INTRODUCING A CONSUMER BEHAVIOR FOR BUYING LUXURY GOODS BASED ON THE THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR

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Abstract

Luxury goods meet various daily, personal and social requirements of the consumer. Identifying factors that are affective on purchasing these goods could have a significant role in sale promotion and beneficiary. In the current research, in order to perceive these goods' consumer behavior, the theory of planned behavior has been utilized. In order to achieve this, mediatory role of purchase intention on the impact of attitude, mental norm, and perceived behavioral control on luxury goods' consumer purchase behavior have been assessed. The current research is applied, quantitative, research, descriptive-survey and descriptive-survey in terms of objective, the type of the data, the method of data collection respectively. The population of interest is consisted of customers of a shopping mall in Tehran among whom 384 people have been selected by convenience sampling. Data analysis has been performed by path analysis and AMOS software. Data collection tool is self-made questionnaire. The findings of the research indicate that the impact of attitude and mental norm on purchase intention has been positive and significant. Perceived behavioral control has had a positive impact on purchase behavior directly as well.

Keywords: consumer behavior, theory of planned behavior, luxury goods, attitude, mental norm, perceived behavioral control, purchase intention, purchase behavior



INTRODUCTION

Different classes of society have various consuming levels and forms. Although the increment of the income affects the consuming level, the amount of its effect on the form of consumption varies. Despite the fact that the consumer chooses a good that would have high standards and low expense among various goods, this kind of reaction does not apply to various kind of goods .According to the rule of demand, by increment of the individual's income, the amount of purchasing a normal good was increased and inferior good decreased. Luxury good is one that its consumption depends on the level of the individuals' income. By developing capitalism and commercial Medias, people are encouraged to consume luxury and unnecessary goods and by elevation of living standards, people ignore their purchasing power. Marketing and commercials increases individual's awareness regarding the quality of the goods and alters their interests and tendencies. In this alteration, individuals' interest in choosing necessary goods changes into choosing luxury ones. Furthermore, quality of the product, the kind of available goods, predicting consumer goods in future and others' consumer behavior are effective in choosing consumer goods. Luxury goods are different from those that are being purchased daily, these products are not required and they just fulfill social requirements such as social prestige and people show off their personality by purchasing luxury goods. People have different purchase behavior during their life and the youth follow the culture related to their age in choosing goods (Eisenstein, 1950).

Various results have indicated that in consuming luxury goods psychological factors and brands have a significant role. By considering human's nature, discussed requirements are more extreme in younger ages. As a result, due to reasons such as a society full of young people and willingness of young people to have a superior sense of community superiority and showing off in society by the type of consumption they choose, comparing themselves with other societies by satellite communication and increasing trips and overseas residences, easy money and high flow of money in superior classes of the society requires the utilization of this ground in improving economics of the society. Luxury goods are different from the other ones due to a significant reason and they include social requirements such as social prestige as well. Getting acquainted with luxury goods' consumers identities could lead to marketing planning and managing brands and exquisite features for the product in order to create the possibility for directing the flow of the money that is currently abundant in the high level of the society toward inner industries that have the potential for competition and could be replaced. Considering daily increment of the luxury goods and its prevailing phenomenon, discovering some of the driving forces existing under increasing demand for luxury goods, holds long-term and short-term significance.



Consuming luxury goods is not like normal models of consumption and without getting affected by pricing system, creates a form of dependence. Consuming luxury goods without being similar to consuming normal goods, has attracted many economists' interests and is still out of the process of normal consumption and holds an outer and nonfinancial impact; consequently, increasing awareness regarding behavioral model of luxury goods in different ranges of the ages, could be used by marketers (Weidman et al. 2007).

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Luxury Goods

Although defining luxury goods does not look simple, many researchers have presented various definitions regarding it (Eisenstein, 1950; Vigneron and Johnson, 2004; Wiedmann et al; 2007). Lexically, the word luxury has constantly means worthy position of the brand (Vigneron and Johnson, 2004). According to Nueno and Quelch (1998) the luxury brand applies to a brand that the ratio of the function of the product is considerably low according to the price paid for it; however, the intangible value and situational function of the product is high. Luxury brands are defined as high-quality, rare and costly goods (Kapferer, 1998). According to Dubois and Duquesne (1995), luxury goods are purchased for the concept that they implied; not for what they are apparently. Researches indicate that luxury goods acquire high grade symbolically and empirically, while normal goods acquire high grades practically and functionally (Shukla, 2010). Individuals endeavor to create a registered social image of them by purchasing luxury goods (Hume, 2010). According to Johnson and Vigneron (2004), luxury goods include clothing, shoes, purses, watches, perfumes and accessories whose consumption brings prestige for their owners. According to Dubois and Duquesne, distinct brands like Hermes, Chanel, Luis Viton and ... share significant features of being lux like costly prices, exquisite quality, unique designs, rareness and specific value with their consumers. An overview indicates that inner and outer motivations have been recognized as two main reasons for consuming luxury goods.

Extrovert people, purchase luxury goods just for showing off their wealth and social position in public (O'Cass and Frost, 2002). On the other hand, introverts consume luxury goods for specified satisfaction, sense of evolution, originality and pleasure (Zhang et al, 2005). It is worth mentioning that despite the fact that inner and outer motivations for purchasing luxury goods are quite contractive, one may consume luxury goods for satisfying inner and outer requirements simultaneously. Some individuals might consume luxury goods not only for their inner peace, but also for showing off their wealth and redefining their social level.



Consumer's Behavior

People generally believe that consumer's behavior is the way individuals buy the goods and the services; however, in fact consumer's behavior is something more than what was mentioned. It is defined as the following: final decision of the consumer considering acquisition, consumption and extricating from goods, services, time and ideas of various decision making in a specific period of the time. Consumer's behavior does not only include the way of purchasing goods, but it also includes using services, activities and beliefs as well. Activities such as travelling, going to the dentist, registering for instructional courses and ... all are among the items that consumer's behavior includes them. Accordingly, consumer's behavior includes goods, services, activities and beliefs and marketing endeavors for fulfilling the individuals' requirements are called suggestion (Zhang et al, 2005).

Although the purchase status is extremely significant for the marketers, consumer's behavior does not only include purchasing; but it also includes acquisition, consumption and extrication. Acquisition is a process through which one acquires a suggestion. Purchasing is only one of the ways of acquiring the gods. Items such as borrowing, bartering, installment sale and ... are other ways through which one would be able to acquire goods and services. Consumption is a process through which one utilizes a good or a service. Although most of the researches of consumer behavior have assessed acquisition, consumption is the central core of consumer behavior and is highly significant due to the following reasons (Amatulli and Guido, 2011): Firstly, consumer of a good transfers an implicit symbolic message to the others. For instance, using a specific automobile, the way of clothing, the type of entertainment all could imply individual's personality to the others. Secondly, consumption could impress others' behavior. For instance transferring a consumer's negative experiment to the others is a factor that impresses purchasing or consuming suggestion from them. Eventually extrication is a process through that one extricates from past suggestion that has acquired. It does not only include throwing away a suggestion, but it is exchanging a suggestion with the other, dedication suggestion to the others, altering efficiency of the suggestion are all among the ways that a consumer extricates from his goods and acquired services. Consumer behavior includes acquisition, consumption and extrication in a form of a dynamic sequence in a specific period. This period could include several hours, days, weeks or even years.

Consumer behavior does not necessarily reflect a specific individual's behavior. Deciding about purchasing a car, going to a specific restaurant and renting a house are among the behaviors that could include a group of friends, a number of colleagues or all family members. Furthermore, individuals might have several roles during performing consumer behavior. For instance, while buying an automobile; one or several members of the family could have the role



of collecting data, as those same member or members might have the role of consumer or purchaser at the same time. Consumer behavior includes perceiving and identifying location, time, the number and duration of purchasing, acquisition, consumption and extrication from a suggestion. Consumers have to decide regarding proceeding to acquisition, consumption and extrication from a good or a service. They might save their income or decide to buy a house or throw out a good. In some cases, deciding about acquisition, consumption or extrication is related with the consumer's concern. For instance, a research in eight countries indicated that extricating from cellphones have been related to the danger of being afflicted by brain tumors. Social, psychological, economical and ... concerns all could persuade the consumer to acquisition, consumption or extrication from a suggestion (Vigneron and Johnson, 2004).

It is worth mentioning that consumers' purchases are extremely being impressed by their cultural, social, personal and psychological traits that are going to be discussed in the following (Kapferer, 1998).

Cultural Factors: cultural factors are among the most significant factors that form one's behavior and desire. Human's behavior is mostly to be learned. One learns fundamental norms and various demands and behaviors from others at the society. Markers should always consider cultural orientation for predicting new goods that could be demanded.

Social Factors: consumer's behavior is being impressed by social factors as well. These social factors consist of small groups, family members and consumer's social role. Companies should consider these factors precisely while codifying their marketing policy; as these factors extremely impress consumer's reactions.

Personal Factors: purchaser's decisions are being impressed by his personality traits as well. These personality traits include age, stage of life, career, economic status, life style, personality and mental image.

Mental Factors: one's choice and purchase, is being impressed by four basic factors including motivation, perception, leaning and beliefs as well. 1) Motivation; one has several requirements at the same time. Some of these requirements are physiological and due to feeling hunger, thirst or sadness. Some of these requirements are psychological and are due to the need for being recognized, respected or sense of belonging. Most of these requirements lack sufficient intensity for motivating the individual at a specific time. A requirement turns into a motivation when it would hold sufficient intensity.

A motivation includes a requirement that would hold sufficient intensity for directing the individual in fulfilling his satisfaction. 2) Perception; one is ready to act. The way one acts is being impressed by his perception of the environment. Two people with the same motivation under the same circumstances have contractive actions; as they have different perception of the



environment. 3) Learning; learning is the alterations that are being created in one's behavior due to experiment. Due to learning theories, most of the human's behavior is to be learned. Learning would be fulfilled due to mutual impact of tendencies, motivations, circumstances, reactions and reinforcement. Tendency is a strong inner motivation that demands proceeding. Tendency would turn to motivation when it would be guided to a motivated object and circumstances consist of small motivations that determine time, place and the way of motivating the individual. 4) Beliefs; people acquire their beliefs through function and learning. These beliefs impress their purchase behavior. A belief is a descriptive opinion that one has toward something.

Theory of Planned Behavior

Many authors believe that studying consumer behavior is deeply impressed by psychology. On the other hand, socialists emphasize studying social groups regarding consumer behavior; as a result theories could effectively help determining individual features, beliefs and values that are related to various hygienic and consumer behaviors and might be changeable; as a result, in order to perceive consumer behavior, theory of planned behavior that is a psychological-social theory, is being utilized. The mentioned theory contains studying attitudes that form the foundation of psychology and groups that affect consumer behavior that forms the foundation of sociology at the same time. Theory of planned behavior is based on the fact that people make rational decision based on available data (Kapferer, 1998). This theory is made of five components including: attitude, mental norms, perceived behavior control, intention and behavior. One's attitude toward a subject is the result of his opinions regarding it and assessing answers related to these opinions. Abstract norms adjust standards for executions that could be accepted or rejected by the individuals. Perceived behavior control indicated the amount of one's intentional control in doing or not doing a behavior. In case individuals would believe that they are not provided with sources or opportunities for performing the intended behavior, the possibility of performing that behavior would weaken. One basic factor in theory of planned behavior is one's intention for performing a specific behavior. Intentions could change during the time. The more the period between intention and behavior would be, the higher the possibility of happening unpredictable events that might change the behavior intention would get (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1975).

This research has been formed based on the theory of planned behavior and for perceiving luxury goods consumers' behavior. It is quite clear in this field that consuming luxury goods includes one's social and personal function. This theory has a key role in explaining social and personal values of the individual (Kumar, 2012). The mentioned theory is in some



way the prevailing issue of the theory of reasoned action (TRA). The basis of this theory is that one's behavior is impressed by one's intention for doing that behavior. On the other hand, one's intention is being impressed by two factors: 1) one's motivation against behavior and 2) mental norms (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1975). As a result, in addition to the two previous factors that was stated regarding TRA, theory of planned behavior adds another variable which is called planned behavior control.

Attitude

Attitude about a behavior is defined as a positive or negative sensation in relation with performing a behavior (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1980). Based on theory of reasoned action, attitude toward a behavior is being determined by one's beliefs, consequences of the behavior and one's assessment of these consequences. In other words, attitude refers to one's solid beliefs regarding performing a behavior. Jin and Kang (2011) in their studies regarding consumers concluded that attitude has been the most significant index of predicting consumers' purchase intention for foreign goods (clothing). Another research that was performed by Son and Jin (2013) confirmed the impact of Indian consumers' attitude about purchasing foreign brands.

In the past numerous researches have been performed that have indicated significant impact of attitude on consumers' purchase intention. Considering these facts, the firs hypothesis of the research is being formed as the following:

First Hypothesis: attitude regarding purchasing luxury goods has a positive impact on consumers' purchase intention.

Mental Norm

Mental norm is defined as a specific perception of confirmation or lack of confirmation from the others (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1991/1975). In other words, mental norm refers to effective individuals' impact on one's function and behavior. Effective individuals could include family members, friends, and colleagues. Kim and Karpova (2010), by studying some of the American students' behavior, discovered a direct link between mental norms and purchase intention regarding purchasing fake brand and unoriginal goods. This positive relation between mental norm and purchase intention has been proved in several studies (Kim and Karpova, 2010; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; May, 2005) according to this; the second hypothesis is being presented as the following:

Second Hypothesis: mental norm about purchasing luxury goods has a positive impact on consumers' purchase intention.



Perceived Behavioral Control

Perceived behavioral control refers to the amount of perceived intensity from the individual regarding performing a specific behavior. There are some of the behaviors that people have the intention of doing them; however, due to lack of opportunity or resources, they would not be able to do them. Perceived behavioral control contributes to predict these behaviors (Miller, 2007). Based on theory of planned behavior, the more the opportunities and resources would be for individuals for performing an action, the more would be his control upon his behavior. Perceived behavioral control affects intentions and behaviors. Studies performed by King and Ho (2002) confirmed that perceived behavioral control is the most significant index for explaining the reason for purchasing luxury goods among Chinese consumers. Several and various studies have confirmed significant relation between perceived behavioral control and purchase intention (Teo and Pok, 2003; Shih and Fang, 2004). Past studies have confirmed a direct link between perceived behavioral control and real purchase behavior. Based on this, third and fourth hypothesis are being presented as the following:

Third Hypothesis: Perceived behavioral control regarding purchasing luxury goods has a positive impact on luxury goods consumers' purchase intention.

Fourth Hypothesis: perceived behavioral control regarding purchasing luxury goods has a positive impact on luxury goods purchase behavior.

Behavioral Intentions (purchase intention)

Behavioral intentions are defined as one's perceptions of performing a specific behavior. The objective of buying a product is considered as a motivation for performing a desirable behavior. Many researchers have confirmed mediatory role of behavioral intentions on purchase behavior. Based on this fact the fifth hypothesis is being presented as the following:

Fifth Hypothesis: purchase intention of luxury goods is effective in luxury goods purchase behavior.

Considering what was stated and five discussed hypothesis, the following conceptual model is being presented for better perception of luxury goods consumers' behavior based on theory of planned behavior:



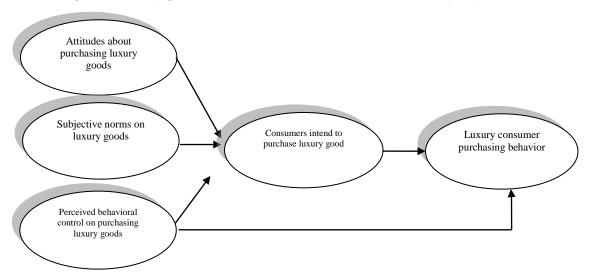


Figure 1: luxury goods consumers' behavior based on theory of planned behavior

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current research, is applied research in terms of objective and descriptive-correlational in terms of data collection. It is sectional considering the aspect of time and the type of the data is quantitative. Population of interest of the current research includes customers of a shopping mall in Tehran that have been privileged with the experiment of purchasing luxury goods. Considering the population of interest being indefinite, 384 people were selected using convenience sampling. Data collection tool has been self-made questionnaire. This questionnaire includes 18 items. 3 items was allocated to attitude variable, 4 items to mental norm, 4 items to perceived behavioral control, 3 items to purchase intention and 4 items to luxury goods consumers' purchase behavior.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Collected data in the current research have been analyzed utilizing SPSS and AMOS software. In the current research reliability and stability of the questionnaires have been assessed by using SPSS software and the amount of the impact of the independent variables on dependent ones has been assessed using structural equations modeling by AMOS software. People under assessment in the current research are different in terms of gender and education; consequently in this part these parameters are being assessed. In table 1, respondents' demographic information has been presented.



Demographic variables		Frequency percentage	
Gender	male	44.2	
	female	55.8	
	Associate degree	20.9	
Level of education	Bachelor degree	22.1	
	Master degree and higher	57	

Considering table 1, it is clear that 44.2 percent of people were male and the rest of them female and 20.9 percent of the responders have associate degree, 22.1 percent bachelor and 57 percent master degree and higher. After assessing descriptive variables, in this part descriptive data including average and standard deviation related to the variables of the research is being presented. In table 2 the amount of average and standard deviation of dependent and independent variables of the research is being presented. The results indicate that most peoples' opinions regarding all of the variables have been more than 3 are tend to completely agree and agree answers. On the other hand, standard deviation of these variables is at an acceptable level.

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Components	average	Standard deviation
Attitude	3.0778	0.49180
Mental norms	3.2615	0.57183
Perceived behavioral control	3.5471	0.27655
Purchase intention	3.5873	0.18762
Purchase behavior	3.1097	0.37007

Table 2: Average and standard deviation of dependent and independent variables of the research

Conceptual model of the research contains a structural model including variables of the attitude (ATT), mental norm (SUB), perceived behavioral control (CONTROL), purchase intention (INTEN) and luxury goods consumers' purchase behavior (BEH). In image 2, the designed model in AMOS software is presented. In this image, standard coefficients and significance amount is present for each of the relations in the model of the research.



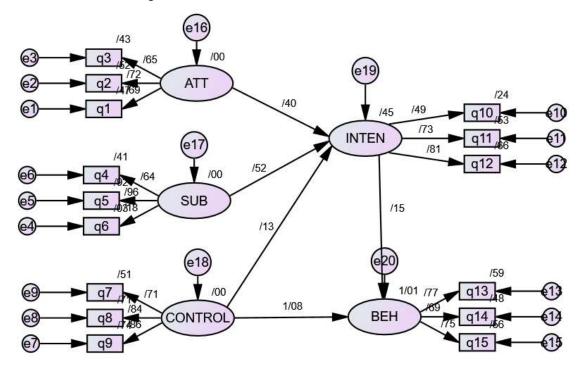


Figure 2: Standard coefficients of model estimation

Standard coefficients and the level of significance among the variables of the research have been presented in table 3.

Table 3: Standard coefficients related to dependent and indepen	dant variables of the recearch
Table 3. Standard Coefficients related to dependent and independent	

Hypothesis	Dependent variable	Dependent	Standard	Significance	result
	Dependent variable	variable	coefficients	level	
first	attitude	Purchase	0.40	0.000	Confirmed
	attitude	intention			
second	Mental norm	Purchase	0.52	0.000	Confirmed
		intention			
P	Perceived behavioral	Purchase	0.13	0.083	Not confirmed
	control	intention	0.10	0.000	
fourth	Perceived behavioral	Purchase	1.08	0.000	Confirmed
	control	behavior	1.00	0.000	
fifth	Purchase intention	Purchase	0.15	0.142	Not confirmed
		behavior			

By executing structural equation modeling in the software, fit indexes would be presented that indicate that the claimed conceptual model is being fitted by the empirical data to some extent.



Despite common statistical tests that are being accepted or rejected by statistics, in structural equation modeling, a number of indexes would be introduced. The status of the fit for the conceptual model of the research is presented in table 4.

Categorization of indexes	Name of index	Primary model	Acceptable fitness
	The surface covered by chi square	0/000	P>5%
Definite fit index	The index of goodness of fit	0/983	GFI>90%
	Reformed index of goodness of fit	0/946	AGFI>90%
Comparative fit index	Normed fit index	0/959	NFI>90%
	Comparative fit index	0/921	CFI>90%
	Relative fit index	0/928	RFI>90%
	Increasing fit index	0/911	IFI>90%
Economic fit index	Economic normed fit index	0/581	PNFI>50%
	The root mean square deviation	0/092	RMSEA<10%
	Normed chi-square to the degree of freedom	4/09	Amount between 1 to 8

Table 4: Indexes of fit for conceptual model of the research

As it is presented in table 4, all fit indexes have an appropriate status. For instance the significance level of Chi-square of the model is less than 5% and this indicates that empirical data support the conceptual model of the research appropriately. The amount of the root mean square deviation is less than 10% which confirms fitness of model. The other indexes being acceptable are apparent in the outputs of the software. General confirming of the model does not mean that all of the existing relations in the model have been confirmed; since, existing relations in the model should be assessed separately as well and consequently, minor fit indexes of the model are being assessed. In other words, after assessing general fitness of the model, minor relations should be tested to determine whether defined minor relations hold appropriate fitness or not.

CONCLUSION

Luxury goods are different from those that are purchased daily; these goods other than being required, fulfill social requirements such as social prestige which reflects itself through purchasing luxury goods. It is generally accepted that consumer behavior, is the way of buying goods and services by individuals; however, consumer behavior is something more than that; it is generally defined as the following: consumer's final decision considering acquisition, consumption and extrication of goods, services, time and opinions of different stages of decision



making at a period of time. Consumer behavior does not only include purchasing goods, but also includes using services, activities and opinions as well. Activities such as travelling, going to the dentist, registering for instructional courses and... all include consumer behavior. Due to what was mentioned, marketing endeavors for fulfilling individuals' requirements are called suggestion. In order to perceive consumer behavior, theory of planned behavior which is a psychological-social theory is being used. The mentioned theory contains studying attitudes that make the base of psychology and groups effective on consumer behavior which is the base of sociology at the same time. Theory of planned behavior is based on the fact that people decide logically and wisely based on available data. The mentioned theory consists of five components including: attitude, mental norms, perceived behavioral control, intention and behavior. One's attitude about a subject is the result of one's opinions about it and assessing answers in relation with these opinions. Abstract adjusting norms are standards for execution which could be accepted or rejected for individuals. Perceived behavioral control refers to the amount of one's intentional control in performing a behavior. In case people would believe that they are not provided with resources or opportunities for performing intended behavior, the possibility of performing it would lessen.

A basic factor in theory of planned behavior is one's intention for performing a specific behavior. Intentions could change during the time. The more the period between intention and behavior would be, the more the probability of occurring unpredictable events that could lead to alterations in the intention of performing behavior would get. Behavior is one' action. In order to present a localized pattern of luxury goods' consumer behavior based on theory of planned behavior and testing hypothesis about relations among the variables including attitude, mental norm, perceived behavioral control, purchase intention and consumers' purchase behavior, selfmade questionnaire was utilized which included 18 items that 3 items belonged to the variable of attitude, 4 items to the variable of mental norm, 4 items to the variable of perceived behavioral control, 3 items to the variable of purchase intention and 4 items to the variable of luxury goods' consumer purchase behavior. The questionnaire was adjusted based on LIKERT scale. In the current research the validity of the questionnaire was assessed which a method is for the amount of validity of the components of a measuring tool and is often performed by those who are experts in the field of subject; consequently, validity depends on the judges' opinion. In the current research, after consulting experts and managers, validity of the tool was confirmed. The results of descriptive statistics indicated that considering table 1, it is clear that 44.2 percent of people were male and the rest of them were female; and also it is clear that 20.9 percent of responders had associate degree, 22.1 percent bachelor degree and 57 percent had master



degree or higher. The results of structural equation modeling indicated that variable of attitude has had 40 percent of positive impact on purchase intention.

Variable of mental norm has had 52 percent positive impact on purchase intention. Variable of perceived behavioral control has had no impact on purchase intention. . Variable of perceived behavioral control has had 1.08 percent positive impact on purchase behavior and eventually, variable of purchase intention has had no impact on purchase behavior.

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