INVESTIGATING THE INFLUENCE OF CLOTH BRANDING ADVERTISEMENTS ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR: INSIGHTS FROM INSTAGRAM

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ABSTRACT
This research paper investigates the relationship between advertising frequency, buying motivation, and buying behavior in the context of Instagram, employing the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) technique. A sample of (N=300) Instagram users was analyzed using snowball sampling. The results reveal that increased exposure to brand advertisements on Instagram affects consumers' motivation to make a purchase. However, Instagram users are more likely to be motivated to buy when exposed to a higher frequency of influencer advertising. Furthermore, it demonstrates the significant impact of buying motivation on actual buying behavior accounting for 48.7% of the variance. These findings contribute to the existing literature on social media marketing and provide valuable insights for marketers and advertisers looking to enhance their strategies on Instagram. The key takeaway from the study is that prioritizing influencers should be of utmost importance for marketers aiming to boost sales through their Instagram marketing efforts.

Keywords: Instagram advertisement, Influencer advertisement, Buying motivation, Buying behavior.

INTRODUCTION
Businesses and marketers are always in search of innovative and effective solutions to connect with their desired audience. Social media is one of the most contemporary communication tools that is rapidly expanding and significantly impacting clothing manufacturers’ marketing strategies. It provides a unique and versatile platform for marketers to interact with their target clients, especially in the clothing manufacturing industry. Therefore, the use of social media has become an increasingly important aspect of modern-day marketing, particularly in the fashion industry.

Instagram stands out as the most reliable social media platform for customer engagement and product promotion, with a brand engagement rate ten times that of Facebook, 54 times that of Pinterest, and 84 times that of Twitter; it is especially effective in clothing businesses. As a result, more US teenagers (32%) name Instagram as the most important social network, compared to any other social media platform (Phua et al., 2017). Notably, studies also reveal that Instagram users often comprehensively understand Instagram advertising (Djafarova & Trofimenko 2019; Johnson, Potocki, and Veldhuis 2019). The number of Instagram users is steadily growing, currently, 40% of American people use Instagram, though, Facebook is still the most popular social media platform with 68% of users, Facebook and Snapchat usage are projected to fall or remain steady throughout 2021, nevertheless, Instagram usage is projected to increase in the United States in coming years. In 2019, there were 107.2 million monthly active Instagram users in the United States; by 2023, it is expected that this number would increase to 120.3 million (Statista, 2022).

Furthermore, Mancuso and Stuth discovered that in 2017, 70% of clothing businesses used Instagram. These businesses share pictures four to nine times each week on average. According to research, 50% of Instagram users follow at least one brand. According to Business Insider, more than 90% of Instagram users

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are under the age of 35. This makes it an extremely appealing social media for clothing businesses targeting the 18- to 34-year-old demographic. As per Mancuso and Stuth (2015), the accessibility of Facebook fan bases for companies is progressively getting restricted. Hence, businesses are now exploring alternative options such as Instagram, which offers a unique image-based storytelling feature that is more prominent than any other social media platform. In a similar vein, when compared to other social media platforms, Instagram usage is more popular among those aged 18 to 34, accounting for 65 percent of all Instagram users worldwide (Clement, 2020). In addition, ladies use Instagram more than men among internet users, accounting for 68 percent of all users (Aslam, 2017). According to recent research, females continue to outnumber males (50.9 percent) in Instagram usage by gender (Clement, 2020).

All of these factors collectively make Instagram a top favored app for promoting cloth branding businesses, particularly among women. Instagram, with over 300 million users, is undeniably excellent in connecting brands with prospective consumers through images, hence, small businesses flourish on Instagram because of its unrestricted access to its following base. (Mancuso & Stuth, 2015). Moreover, utilizing other features, for instance, location search, users may look for photographs with a location tag. This feature is quite useful for promoting the location of companies. (Linaschke, 2011). The subsequent feature that will be added to Instagram is the ability to track clicked advertising messages. Instagram enables users to evaluate advertisement pictures, hashtags of product names or subjects, form factors, product color, and other visual characteristics (Mancuso and Stuth, 2015). It enables users to digitally exchange material in the form of new posts or narratives, as well as like and watch other users' images and videos. Instagram also allows users to comment on other users' stories and tag other users in their posts. Through these likes and comments, marketers are prepared to approach their audience; they will even engage with their target demographic (Sharma et al., 2021).

Advertising of brands through social media Influencers is another new strategy for motivating users and promoting sales. Instagram, once again, stands out among other social media platforms for advertising through influencers. Instagram users are motivated by influencers, and when they promote a specific item, people promptly purchase that product. Social influencer marketing is particularly efficient for firms seeking to attract a "younger" audience. This is because younger customers are going online and forming groups around certain well-chosen and trustworthy influencers who share their interests (Soltysinska, 2017).

In former years, offline shops were a very popular way to market clothes and buyers would only buy these items from these local stores. They contribute more than one-fifth of total volume sales, however as time goes on, developing luxury cloth brands on online platforms started expanding faster than local retailers. Online brands sell a wide range of clothing at prices that are frequently higher than those found in local stores. So, why were buyers prepared to pay more for online clothing brands than for stores? Are customers compelled to buy pricey clothing brands because of the many distinctive means of advertising? Is the inclusion of celebrities, promotion by influencers, hashtags, and other forms of advertisements the primary variables to change the purchasing behavior of online consumers? In order to find out the answers to all of these questions and given the increased demand for marketing on social media, this study investigates clothing brands’ advertisements on Instagram and their influence on customer purchasing behavior. The major purpose of the study is to determine whether cloth brands’ advertisements motivate people to purchase the promoted items. This study will look at the relationship between brand clothes advertisements on Instagram and buying motivation. Instagram advertisement, promotion by influencers, buying motivation, and buying behavior are the main variables under investigation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
Social media has grown in importance as a marketing tool for businesses targeting online consumers. Social media marketing is redistributing power away from businesses and toward customers because of the platform’s democratic structure, it promotes user-to-user contact and the sharing of product and service information. As a result, brands are being compelled to adapt their business practices to better serve their target audiences and make direct personal contact with them. In addition, consumers may learn about new products and other items they may desire through advertising. Because of increasing product knowledge,
consumers have more alternatives, and no one wants to make bad decisions, hence, despite other social media platforms, Instagram is the most preferred for companies to sell their products. Instagram has altered different features of human life, users employ this application for a range of functions, including communication, locating friends and family members, exchanging information and idea, and speak about products experience, and even asking for advice about unique brands and items. Businesses have begun to consider how they might use Instagram for promotion and gain further advantages, hence, the majority of businesses prioritize Instagram in their marketing plans. The difference in marketing method and strategy which happened recently based on Instagram makes a big question about the effective method for using this opportunity. Thus, research ranked Instagram’s capability as one of the most important factors marketing strategy, consumer reaction and brand power (Zomorodain & Lu, 2019).

According to studies, 60% of Instagram users find new products on the app. And its popularity is still rising, as evidenced by an investigation by Dana, R. (2018) design, which surveyed 2,000 Instagram users and found that the platform continues to have an impact on customer purchasing decisions. The vast majority 85 percent of respondents said they follow accounts focusing on style, fashion, or lifestyle, and 63 percent said they think that they are fashion-forward. The survey also emphasized Instagram’s influence on consumer purchases, with 72 percent of respondents saying they bought fashion, beauty, or style-related items and products after seeing something on Instagram specifically, clothing, beauty, shoes, and jewelry being the most popular product categories. Taking into account how visible fashion is on Instagram and how probable it is that followers will make purchases. The study suggests that it is strange that this logical development hasn't taken traction because the "SHOP NOW" function might still be too new and users are awaiting its broader acceptance, yet until then, Instagram still has a greater following than other social networking sites (Salpini, 2017).

Instagram, in particular, has grown in popularity because of its massive user base and commercial prospects. It allows online stores to switch their marketing efforts to a new platform, hence Instagram usage is fast increasing. This is why there are millions of Instagram users. As a result of this, Instagram has become more well-known as a marketing channel where brand promotion is becoming more prevalent, and where consumers are more interested in goods. Creating brand pages on Instagram is a specialized technique for marketing. Companies can share clothing brand posts, including videos, messages, quizzes, information, photos, and other content. Customers can become fans of these pages and subsequently show their support by liking or commenting on the brand's posts. This liking and commenting activity on brand posts demonstrate the popularity of the brand and influence customer purchasing behavior. Placing clothing brands’ posts at the top of the brand fan page increases the popularity of the posts. However, several factors affect the number of likes and comments. For instance, when positive comments are shared on a brand post, it is positively correlated with the number of likes. Therefore, interactive brand posts can enhance the number of comments (Vries et al., 2012). Cloth businesses have a professional Instagram profiles where they may interact directly with their fans. There are also a lot of "Micro celebrities" on Instagram. A micro-celebrity is one who is famous on a small scale or in a narrow location (Senfit, 2010). It is a new kind of online performance that includes individuals in their brand popularity on the Web via the use of technology including video, blogs, and social networking sites. Instagram is a platform for gaining fame in another medium (Marwick, 2015). In other words, micro-celebrities are not always well-known outside of the Instagram community. Micro celebrity is said to be "more real" and "more engaged" than traditional celebrities since it includes direct and authentic engagement with customers who use Instagram to purchase the clothing business (Senft, 2008; Marwick, 2010).

Some cloth brand profiles have an enormous following audience, while others are less popular among their followers. However, popular cloth brands available both online and offline in Pakistan, such as HSY, Khaadi, Maria b, Elan, Gull Ahmad, and a range of purely online brands have a very strong influence on their followers. They can reach different social groups within a brand’s target audience, with an authentic voice (Steimer, 2017). Most firms work with ten to twenty-five influencers every campaign. Working with a large number of influencers is becoming less frequent since managing Influencer Marketing may be time-consuming (Linqia, 2016).

Opinion leaders in the form of influencers are valuable sources for advertisements, hence, some businesses recruit them. Instagram is the most preferred platform for fashion industry opinion leaders; nevertheless, in order to be an Instagram opinion leader, you must be original and unique. Furthermore,
Investigating the Influence of Cloth Branding Advertisements on Consumer Buying Behavior

customer behavioral intentions toward the influencer and fashion clothing industry are influenced by opinion leaders. Finally, the observed fit of the account with the consumer's personality improves the effect of opinion leadership on the desire to follow published recommendations. These findings have intriguing implications for the fashion clothes business (Casaló, et al., 2020).

**Brand Choice Theory**
The theory of brand choice is an important part of marketing science. Almost all marketing choices contain explicit or tacit assumptions about how people make purchasing decisions. Pricing, advertising, and distribution are examples of strategic marketing variables that influence these decisions. Brand choice research tries to build models that reflect both the behavioral realities of consumer choice and give reliable projections of future decision behavior to aid in this endeavor (Russell, 2014). Different scholars have characterized the option in various dimensions. Most consumer behavior theories suggest awareness as the most important factor in customer decisions. On the other hand, it was assumed that too much of something is bad, therefore more information may mislead the consumer about the brand to be selected. Alam & Rubel, (2014) are of the belief that "Consumers actually make inferior buying decisions with more information". Consumers frequently examine the reasons behind their brand choices, either voluntarily or as a result of advertising efforts. Some advertisements, for example, motivate customers to consider the reasons why they would choose a certain brand and finally purchase the brand’s product. Advertising and price tend to have the most consistent influence on motivating customers among certain marketing mix components. Sales promotions, for example, have been demonstrated to influence brand choice, which in turn influences customer bottom-line costs. For example, advertising and pricing promotions might include coupons or just a price decrease within a product category (Alam & Rubel, 2014).

The new forms of advertising include paid social media ads and banner ads that represent the brand’s social media presence. A sponsored story is a new style of advertising that, unlike traditional banner ads, has not been well examined in the literature. Researchers have named this type of brand communication "native advertising." It is also known as brand narratives or company-generated postings (Campbell & Marks, 2015). Because the sponsored content appears to be comparable to the surrounding information, the viewer is expected to ascribe relevance because the content is not apparently advertising (Campbell & Marks, 2015). As a result, studying the impact of sponsored content and native advertising is becoming increasingly crucial for academics. Adweek (2015), predicted that expenditure on social media advertising will reach $4.3 billion in 2015, growing to $8.8 billion in 2018. However, there are fewer studies concentrating on online clothes branding and ways of advertising that motivate and eventually lead online shoppers to buy that brand. Thus, the current study proposes the following hypotheses to better understand the role of advertising in influencing online customers' buying behavior:

H1: The frequency of advertisements of a brand on Instagram is significantly associated with buying motivation of users.
H2: The frequency of advertisements by Instagram influencers significantly affects users’ buying motivation.
H3: Buying motivation significantly affects buying behavior.

**METHODS AND MEASURES**
We performed an online survey using a Google form to evaluate the suggested study hypotheses. According to Howell (2012), consumers build their brand preferences between the ages of 15 and 30. This age group also uses social media more often and is more fashion- and trend-conscious. Therefore, the targeted population of this study includes 18-30 years old Instagram users in Pakistan. Snowball sampling was appropriate since the sample frame did not function and it was difficult to find population members in the field (Maxfield, & Babbie, 2014). The sample size was estimated using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula with a 5% margin of error. The first section of the questionnaire consists of one filter question to determine the respondents' online buying interests and three demographic questions. The second section comprised of questions about consumers' attitudes; advertisements on Instagram and motivation of buying brands, buying motivation, buying behavior, and inclusion of influencers/micro-celebrities in Instagram advertisements and their influence on buying behavior. The questions were close-ended and based on a
five-point Likert scale. The survey generated 300 valid replies, with 27.8 percent of males and 71.2 percent of females from Pakistan being Instagram users. The difference in the ratio depicts that females were a more brand-conscious demographic than males and preferred online shopping after being inspired by Instagram advertisements. Table 1 demonstrates the demographics of respondents:

Table 1: demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>71.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 21</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 to 24</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>47.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 to 27</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 to 30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=300

MEASUREMENT MODEL ASSESSMENT

As indicated by academics, the research model was investigated in two stages using PLS-SEM analysis: the measurement model and the structural model (Hair, et al., 2021; Sarstedt, et al., 2022). The provided outcomes for the variables' Cronbach's alpha varied from 0.701 to 0.884, while the composite reliability (CR) ranged from 0.761 to 0.893. Therefore, the model was internally consistent and reliable. All outer loadings were greater than 0.6, suggesting adequate indicator reliability (Chin, 1998), and the average variance extracted value (AVE) of each construct was greater than the 0.5 criteria (varying from 0.616 to 0.806), demonstrating adequate convergent validity (Hair, et al., 2019).

Overall, the current study checked three factors: internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. In order to satisfy the convergent validity requirement, we first examined the item loadings and determined that they satisfied the 0.7 thresholds (Hair et al., 2017). The subsequent examination of the average variance extracted verified that AVE values for the present study's variables are larger than 0.5. Then, we validated the internal consistency reliability which showed Cronbach’s alpha, α > 0.60 (Sekaran & Bougie, 2020), and composite reliability value > 0.70 (Hair et al., 2017). These are the primary criteria used to establish the internal consistency reliability. Therefore, there was no issue with the discriminant validity of the study data. The results were presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Internal Consistent Reliability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Cronbach's alpha</th>
<th>Composite reliability (ρ_a)</th>
<th>Average variance extracted (AVE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instagram ads</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IA1</td>
<td>0.869</td>
<td>0.742</td>
<td>0.797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IA2</td>
<td>0.873</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IA3</td>
<td>0.675</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IF1</td>
<td>0.763</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram influencer ads</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IF2</td>
<td>0.790</td>
<td>0.884</td>
<td>0.893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IF3</td>
<td>0.807</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IF4</td>
<td>0.852</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IF5</td>
<td>0.820</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buying Motivation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM1</td>
<td>0.904</td>
<td>0.759</td>
<td>0.761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM2</td>
<td>0.892</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buying Behavior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BB1</td>
<td>0.792</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BB2</td>
<td>0.892</td>
<td>0.701</td>
<td>0.768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BB3</td>
<td>0.651</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Investigating the Influence of Cloth Branding Advertisements on Consumer Buying Behavior

**STRUCTURAL MODEL ASSESSMENT**
Table 3: Result of structural model assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses Relationship</th>
<th>$\beta$ value</th>
<th>STDEV</th>
<th>T statistics</th>
<th>P value</th>
<th>Confidence Interval</th>
<th>Bias Corrected 2.5%</th>
<th>97.5%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instagram ads → buying motivation</td>
<td>0.701</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>17.272</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.612</td>
<td>0.771</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram influencer ads → buying motivation</td>
<td>0.811</td>
<td>0.030</td>
<td>27.283</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.741</td>
<td>0.861</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buying motivation → buying behavior</td>
<td>0.697</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>14.687</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.582</td>
<td>0.772</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first hypothesis has been accepted, indicating the number of Instagram ads about a brand positively predicts motivation to buy that brand ($\beta = 0.701$, $t = 17.272$, $p < 0.01 *$), indicating that Instagram advertisers are utilizing various techniques to effectively communicate commercial messages that can influence purchase decisions. This is made possible by Instagram's superior "smart advertising" option, which allows advertisers to customize all the details in their ads to correspond with the viewers' preferences. According to Goldsmith and Lafferty (2002), smart advertisements have an impact on the attitude toward the brand and ultimately lead to a purchase intention.

The second hypothesis (H2) has been accepted, which means that there is a positive relationship between the promotion of a brand by Instagram influencers and users' buying motivation. The higher beta and t values ($\beta = 0.811$, $t = 27.283$, $p < 0.01 *$), indicate that when an influencer promotes a brand on Instagram, it might have a greater effect on the purchase behavior of Instagram users. Influencers are individuals who have a large following on social media and are known for their expertise or authority in a particular niche. They are often perceived as trustworthy and credible sources of information by their followers. As a result, their promotion of a brand can influence their followers' attitudes toward the brand and their likelihood of making a purchase. Instagram influencers can also create a sense of urgency among their followers by providing limited-time offers or exclusive discounts, which can further motivate users to make a purchase. Therefore, companies can benefit from partnering with Instagram influencers to promote their brand, as it can positively influence users' buying behavior and increase sales.

The acceptance of H3 i.e. buying motivation is positively related to buying behavior ($\beta = 0.697$, $t = 14.687$, $p < 0.01 *$), suggests that Instagram ads and especially Instagram influencers create a sense of motivation among their followers to purchase a product, it can lead to actual purchases. This hypothesis implies that users' motivation to buy a product can be influenced by their exposure to content posted by Instagram influencers, including product reviews, recommendations, and endorsements. The positive relationship between buying motivation created by Instagram influencers and buying behavior suggests that influencer marketing can not only influence users' attitudes and beliefs about a product but also encourage them to take action and make a purchase. Finally, to know the percentage variance of the exogenous constructs and the predictive accuracy of the study’s model (Hair et al., 2017), we examined the coefficient of determination ($R^2$). The $R^2$ value of buying behavior is 0.487, which shows that our exogenous constructs explain 48.9% of the variance which is moderate and satisfactory (Ramayah et al., 2018).

Incorporating influencers, Instagram ads become more creative, and creative advertisements effectively sway customers' opinions toward a brand and create an emotional response to the advertisement (Holden & Lutz, 1992). Therefore, creative advertisements are effective sources to create an emotional response toward an advertised product. The rationale behind all three hypotheses lies in the power of advertising and its impact on consumer behavior. When users are consistently exposed to ads, it increases brand awareness and familiarity. As a result, users become more knowledgeable about various products
and services available in the market. This greater exposure may enhance the possibility of consumers contemplating and finally purchasing. Furthermore, regular exposure to advertisements might instill in people a sense of urgency or desire. It reinforces the presence of certain products or services in their minds and may influence their decision-making process. By repeatedly seeing ads, users may perceive the products or services as more desirable or necessary, leading to a higher propensity to buy. Furthermore, repeated exposure to ads can also enhance brand recall and recognition. When users encounter a brand multiple times, it strengthens their memory and association with that particular brand. This increased familiarity can contribute to building trust and credibility, making users more inclined to choose and purchase from that brand. In conclusion, the hypotheses suggest that a higher frequency of ads on Instagram can positively influence users' buying behavior by increasing brand awareness, creating desire, improving brand recall, and enhancing trust and credibility. However, it is crucial for advertisers to strike a balance and ensure that the ads are relevant, engaging, and provide a positive user experience to maximize the potential impact on buying behavior.

CONCLUSION
The branding strategy in the fashion industry interacts with present and prospective customers on Instagram, which has better user integration than Facebook. Although Facebook has a larger number of followers, consumers nowadays tend to prefer branding advertisements on Instagram. Instagram posts by clothing brands receive more interactions from followers in terms of likes and comments on the brand's respective posts, as supported by previous research. For example, Zahid and kamarudin, 2019, noted that Khaadi's Instagram posts received more interactions from followers by likes and comments on the brand's respective posts than on Facebook. Similarly, Al-Dhuhli et al. (2015) stated that previous studies found an increasing rate in Facebook usage, but Instagram has changed this phenomenon. The literature shows that Instagram has made significant changes in consumers' buying decisions towards choosing particular products. Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that Instagram influencers play a significant role in motivating users to buy branded products. This finding is consistent with previous research indicating that social media influencers have a strong impact on consumer behavior and purchasing decisions (Barros Nunes, 2021). The use of Instagram as a marketing platform is also found to be effective due to its smart advertising option, which allows advertisers to customize their ads and target specific audiences. Moreover, this study adds to the existing literature on the effectiveness of social media marketing and highlights the importance of influencer marketing in reaching and motivating target audiences.

Furthermore, when consumers are motivated to make a purchase, they are more likely to follow through and make the actual purchase. This conclusion is consistent with prior studies that found a substantial link between motivation and behavior in the context of consumer decision-making (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2011). Understanding the elements that impact purchasing motivation is critical for marketers wanting to enhance sales and customer engagement. Brands may better connect with their target audience and eventually generate more sales by concentrating on developing successful advertising tactics that tap into customers' motivations and aspirations and ultimately increase sales.

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Investigating the Influence of Cloth Branding Advertisements on Consumer Buying Behavior


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