
The Impact of the Self-esteem and Consumption Values on Consumers Attitude and Intention to Purchase Luxury Fashion Products

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Background and Purpose: Luxury brands consumption has increased in the recent years (Hennigs, Klarmann, Behrens, & Wiedmann 2016), moving from production of exclusive products to creation of memorable retail experience and personalized symbolic attachment (Kapeferer & Valette- Florence, 2016). Thus, brand managers must strive to maintain quality without compromising exclusivity and uniqueness of these luxury fashion brands. As a result, there is a need to understand the intrinsic motivation of consumption that can capture feelings attached to luxury brands. Recent studies indicate that consumer perceived value influences luxury brand consumption, but little is known on the role of self-esteem in this relationship. Hence, this study will focus on the interaction between consumption values and self-esteem and their impact on the attitude and intention to purchase luxury fashion products.

Self-esteem and consumption values are important in determining consumption behavior because consumers often seek to improve their self-esteem through acquisition of goods (Truong & McColl, 2011), and often love and buy brands that give them self-worth (Aaker, 1997). Values also influence consumer choice and loyalty to a given brand (Chi & Kilduff, 2012). Consumers seek values that improve or maintain their self-esteem and therefore appealing to the self-esteem can be an effective way of enhancing acquisition of Luxury brands (Truong & McColl, 2011). Given that today's consumers are identity shoppers seeking to renew their self-image through consumption, understanding consumption values that appeal to the self to influence attitude towards purchase intention is important.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine how consumption values and self-esteem affect consumer's attitude and intention to purchase luxury fashion products. Results will provide implications for luxury fashion brand managers to highlight consumption values in marketing strategies to increase consumer purchase and brand loyalty.

Method: Data were collected through online survey and college students were invited to participate. Convenience sampling strategy was applied. The survey link with an invitation was sent to college students; and extra credits were provided to those who completed the survey. In total, 214 usable responses were generated. Multi-item scales were developed to measure self-esteem, social value, emotional value, quality value, price value, attitude and intention to purchase luxury fashion brands, utilizing 5-point Likert scale of 1= "strongly disagree" to 5= "strongly agree." Demographic variables were also collected, including gender (female=80.8%; male=19.2%), age (18-20=34.6%; 20-22=48.6%; older than 23=16.8%), ethnicity (Caucasian=64.5%; African American=20.1%; others=15.4%). Consumption values contained four dimensions: *social value* ($\alpha=.846$), *emotional value* ($\alpha=.843$), *quality value* ($\alpha=.865$) and *price value* ($\alpha=.743$). Each dimension was measured by a multi-item scale. Three-item scale was developed to measure *self-esteem* ($\alpha=.892$). The semantic differential scale was employed to measure *attitude* ($\alpha=.894$). An incomplete statement regarding purchasing luxury fashion

products was developed, followed by five groups of semantic differential adjectives. Participants were requested to select the corresponding adjective from each group to complete the statement. Finally, *intention* towards purchasing luxury fashion brand was measured by three-item scale ($\alpha=.946$).

Results: Structural equation modeling was applied to examine the effect of self-esteem and personal values on consumer intention to purchase luxury fashion products. The model demonstrated an excellent fit: χ^2 ($df=255$) = 375.472, $p=0.000$; RMSEA=0.047; CFI=0.962; TLI=0.955; SRMR=0.049 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). The individual paths were inspected. Statistic results indicated that social value significantly influence both attitude towards luxury fashion ($\beta=.230$, $p<.001$) and purchase intention ($\beta=.177$, $p<.012$), but not self-esteem. Emotional value, differently, was found to significantly associated with self-esteem ($\beta=.624$, $p<.000$), but not related to attitude or intention. The significant relationship between quality value and attitude ($\beta=.448$, $p<.000$) was also identified, indicating that consumers who have higher level of quality value tend to have positive attitude towards luxury consumption. Further, intention towards purchasing luxury fashion was negatively associated with price value ($\beta=-.318$, $p<.045$), but positively related to attitude ($\beta=.619$, $p<.000$). In addition, the indirect relationships between consumption value and luxury fashion purchasing intention were also examined. Although, quality value was not significantly related to intention, but its indirect effect on intention mediated by attitude was significant ($\beta=.169$, $p<.000$).

Discussion: The results suggested that social value and quality value motivate consumers to purchase luxury fashion brands directly and indirectly, which indicate that consumers who care about others' opinion or who prefer high quality product would be more likely to purchase luxury fashion products. However, those who have higher level of price value are less likely to purchase luxury fashion products. Not as expected, emotional value and self-esteem had no influence on attitude and intention to purchase luxury brands. People who have higher self-esteem usually would not engage in buying behavior to boost their already high self-esteem, which is consistent with previous research (Chang & Arkin, 2002). Luxury fashion businesses should consider the influence of different consumption values, and providing products that are price friendly, good quality, and take social value influence into the consideration for marketing strategy.

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