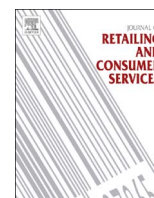




ELSEVIER

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/jretconser

Consumer motives and impact of western media on the Moroccan luxury buyer

Nicolas Hamelin^a, Park Thaichon^{b,*}^a S P Jain School of Global Management, Singapore, Singapore^b S P Jain School of Global Management, 5 Figtree Drive, Sydney Olympic Park, Sydney, New South Wales 2127, Australia

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 26 April 2016

Received in revised form

11 June 2016

Accepted 12 June 2016

Keywords:

Purchase intention

Product characteristics

Motives

Media

Luxury

Morocco

ABSTRACT

Despite rising income inequality, social and political instability, Morocco has witnessed an exponential growth in luxury good consumption. Increased political freedom, multiplication of international trade agreements and a somewhat liberalization the audio-visual sector combined with an ever increasing internet penetration have brought Moroccan 'citizen under the spotlight of globalization. On the other hand, Morocco has remained deeply attached to its religious and traditional roots, with a vast majority of the population considering themselves devout and practicing Muslim. In Islam the consumption of ostentatious goods is clearly proscribed, yet consumption data clearly describe a different reality. Questionnaires were distributed by a trained pollster to potential luxury good consumers in Morocco. A total of 296 surveys were filled. Findings from this research shows a strong positive link between luxury good purchase intention and consumption of western media channels as well as social media. The research also provides an analysis of the demographics and the social and personal motives of the Moroccan luxury good consumer.

© 2016 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Morocco is a country in North Africa which is comparable in size to the state of California. Neighbouring countries are Algeria to the east and Mauritania to the south. The west of the country has an Atlantic coast, and there is a Mediterranean coast in the north. Following 44 years of French protectorate (1912–1956) Morocco economic situation has remained dire over the years. Following the independence of Morocco, the rural elites who had sided with the French colonial powers were discredited. The bourgeoisie, which included most of the bureaucracy, were impatient to increase their political weight and modernize the country. The monarchy however quickly realised that relying on these elites was fundamental to sidetracking the national movement led by the bourgeoisie. Yet solidarity between this movement and traditional rural leaders prevented any modernization for many years. The stagnation of the kingdom in the fields of education, the economy and governance was near total (Leveau, 1985). However with the reign of Mohammed VI, Morocco's new ruler who took the throne in 1999 undeniable progresses were made. Morocco's per capita GDP improved steadily from 1000 USD in 1991 to around 3100 USD in 2013, and the country's per capita GNI increased 92 per cent between 1980 and 2012.

* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: park.thaichon@spjain.edu.au (P. Thaichon).

Additionally, in terms of human development the country is still struggling. According to the United Nations Development Program's Human Development Index, in 2005 Morocco was ranked 124th out of 177 countries, in 2011 it ranked 130th out of 186 countries and two years later in 2013 no net progress was noted with the kingdom ranking 130th out of 187 countries. The poverty level remained high, with nine per cent of the population below the poverty line. Nonetheless, in parallel recent economic growth has generated, along high income inequality (Strachan, 2014) a solid base of very wealthy consumers, which leads to the development of a luxury market (Bloomberg, 2015). Casablanca, and more precisely, Morocco Mall, is the center of luxury stores (Martin-Leke and Ellis, 2014). The new shopping center opened more opportunities for Moroccans to buy many kinds of luxury brands such as Louis Vuitton, Dior, Gucci, Prada, Fendi, Miu Miu, Ralph Lauren, and Rolex (Zevloff, 2012). Moroccan high-income women have always been aware of the latest international luxury trends and are always trying to position themselves above others by buying luxury goods (Benbrahim, 2011).

At time the demand for luxury products by Moroccans is so high that a "rationing" system is being established. The Louis Vuitton shop in Marrakech started to establish purchasing quotas on their customers: clients can buy only one article and one accessory per day (Benbrahim, 2011). In 2010, more than 206 cars whose unit price is more than MAD 1 million were sold in Morocco (Chalot, 2011). In the heart of the financial crisis, Porsche sold 50% more cars in

Morocco than in 2008, increasing its market share by 12% in a single year. "In both 2008 and 2009, we have exhausted our quota of Porsche Cayenne – sold 2 million dirhams – approximately 243,000 \$US for the Turbo S version. The Porsche Panamera sold nearly 1.4 million dirhams outsold its quota in less than three months between October and December 2009". Declared Loïc Roix, Marketing manager for Porsche-Audi. The CEO of Dior couture Serge Toledano noted: "In 2004, we had the opportunity to open a store in La Mamounia in Marrakech. (...) We thought initially that we would target foreign tourists, but this was not the case. In fact, the clientele was made up to 70% of Moroccans who came from Casablanca and Rabat. Such surge in luxury consumption may appear in contradiction for a Muslim country such a Morocco. Islam proscribes blatant consumption of luxuries and advises against hoarding: "and let those who hoard gold and silver and do not spend them in the way of Allah know that a severe and painful punishment is awaiting them." (At-Tauba: 34).

Although there has been an increase in western influence Islam has remained very much anchored in the life of Moroccan citizen: a 2012 survey by a mainstream Moroccan magazine, *Tel-Quel*, shows that 89 per cent of Moroccans feel that Islam guides their lives; with over 60 per cent praying five times a day and 39 per cent claiming to recite the Quran at home. Yet clearly Moroccan society is much divided on the possession of wealth and luxury. A recent French TV documentary on the extravagant wealth of the Palace did not trigger protest from the Moroccan public, quite the opposite. Social media reflected Moroccan irritation against France and many comments wished even more wealth to the king. Hence a question central to this paper is how the Moroccan society has reacted to western influence and globalization. One may suggest that globalization is a key factor in the loss of tradition and the religion aspect of community. Alvey (2005) demonstrated that for Adam Smith secularization was not an inevitable consequence of globalization and that the religious aspect of community was not necessarily being attenuated by the forces of globalization. Before the reign of Mohammed VI, the palace, under King Hassan II had kept a strict lead on the media and mostly used to promote the regime (Zaid, 2016). This changed with the new King, a modernization of the telecommunication sector, the arrival of Arab satellite broadcasting and an exponential growth of internet penetration meant that the Moroccan public was increasingly exposed to the wider world, for example Facebook users were estimated at 10 million in 2015 compared to 860,000 in 2009 (Zaid, 2016). Although Western cultural behind luxury consumption has been extensively studied (Ahuvia and Wong, 1998) very few research have investigated the impact of media on the North African market and the social values influencing behavioral intentions towards luxury. The first part of this research will assess the impact of social and personal motive, product characteristics on luxury good consumption. The second part of this research will specifically analyze the influence of western and traditional TV channels, TV programs, and websites. The results section is then presented, followed by section suggesting future research and discussing some implications of the findings of this study.

2. Literature review

2.1. Defining luxury

Previous research found that luxury goods can be classified into four main categories: fashion, cosmetics, wines, and watches/jewellery (Jackson, 2004). Recently other categories were added: luxury automobiles, hotels, tourism, private banking, home furnishing and airlines (Chevalier and Mazzalovo, 2008). Fashion luxury goods are comprised of apparel, accessories, handbags, shoes, watches,

jewellery, and perfume, for which just the mere use or display of a particular brand brings prestige to the owner, and functional utility becomes a side issue (Vigneron and Johnson, 2004a, 2004b). When analyzing the consumption of luxury goods some researchers focused on the profile of the buyers and on the reasons for their choices (Chan et al., 2015; Dubois et al., 2005; Dubois and Duquesne, 1993; Husic and Cicic, 2009; Nueno and Quelch, 1998; Sanguanpiyapan and Jasper, 2010; Summers et al., 2006; Truong and McColl, 2011; Wiedmann et al., 2007; Zhang and Kim, 2013). Other studies analyze the luxury market from the point of view of marketing management (Truong et al., 2008; Vickers and Renand, 2003) and the role of the brand for the consumption of luxury goods (Fionda and Moore, 2009; Kapferer, 1997; Kapferer and Bastien, 2009; O'Cass and Frost, 2002; Phau and Prendergast, 2000; Tsai, 2005). Previous research such as Vigneron and Johnson (1999) explored the presence of personal and interpersonal motives for the consumption of luxury brands. In spite of the considerable volume of research in this area, much remains to be understood about the relationships among the motivating factors behind the purchase intention for luxury brands (Hung et al., 2011). According to Berthon et al. (2009, p. 45), "they [luxury brands] are poorly understood and under-investigated". This gap in consumer research is not unique to this specialist area. As Arnould and Thompson (2005), Lye et al. (2005) and Hung et al. (2011) noted, academics still have limited knowledge with regard to generalizing consumption processes and outcomes. For this reason, the aim of this study is to provide new insights into theorizing the consumption of luxury brands by integrating existing frameworks with empirical testing.

2.2. Product characteristics

Product characteristics are important factors linked to luxury products purchase intention. It is reported that the higher the price, the higher the intention to buy luxury goods (Jackson and Carmen, 2002). Furthermore, it has also been demonstrated that product design is an important precursor of luxury customers' purchase decision (Bendell and Klaenthus, 2007). Brand name is also a determinant when buying luxury goods. Han et al. (2010) assert that wealthy consumers are more likely to buy well known, luxury brand names as they are associated to higher status. In addition, quality is an important product characteristic that affect customer purchase decision (Korgaonkar et al., 2010; Vigneron and Johnson, 1999). Research shows that luxury customers expect the products to come with outstanding in-store and after-sales services (Liu et al., 2013). The following null hypotheses can be derived as such:

H1: There is a positive relationship between product characteristics and the intention to buy luxury goods.

$$\text{Log (intention)} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{ Price} + \beta_2 \text{ Design} + \beta_3 \text{ Brand name} + \beta_4 \text{ Quality} + \beta_5 \text{ Service} + \epsilon.$$

2.3. Social and Personal Motives

Consumer determined to elevate themselves to higher social status or strengthen their affiliation to a higher class are the prime purchaser of Luxury goods (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999; Arora, 2005). For those in lower social classes, luxury goods consumption is a way to reach out to the upper classes. A recent study found that the primary reason for purchasing luxury goods in Morocco is to belong to a particular social group (Aboulghali, 2010). Consumers motivated by uniqueness will favor luxury goods that are in limited supply and are owned by only a few individuals (Yan, 2002). Lastly, self-satisfaction motives (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999) means that people buy luxury goods for their own satisfaction. The following null hypothesis is then being tested:

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/7433789>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/7433789>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)