity by gifting or giving a sample or a free service tends to make customers feel obliged to purchase. Scarcity, which is a technique that emphasizes the idea that there is a shortage of the product or services, or the offer is for a limited time, only makes the customer take action. First, the degree of authority and expertise combines the customer's trust in the seller, and second, the seller's pleasant personality makes the customers feel comfortable and valued in their shopping experience.

### **Customer Reactions to Persuasion Techniques**

The insight derived from the study is also worth acknowledging, as it can help the organization understand the likely reactions of customers to different persuasion strategies. The general feedback and final recommendations were primarily positive, and customers were pleased to see that the company was trying to understand their preferences. This supports the research, which indicates that personalizing services leads to increased customer satisfaction and loyalty in the jewelry market. However, the study also pointed out that using scarcity techniques was met with mixed reactions. While there is merit in this approach, it should be used wisely, as customers can easily recognize tactics meant to pressure them into making a purchase. This highlights the importance of understanding customer reactions more nuancedly, balancing customer needs, ethical considerations, and sales strategies.

### **Challenges and Opportunities in Jewelry Sales**

The interviews revealed various pressures that currently influence jewelry salespeople; these pressures include economic fluctuations, increased competition, high customer expectations, the success of e-commerce, etc. They are that competition presses for constant accommodation and learning as the key to survival. On the other hand, it was realized that there are prospects for the betterment of the comprehension of training, concrete utilization of advocational technology, synchronizing customer allegiance, and customized services (Jahan, I. M. (2024). The knowledge derived from this paper offers a full appreciation of the jewelry sales industry's dynamism and the strategies necessary to compete in it.

### **5.2 Comparison with Existing Literature**

The outcomes of this study support many of the prior research findings in customer engagement, as well as the persuasion strategy in the retailing environment. Past research studies reveal that the customer engagement strategy stakeholders should employ the development of trust and rapport with the full recognition of customer needs to facilitate customer engagement. For example, in Gremler and Gwinner's (2000) study, relationship quality played a pivotal role in customer loyalty in service industries, as observed in the current research where trust and rapport were reported to be critical in jewelry sales. The identified persuasion techniques have a close resemblance to the theories postulated. The concepts could be identified and supported by previous research in the sales and marketing field, and actual illustrations of those principles work in the jewelry sales trade also align with our current study. This high correlation with past theories supports these methods' continued usefulness and ability to create customer needs.

Our results share strong similarities with many of the theoretical frameworks in the literature, but in certain parts, they differ quite significantly. The first of them does not imply the strict use of the principles

of scarcity and focuses on a subtler use of the same concepts. Although amidst the discussed reasons, scarcity is acknowledged to augment perceived value and sense of urgency (Cialdini, 2001), the current research reveals that this technique is effective in the context of jewelry sales to the extent that it creates a balance between urgency and pressure (Oruc, R. 2015).

While customers like absolute scarcity, it can cause negative feelings when scarcity is forced on them, which means that there needs to be a better way of implementing it. Another divergence is in the appeal to emotions category, which has a significantly higher percentage for jewelry than shoes. As with other forms of appeal, there is an understanding of emotional appeal in consumer behavior literature. However, such appeal is found to have a pronounced effect and almost a force of its own in the case of jewelry, which is imbued with emotional associations. It can be understood that the jewelry market is a different genre from other products and requires customers' emotions to control them.

### **5.3 Implications for Theory and Practice**

The results of this study enhance the theoretical literature on customer behavior in retail stores, especially in the jewelry niche market. By underlining the significance of psychological factors like trust, rapport, and the need for emotional appeal proposed in this research, this study calls for customer-focused strategies required in the retail context. They build upon theories by explicating an extraordinary emotional and sentimental aspect of jewelry, which might be relevant to other expensive, emotionally driven retail environments.

Moreover, the investigation of the persuasiveness techniques utilized in the study provides real-life applications of Cialdini's presented concepts, uncovering the presence of scarcity appeals and the need for moderation. It positions current scholarship on persuasion in the retail context for further elaboration of the theoretical and practical implications of the identified techniques beyond the realm of ethical concerns.

Based on the findings, several practical recommendations can be made for jewelry salespeople and businesses to enhance their customer engagement and sales strategies:

1. **Focus on Building Trust and Rapport:** The main communication tactics that salespeople should apply are listening to customers and paying individual attention to them. Such skills should be underlined in the training programs, and different ways of creating effective customer relations should be described with examples.
2. **Leverage Emotional Appeal:** Figuratively speaking, jewelry has always been close to people's hearts as gifts and ornaments, and due to this, salespeople must stress the ethereal and endearing features of products. There are ways of presenting jewelry pieces so that the extent to which the customers relate to jewelry by associating it with certain moments or feelings increases.

3. Utilize Persuasion Techniques Ethically: Cues appeals like social proof, reciprocity, and authority should be used ethically and with full disclosure. This should be practiced when applying scarcity tactics because inappropriate pressure can demoralize customers.
4. Enhance Personalization and Customization: Personalized and customized services can make a big difference in customer satisfaction and between competitors. Businesses should provide sufficient information addressing customers' characteristics and offer relevant products. Businesses can also deploy customization features, such as designing a set of jewelry pieces according to the client's specifications.
5. Invest in Continuous Training and Development: Periodic training and development activities are important to ensure that salespeople are conversant with the latest products, selling techniques, and customer relationship skills. Motivation and sustained learning will help salespeople adapt to changes in the market and perform better.
6. Leverage Technology and Digital Tools: Incorporating technologies drives customers' interactions with businesses and the latter's scope. Combined with CRM systems, virtual fitting, and working with social networks, the specifics of customer preferences and actions can be investigated more thoroughly, which will help improve the effectiveness of sales initiatives.
7. Foster Customer Loyalty: Plans must be developed to help create a client base and increase overall customer return patronage. Organizations can foster long-term customer relations by initiating loyalty programs, ensuring high satisfaction levels with after-sales service, and routinely communicating with clients.

The findings of this research give a complete account of psychological variables and persuasive strategies regarding customer allure and buying behaviors in jewelry-selling organizations.

Considering the research questions and providing answers to them while relating them to the existing literature, a set of critical strategies and experiences are presented, which can be used to develop both theoretical and practical foundations for increasing customer engagement in retail environments. The practical recommendations provided can be helpful for successful sales performers and companies interested in the jewelry industry, its development, increasing customer satisfaction, and becoming a permanent leader in the highly competitive environment of the modern sales market.

## 6 Conclusion

This work addresses theoretical and empirical gaps in the literature by offering an in-depth analysis of the psychological factors and persuasive strategies that significantly influence customer engagement in the jewelry sales industry. The research explores several key themes, including the critical role of trust and rapport in customer relations, the effectiveness of emotional appeals in shaping customers' purchasing decisions, and the importance of customizing interactions to enhance customer satisfaction. The findings underscore that successful sales strategies in the jewelry industry are deeply rooted in an understanding of consumer psychology. Salespeople who can connect with customers on an interpersonal level and personalize their approach are likely to foster higher customer satisfaction and achieve tremendous sales success. This comprehensive perspective highlights the vital connection between psychology, persuasion, and customer satisfaction in driving sales outcomes within the industry.

The research provided the following significant input into the existing literature on consumer behavior and total retail sales in the specific area of jewelry. This study goes beyond the current theories of customers' engagement and persuasion by situating them in a different emotional context of jewelry purchases. It becomes helpful for sales practitioners to see how theories can be applied in the field to enhance the results of sales processes. The results highlight the importance of empathy in consumer services, which provides a great source of ideas for training and strategies in retail organizations. Therefore, this study fills the gap in the literature between theory and practice and adds to the knowledge of customer behavior when purchasing a product that involves considerable effort.

Thus, the limitations of the study should be acknowledged. Despite the methodological strengths, several limitations need to be noted. The study is based on a qualitative research approach, and the sample size is relatively small, which may limit the generalization of the results. Additionally, the subjective nature of qualitative data analysis introduces potential biases, as much of the information is drawn from participants' personal experiences and perceptions. Future research would benefit from larger, more diverse samples and the incorporation of quantitative methods to validate and extend the findings of this study. Furthermore, exploring the influence of digital transformation, cultural differences in sales practices, and integrating new technologies into sales processes could offer deeper insights into customer engagement and persuasion in jewelry sales. This study serves as a foundation for future research to further understand the complexities of customer interactions and the effectiveness of sales strategies in the retail context.

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