

THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CULTURAL VALUES AND CONSUMER MOTIVATIONS FOR PURCHASING LUXURY BRANDS

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Abstract

In a global context, it is important for researchers and marketers alike to understand the behavior of consumers in general and their motivations in particular for purchasing luxury goods, while taking into account the cultural context of the buyers – an important aspect from the point of view of some marketing scholars.

This research investigates if the differences between consumers from different parts of the world influence their motivation for purchasing luxury goods.

Concerning motivations, we identified five categories: status, uniqueness, conformism, quality and hedonism, to which we added ostentation.

With regard to cultural values, we relied on the framework provided by Hofstede and took into account the values for individualism-collectivism, power distance, masculinity-femininity, uncertainty avoidance.

In this article we intend to develop a framework for analyzing the relationships between cultural values and motivations of purchase and consumption of luxury brands.

For this purpose we conducted a literature review on this topic, we developed a conceptual model of research and we formulated the hypotheses of research. Conceptual model of research and the hypotheses will form the basis of a quantitative research that will take place in Tunisia and Romania on two samples of 100 respondents each. This will facilitate empirical research comparing purchasing behavior of luxury brands consumers on the two markets.

Key words: *marketing, luxury brands, purchase motivations, cultural values, status*

JEL Classification: *M31*

I. INTRODUCTION

According to Bain's et al. (2014) study on the international market for luxury goods, the consumer is of the utmost importance for a luxury market that goes through a less sustained but more perennial rhythm of development. The global luxury market is maintained by the growth of international tourism and the emergence of international middle classes. With an increasing tendency towards purchasing goods abroad, we are facing the emergence of a real international consumer. The global luxury market should rise to 223 billion euros in 2014, as opposed to 217 billion in 2013, that is a 2% increase based on the 2014 selling rate of luxury goods (as opposed to +3% in 2013) and a 5% increase based on constant selling rates (as opposed to +7%). The market should grow at least 50% faster than the GWP (Gross World Product), with a forecasted growth of 4 to 5% in 2013 and an annual average of 5 to 6% from 2013 to 2015.

A simple literature review shows that the first studies in literature examining the luxury goods consumer's behavior were carried out by Rae (1834), Veblen (1899) and Keasbey (1903). The studies that followed, especially those in marketing literature, focused on luxurious brands and especially the expansion of brands (Roux, 1995), competitive management in mass marketing and luxury goods principles (Bechtold, 1991; Roux, 1994; Roux and Floch, 1996), as well as the measurement of reactions against the idea of luxury goods (Dubois and Duquesne, 1993; Dubois and Laurent, 1994). On a different level, at the beginning of the 21st century and due to the fact that the luxury goods market gained a new dimension with the unique demand coming from Asian and Western communities, the conducted studies focused mainly on social intercultural differences that affect the idea of luxury goods and the concept of luxury goods created by such differences (Dubois and Laurent, 1996; Dubois and Paternault, 1997).

In consumer behavior research, a growing amount of attention has been given to the concept of luxury. Researchers have focused on how the luxury of a brand enables a consumer to express his or her own self, an ideal self or specific dimensions of the self, through the use of a brand (Lichtenstein, Ridway, and Netemeyer, 1993). Practitioners view this as the main factor to differentiate a brand in a product category, as a central driver of consumer preference and usage, and as a common denominator that can be used to define consumption across

cultures (Dubois and Laurent 1994). Luxury is a main factor that differentiates a brand in a product category (Allèrés, 1991; Kapferer, 1997) and is a central driver of consumer preferences and usage (Baek, Kim, & Yu, 2010; Dubois & Duquesne, 1993).

Past research focused on luxury brand types (e.g., Andrus, Silver & Johnson, 1986; Dubois & Duquesne, 1993), the consumption behaviors of affluent consumers (e.g., Hirschman, 1988; Veblen, 1899, in Allison, 2008), the determinants of the acquisition of luxury goods (e.g., Dubois & Duquesne, 1993; Dubois & Laurent, 1993; Mason, 1992), the cross-cultural comparison of attitudes toward the concept of luxury (Dubois & Laurent, 1996; Dubois & Paternault, 1997), and the comparison of motivations between Asian and Western societies (Wong & Ahuvia, 1998). Nevertheless, a consumer's motivation "to impress others" seems to serve as the main strategic principle for the marketing management of luxury brands (Corneo & Jeanne, 1997; Dittmar, 1994; O'Cass & Frost, 2002; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999, 2004).

Therefore, the objective of this article is to focus on the relationship between cultural values and motivations to purchase luxury goods by Tunisian and Romanian consumers.

In order to attain this objective, our research is divided into four parts. The first part presents the literature review, while the second introduces a conceptual model as well as the ensuing research hypotheses. The third part deals with the research methodology. Finally, the conclusion mentions the inherent limits of such an endeavor and suggests potential and pertinent avenues of research.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The consumer's motivation for purchasing luxury goods

The topic of luxury has been addressed by several disciplines in humanities and social sciences: in philosophy (Voltaire, Rousseau, Flaubert), in sociology (Bourdieu, Baudrillard), in economics (Veblen) or in management (in France: Roux, Allèrés, Dubois and Laurent). Without any attempt at being exhaustive, we will present here some of the existing definitions formulated for this concept. Koromyslov (2009) mentions that, from an etymological point of view, the word „luxury” is derived from the Latin „luxus”, originally a term used in agriculture with the meaning of „growing askew” (Roux and Floch, 1996), which indicates a certain idea of excess or a disruption to the norm. Some link „luxury” to „lux” (i.e. „light”); for others, the roots of the word „luxury” can be traced back to „luxuria”, meaning „vice” or „excess” (Castarède, 2004). According to Nueno and Quelch (1998), Tynan et al. (2010); Phau and Prendergast (2000), the main attributes of luxury goods are their excellence of quality, high price, rarity, exclusivity and art..., while, in Allèrés's (2006) opinion, the luxury product should be defect-free. At the same time, it must meet high aesthetic standards.

However, for Allison (2008), motivation is what orients behavior. In so doing, it explains why a certain individual does something in particular. A motive is conceptualized that acts as an unobservable interior force that triggers specific behavior, clarifies the general nature of that behavior and remains influent until the motive itself has been satisfied (Quester et al., in Allison, 2007).

De Barnier, Rodina and Valette-Florence (2008) point out three distinct groups of motivations that drive consumers to purchase luxury brands:

- Functional motivations based on tangible features of the product, such as quality;
- Experiential motivations such as hedonism or the pursuit of pleasure aroused by the design or a particular aesthetic quality;
- Motivations for symbolical interaction, group membership or for assertion of one's social status that are linked to a brand name or prestigious logo (Kapferer, 1998; Vigneron and Johnson, 1999; Dubois, Laurent and Czellar 2001; Vickers and Renand, 2003).

According to Solomon (2005), luxury consumption is used to symbolize wealth and, by inference, power and social status. Thus, luxury or prestigious products are a means of making public display of one's wealth or of projecting an image of oneself as belonging to the upper class. One can also state that the aspect of ostentation is connected with the influence exerted by the reference group; therefore, public consumption of luxury goods is more likely to include ostentatious products as opposed to products used privately. Apart from ostentatious consumption, snobbishness has also been identified to be at the core of luxury-related motivation, by taking into account both personal and emotional aspects.

According to Guido and Amatulli (2011), the main motivations that make consumers purchase luxury goods are:

- on the one hand, external social interpersonal motivation – wealth or social status;
- on the other hand, internal motivation – related to the consumer's state of mind or emotions.

Therefore, there are two possible approaches – different in terms of perceptions, motivations and behavior – in order to distinguish between “interpersonal effects” and “personal effects” of luxury.

In the first case, for Fionda and Moore (2009), as well as for Truong et al. (2008), luxury is typically consumed for reasons pertaining to ostentation, social status and symbolism. In the second case, for Dubois and Duquesne (1993), as well as for Vickers and Renand (2003), the consumption of luxury goods has rather personal or cultural reasons, pertaining to the pursuit of pleasure, to originality and to perfection.

Allison (2008) mentions that the consumer’s motivations for luxury goods can be ordered into several categories according mainly to the five forms of motivation (status, uniqueness, conformism, quality and hedonism) identified by Vigneron and Johnson (1999). Table 1 contains a summary literature review which identifies motives for the consumption of luxury goods.

Table 1. Summary of studies which identify motivations for the consumption of luxury goods
(Source:Allison, 2008)

Author	Status	Uniqueness	Conformism	Quality	Hedonism
Mandeville (1732)			Emulation		
de St Lambert (1764) Smith (1759 /1776)	Ostentation		Self-esteem		Pleasure
Rae (1834)	Vanity		Social status		
Veblen (1899)	Ostentatious consumption				
Keynes (1936)	Ostentation Extravagance				
Duesenberry (1949)			Demonstration effect		
Leibenstein (1950)	Veblen effect	Snob effect	Bandwagon effect		
Vigneron and Johnson (1999, 2004)	Ostentation value	Uniqueness value	Self-image value	Functional value	Hedonistic value
Dubois, Laurent and Czellar (2001)	Price	Uniqueness		Quality	Aesthetic aspect
Vickers and Renand (2003)	Interactive symbolic need	Interactive symbolic need	Interactive symbolic need	Functional need	Experimental need
Tsai (2005)				Quality assurance	Self-guided pleasure

Uzgoren (2012) shows that Vigneron and Johnson (1999) defined five prestige-related behavioral values combined with five motivations based on which one can identify five different categories of prestige consumers (Table 2). According to the Veblen effect, the prime objective of consumers is to impress others, which is why they accept the price tag as a prestige indicator and give it a lot of importance. Thus, their demand increases as the product’s price increases.

The snob effect shows that the snobbish consumers regard the price as a privilege indicator and avoid using ordinary brands in order to enjoy a consumption experience that is self-oriented, in order to satisfy the need of being the only consumer of that product.

The bandwagon effect implies the fact that the consumer tries to imitate other consumers’ behavior in order to be identified as a group member. According to the author, by openly purchasing luxury goods, the consumer builds an extension of himself/herself, which sometimes helps identify with a certain social class; like the snobbish consumers, the bandwagon consumers attach less importance to the price as a prestige indicator, but attach more importance to the effect they have on others when purchasing products that act as signs of prestige.

The hedonistic effect shows that hedonistic consumers attach more importance to their own feelings and pleasure, than to the price tag as a prestige indicator.

The perfectionist effect implies the fact that perfectionist consumers rely only on their own perception of the quality of the product and can then use its price as proof of quality.

Table 2. Values associated with prestige and their motivations
(Source: Vigneron and Johnson,1999)

Values	Motivations
Ostentatious	Veblen
Differentiation (unique)	Snob
Social	Bandwagon
Emotional	Hedonist
Quality	Perfectionist

Quality

Aaker (1991, in Teimourpour, 2013) specifies that consumers associate the luxury product with quality. Thus, good quality is one of the features of a luxury product (Quelch, 1987). Indeed, quality is one of the reasons that determine the consumer to purchase a luxury product, which in turn is reflected in the brand name. The existing literature on the consumption of luxury goods specifies the importance of quality in order to ensure a certain perception of luxury value (Quelch ,1987; Rao and Monroe, 1989; Garfein 1989; Groth and McDaniel 1993; Roux 1995).

Consumers can feel attracted to luxury merchandise due to its perceived quality, while perceiving that more expensive luxury goods possess by default higher levels in terms of quality (RaoandMonroe,1989).

Uniqueness

If certain consumers want to differentiate themselves from the group and to feel unique, their purchasing behavior will be different. In general, according to Tian et al. (2001), this difference is observed especially in the consumers' behavior when purchasing clothing. However, nonconformism is sometimes due to dependence upon one's environment, for if one is to be set apart, it is always in relation to the group, as the individual defines himself in relation to others. This differentiation phenomenon was already mentioned by Veblen in 1899, when he spoke about the snobeffect.

Conceptualizing the snobbishness effect showed that, when demand rises, snobbish individuals may no longer desire to purchase the luxury product (Uzgoren, 2012). The people influenced by the snobbishness effect value the luxury brand less if there is high demand on the market.

The snob is essentially always in search of what distinguishes him/her from the other people. Thus, the snob desires unique exclusive items, tailored to his/her needs or uncommon.

According to Uzgoren (2012), snobbishness is a motivational factor that manifests itself primarily when the consumer wishes to be innovative by making sure that he is one of the first to possess an item manufactured in a limited amount, or when the consumer expresses his need to be unique.

Wiedmann et al. (2007) shows that uniqueness is based on exclusivity and perceived rarity, which increase desire and preference for the brand (Lynn 1991; Pantzalis, 1995). Moreover, this desire increases even when the brand is equally perceived as expensive (GrothandMcDaniel, 1993;VerhallenandRobben, 1994).

Exclusivity and differentiation can be achieved only when consumption and use of the brand are offered to an exclusive clientele (Vigneron and Johnson 1999, 2004); therefore, one has to state that a luxury product is not accessible to everybody.

Hedonism

In this article, hedonistic motivation for consuming luxury goods is defined as people's desire to experience positive feelings and affective states they believe possible by consuming those luxury goods. According to Wiedemann (2007), certain products carry an emotional value and provide pleasure in addition to their functional utility.

Moreover, research on the concept of luxury has helped identify emotional responses related to the luxury consumption such as sensory pleasure, satisfaction, aesthetic beauty Fauchois and Krieg 1991; Roux and Floch 1996; Vigneron and Johnson, 2004).

For Allison (2008), emotional responses to luxury have been identified in studies on the semiotics of luxury.

These responses include aesthetic beauty, pleasure, sensory pleasure (Fauchois and Krieg, 1991). The importance of the hedonistic motive for the consumption of luxury goods was identified by Dubois and Laurent (1994), who noted that a large number of consumers subscribe to this motive when consuming luxury.

Certain consumers love consuming for the sheerpleasure of it. Sometimes, hedonism has a negative connotation, as it is often associated with a form of selfishness, the pursuit of pleasure being aimed at improving the quality of a sensory experience. At the same time, the pursuit of satisfaction is aimed at satisfying a biological need created by discomfort created in turn by deprivation. The pleasure of consuming lies in imagination in the sense that the individual anticipates the pleasure of experimenting with a product. (Campbell, 1982, inMoawad, 2007).

According to Gobe (2003), since the 90's, luxury consumption has known a major transformation due, among other things, to changes in societal values. The consumers who used to uphold individualism now give more attention to pleasures and to emotions.

Roux and Foch (1996) mention that luxury corresponds to a lifestyle that is synonymous with pleasure, as luxury brands have shifted from status-related luxury to hedonistic luxury. Nowadays, luxury customers treat themselves to an exceptional product for personal gratification rather than to display their social status. Henceforth, luxury consumption is guided by a desire to profit from life and to live in the now.

For Nyeck and Roux (2003), the best evaluation of luxury goods can thus be built on this hedonistic dimension as the consumers are more and more avid of sensuality and personal gratification.

The value of status and of ostentatious consumption

The pursuit of status is a motive generally linked to the purchase of luxury goods (Liebenstein, 1950; Veblen, 1899; in Vigneron and Johnson, 1999).

At the beginning of the 1980's, a certain number of researchers carried out studies based on the work of Bourne (1957), who had focused on the influence of reference groups on the consumption of luxury brands (Mason, 1981, 1992; Bearden and Etzel, 1982, mentioned by Wiedmann (2007).

For example, Bearden and Etzel (1982, in Wiedmann (2007) reached the conclusion that luxury goods consumed in public were more remarkable than the goods consumed in private; ostentatious consumption plays an important part in the form of preferences for many goods consumed in public.

The results of these studies indicated that ostentation had been linked to the susceptibility of the reference group; luxury brands can be important for individuals looking to acquire social status in particular rather than a social position associated with the brand, which plays an important role in ostentatious consumption.

Eastman, Goldsmith and Flynn (1999) developed a scale to measure status-related consumption and noticed that it is openly correlated with a certain number of identified products as having the potential to offer a certain status to their owners, such as: clothing and personal care items, beer, sports shoes, cars, eating out in fancy restaurants, shopping at specialty stores, as well as having a membership in certain social organizations.

By consuming luxury products, when one acquires a product possessing symbolical characteristics, one makes a display of one's social status in order to impress the other members of the reference group or to persuade them of the superiority of one's social rank. (LaBarbera, 1988, in Richins, 1999). This consumption pattern manifests itself through the purchase of products, because by means of these symbolic possessions, consumers can launch a message to their social environment. Thus, symbols decoded by the group will give the individual a certain status.

Self-image

Contrary to an individual's outside (social) image, personal identity relates to the inside (private) image depending on the way the individual perceives himself (Mehta 1999; Sirgy and Johar 1999; Jamal and Goode, 2003; Wiedmann, 2007). In other respects, it is generally accepted in the theory on the consumer's behavior that the congruence of the personal image of oneself modifies the relation between the image that an individual has of himself and the image that the same individual has of the product or of the service (Belk, 1988; M). The theories have also fitted the impact of the consumer's self-concept on his purchase behavior into a model of congruence self-image / product image (Sirgy, 1982). Concerning luxury goods, Puntoni (2001) confirms the important influence that the congruence of the self has on the purchase of a luxury product. From this point of view, consumers can use luxury items to integrate symbolic meaning into their own identities (Vigneron and Johnson 2004) or they can use luxury brands to sustain and reinforce their own identities (Dittmar 1994). One can state that consumers look for brands which reflect their self-image or their personality.

Similarly, Grubb and Grathwohl (1967), quoted by Moawad (2007), notice that the purchase and the consumption of goods can be fulfilling in two ways. On the one hand, an individual's self-image will be maintained and affirmed if the individual believes that the product purchased benefits, in the collective mind, from recognition and reputation that support and benefit his self-image. Products are used as symbols and become means to trigger desired reactions in other people.

According to Moawad (2007), each individual plays a role and has different self-presentations depending on the situation, the events and the public.

Conformism and bandwagon effect

The reference group exerts an influence over values, attitudes, aspirations, models and norms of behavior. The importance of this influence varies according to individuals and situations. This influence also touches the choice of symbols for these luxury consumers. First, the symbols are transferred to the product and then, from the product to the consumer in order to create the self-concept. Thus, consumers belong to social groups with which they interact perpetually. Social groups are formed by people who belong to the same culture,

subculture, social class or who share the same symbols and the same norms. They are influenced directly by their family and their reference groups.

Hofstede’s cultural values

Several researchers discuss the choice of the most appropriate cultural dimensions (Clark, 1990; Dorfman and Howell, 1988; Hofstede, 1984, 1999; Inkeles and Levinson, 1969; Keillor and Hult, 1999; Schwartz, 1994; Smith et al, 1996; Steenkamp, 2001, in Allison, 2008). However, Hofstede’s framework remains the most widely used in psychology, sociology or in management.

Hofstede (1984, 1991, and 2001) identifies five different dimensions: individualism and collectivism; power distance; masculinity and femininity; uncertainty avoidance; long-term orientation and short-term orientation.

Individualism and collectivism

Soares et al. (2007) describes the relationships existing between the individual and the group in society. In an individualist society, personal objectives take priority and individuals prefer relations of independence, while in a collectivist society, the objectives of the group take precedence over personal objectives. Individuals develop relations of interdependence with the group.

Power Distance

For Soares et al. (2007), this dimension reflects, inside the borders of a country, the consequences of inequality in what power and authority are concerned in society. This power distance reflects itself in the family, at school or in the community.

Masculinity and Femininity

This dimension refers to the roles given to genders in society. According to Soares et al. (2007), in a masculine society, the man is supposed to be strong, imposing and interested in success, while the woman is expected to be sensitive and interested in human relations and the quality of life.

Uncertainty Avoidance

In general, it expresses itself through stress, anxiety and the need to live and work according to a framework of reference comprising rules and regulations (Hofstede, 1991). For the author, a country’s degree of uncertainty avoidance is measured by the degree of comfort of inhabitants when facing unexpected situations. Uncertainty is connected with the relative importance given to security in a society.

Long-Term Orientation and Short-Term Orientation

Hofstede (2001, p. 351, in Soares et al., 2007) mentions that long-term orientation “is aimed at the future, at perseverance in particular”.

Epiney (2001) states that in a long-term oriented society, perseverance and respect for status are appreciated norms of behavior.

On the contrary, in a short-term oriented culture, values are rather oriented towards the present and the past. Empirical studies carried out on the relation between cultural values and purchase behavior and consumption of luxury brands are the following:

- The study carried out by Allison (2008) ;
- The study carried out by [Ruthsaida](#) (2011) ;
- The study carried out by Wong and Ahuvia (1998) ;
- The study carried out by Kau (2004) ;
- The study carried out by Gao (2009).
- The study carried out by Socha (2012).

The research methodology proposed

The conceptual model, research hypotheses and operational measures

Our research model will test the relations between four constructs representing cultural values (individualism / collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity/femininity, power distance) that can have an impact on the four constructs representing the motivations behind the consumption of luxury goods: ostentatious, uniqueness/snobbishness, social/bandwagon, emotional/hedonism, quality/perfectionism). Figure 1 presents the conceptual model of this paper.

Research hypotheses

Based on the theoretical aspects mentioned previously, it is possible to postulate a link between Hofstede’s cultural values and motivations for luxury consumption. Thus, we formulate the following hypotheses.

H1. Individualism has a direct, positive and statistically significant influence, on the motivation to consume luxury products for their good quality.

According to Shukla et al. (2012), consumers expect a luxury product to be usable, of quality that is both good and unique enough to satisfy their desire and to set them apart (Wiedmann et al. 2009). Luxury products are different based on their excellent quality, craftsmanship and performance compared to non-luxury products (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). In a comparative study involving American, Canadian, British and Indian consumers, Donthu and Yoo (1998 in Shukla et al., 2012) noticed that individualist consumers have greater expectations regarding service quality than collectivist consumers, expectations that reflect themselves in their demand for product functionalities.

Gentry et al. (2001, in Teimourpour, Hanzae, 2011) found that one reason why consumers purchase luxury brands is for the superior quality reflected in the brand name. In addition, high quality is seen as a fundamental, *sine qua non* characteristic of a luxury product (Quelch, 1987, in Allison, 2008).

The conclusion suggests that individualist consumers can demand higher levels of functionality and usefulness when purchasing a product.

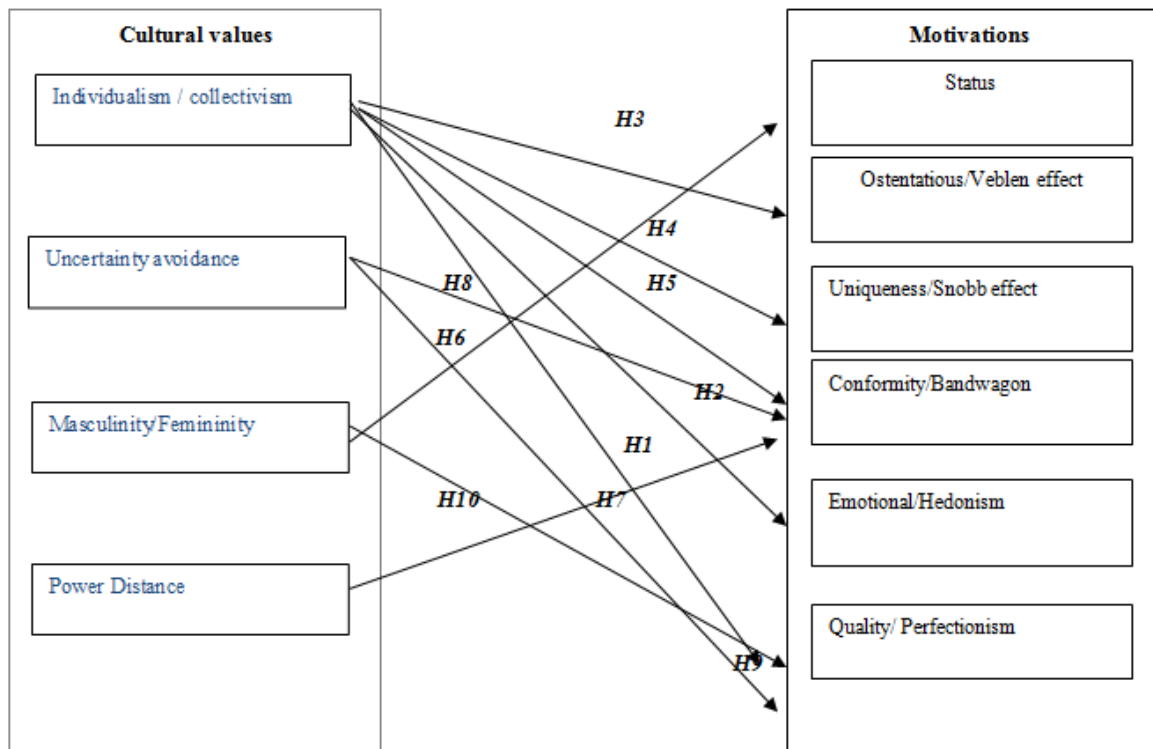


Figure 1. Research model for the impact that cultural values have on the motivations to purchase a luxury product

H2. Individualism has a direct, positive and statistically significant influence on the motivation to consume luxury products for hedonistic motivations.

Studies in the field of luxury consumption have shown that luxury products are likely to provide such subjective intangible benefits (Dubois and Laurent, 1994). Research concerning the concept of luxury has repeatedly identified the emotional responses and excitement (Benarrosh-Dahan, 1991). The extent to which individuals seek self-pleasure through their consumption habits may differ between cultures. It has been proposed that consumers from individualistic cultures will place emphasis on goods as a source of pleasure (Wong and Ahuvia, 1998). When the emphasis is on an individual’s well-being, they are more likely to consume products for the personal pleasure that a product gives them. Consequently, it is likely that individualists will possess higher levels of hedonic motivation for the consumption of luxury products than collectivists (DeMooij, 2010).

H3. Collectivism has a direct and positive influence on the motivation of ostentatious consumption.

Findings revealed that the conspicuousness of a product was positively related to its susceptibility to the reference group. Luxury goods consumed in public were more likely to be conspicuous goods than privately consumed luxury goods and conspicuous consumption still plays a significant part in shaping preferences for many products that are purchased or consumed in public contexts (Braun and Wicklund, 1989, in Teimourpour and Hanzaee, 2011, Vigneron and Johnson, 2004).

Allison (2008) put forward that consumers coming from collectivist cultures are likely to value more publicly visible possessions than consumers belonging to individualist cultures (Wong and Ahuvia, 1998). The literature on ostentatious consumption mentions the pursuit of status as an element that consumers can look for when making purchase-related choices in their societies.

H4. Individualism has a direct and positive influence on the motivation to consume luxury products for uniqueness.

Uniqueness is based on the assumption, demonstrated in research, that the perceived exclusivity and rareness of the product enhances a consumer's desire or preference for it (Verhallen, 1982; Lynn, 1991; Pantzalis, 1995). Furthermore, this desire increases when the brand is also perceived as expensive (Groth and McDaniel, 1993; Verhallen and Robben, 1994). Therefore, the more unique a brand is deemed, the more expensive it is compared to normal standards, and the more valuable it becomes (Verhallen and Robben, 1994).

In addition, the functional value of uniqueness also strengthens an individual's need for uniqueness (Snyder and Fromkin, 1977, in Teimourpour and Hanzaee, 2011) and their wish for differentiation and exclusivity, which can only be fulfilled when the consumption and use of a certain brand is accessible to an exclusive clientele (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999, 2004).

The extent to which an individual desires to differentiate himself from others is thought to vary according to the individual's cultural orientation. Utilizing a sample of Japanese students, Yamaguchi, (2004, in Teimourpour and Hanzaee, 2011) ascertained that collectivism correlated negatively with the need for uniqueness. The reverse may also be true, with people from an individualist orientation being more likely to desire uniqueness.

H5. Collectivism has a direct and positive influence on the motivation to conform to social norms, to imitate other consumers.

A consequence of collectivism is the pressure exerted by the group to conform to social norms, especially in social situations (Tse, 1996, in Wong and Ahuvia, 1998). In the context of consuming luxury products, this is seen as exerting pressure on consumers to purchase certain products because they conform to social norms (Wong & Ahuvia, 1998). Collectivist consumers are more likely to purchase products for reasons of group affiliation (Lee & Kacen, 1999, in Allison, 2008), or to fit in with social norms (Wong & Ahuvia, 1998). The coefficient of imitation, a measure of the extent to which individuals imitate their peers, has also been found to be higher in collectivist cultures than in individualist cultures, and in cultures that are high in uncertainty avoidance (Yaveroglu & Donthu, 2002, in Allison, 2008). As such, it is proposed that collectivist consumers will possess high levels of conformist motivations for consuming luxuries.

H6. Masculinity has a direct and positive influence on the motivation to research a social status.

H7. Masculinity has a direct and positive influence on the motivation to research high quality in luxury brands.

A high **masculine** society places greater value on success, money, and material possessions. According to Mde Mooij and Hofstede (2011), masculine societies are very focused on performance and achievement; these qualities are highly valued and have to be demonstrated, therefore, high end products are important to show one's success. We will link masculinity to the club memberships used by the luxury brands.

H8. Uncertainty avoidance has a direct and positive influence on the motivation to conform to social norms.

Certainty oriented people, on the other hand, develop a self-regulatory style that circumvents uncertainty. Given the choice, persons who are certainty oriented will undertake activity that maintains clarity; when confronted with uncertainty, they will rely on others or on heuristic devices rather than on more direct methods of resolving uncertainty.

Generally, Eastern cultures have a preference for certainty, whereas Western cultures are uncertainty oriented. The tendency to be individualistic or self-oriented in Western populations exists because uncertainty oriented people like to find out new information about the self.

Certainty oriented people, however, are more group oriented, as the group provides a clear standard for norms and behavior, a standard that can be embraced by those certainty oriented. Western societies tend to be

more uncertainty oriented because of their self-oriented and individualistic approaches to life than do people in Eastern societies, who, in turn, should be more certainty oriented as a function of their heavy reliance on groups. (Shuper et al., 2004). Finally, the group used for comparison and conformity is a reference aiming to reduce uncertainty.

H9. Uncertainty avoidance has a direct and positive influence on the motivation to research high quality in luxury brands.

Countries with **high uncertainty avoidance scores** create beliefs and institutions that safeguard their high need of security. According to de Mooij and Hofstede (2011), high uncertainty avoidance societies have a need for purity when they buy something, so they can find this purity and excellence in the high quality of luxury goods. I will link the uncertainty avoidance to the use of internet by the consumers.

As we mentioned before, according to Ruthsaida (2011), in high uncertainty avoidance countries, quality, price, service, information and warranty are more important for the consumer at the moment of purchase than in low uncertainty avoidance countries. Trustworthy brands offer more value to consumers coming from high uncertainty avoidance countries due to the fact that such a brand is perceived as low-risk and information is costly.

H10. Power distance has a direct and positive influence on the motivation to conform to social norms and imitate other consumers.

Hofstede maintains that in larger power distance cultures, inequalities among people are both expected and desired. Less powerful people should be dependent on more powerful people. In larger power distance cultures (e.g., the Philippines, Mexico, India), children are expected to be obedient, conformist, people who disobey may be punished severely or are marginalized.

In what follows, we present the constructs which represent extremely well the variables in question: the scales for the motivations behind the consumption of luxury products: the scale of status, of conformism, of hedonism, of uniqueness, of ostentatious consumption.

In the development of measures of the constructs for the six dimensions of brand luxury consumption motivations 27 items were finally generated.

In order to measure uniqueness, we refer to two scales developed by Lynn and Harris (1997), entitled “Desire for uniqueness”, as well as the scale devised by Tian et al. (2001), adapted by Moawad (2007). This scale includes 4 items.

In order to measure social status, we use the scale devised by Zhou and Wong. (2008), adapted by Sun (2013). To measure perfectionism/research of quality, we prefer using the scale devised by Tsai (2005), adapted by Sun (2013), which contains 7 items.

Hedonism will be measured by 5 items from Sweeney and Soutar, (2001) including 2 items adopted by Sun (2013), and 3 items from Voss, Spangenberg, and Ghrohmann, (2003) derived from studies of Moya (2012). 7 items were designed to measure quality motivation from a scale developed by Tsai (2005) adopted by Sun (2013). 4 items were designed related to conformism motivation from Rosenberg’s (1965) scale, adopted by Sun (2013). Conspicuous consumption was measured by 5 items from the scale developed by O’Cass and McEwen (2004) adopted by Allison (2008) and Moawad (2007).

Subsequently, 28 items were finally generated for Hofstede’s 4 dimensions of culture (Individualism/ Collectivism, **Uncertainty Avoidance, Masculinity/** Femininity, Power Distance): Individualism/ Collectivism will be measured by 10 items from Allison (2008) and Balamboo’s(2013) scale. Power distance was measured by 6 items from Balamboo’s (2013) scale as well as 6 items related to **Masculinity/** Femininity. Finally, 6 items were designed for Power Distance based on Balamboo’s (2013) scale. All measures were 5 point Likert-type scales with poles from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Table 3. Operational measures of uniqueness

Motivation	Items (statements)
Uniqueness	1. Rare objects appeal to me
	2. I am rather a leader than a follower in terms of fashion
	3. I detest possessing things that everyone else possesses
	4. I enjoy trying new products and services out before other people do

Table 4. Operational measures of motivation for pursuing status

Motivation	Items (statements)
Status	1. The purchase of luxury goods would improve my social image in the presence of other people
	2. The purchase of luxury goods would show my social prestige in the presence of other people
	3. The purchase of luxury goods would show my social status in the presence of other people
	4. The purchase of luxury goods would symbolize my wealth in the presence of other people
	5. Since several other people purchase luxury goods, I have to purchase luxury goods myself in order to feel accepted by these people

Table 5. Operational measures motivation for pursuing quality

Motivation	Items (statements)
Quality	1. The performance of a luxury product is my primary reason for the purchase
	2. The certain quality of luxury goods appeals to me
	3. I think positively of the latest design and features
	4. I would purchase luxury goods due to their certain quality

III. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

People consume luxury goods either socially or personally, an understanding of the consumers' behavior for luxury goods being very important.

Companies that are players on the luxury market are faced with a strategic dilemma: they can either standardize their marketing activities or they can adapt them according to the differences identified on the markets on which they are active. Although these companies can identify a transversal segment encompassing consumers who display similar behavior regardless of the market, in many cases they have to adapt, partially or completely, their marketing activities: integrated marketing communication, advertising campaigns, creative strategies, distribution, purchase and consumption. Cultural values specific to each culture represent a variable that has a significant influence on purchasing and consumption behavior. Thus, if conformist motivation is associated with collectivist values, online and offline advertising campaigns are different from advertising campaigns mounted on individualist markets, where uniqueness-driven motivation is dominant in what luxury brands consumption behavior is concerned.

Based on the literature review and the research model devised in the present paper, we undertake quantitative empirical research regarding the influence that cultural values have on luxury brands purchasing behavior. A survey with an online questionnaire will be conducted to collect data. The target population originates from two different cultural areas: Tunisia and Romania. The research relied on a survey of two independent samples totaling a hundred respondents from both countries and a snowball sampling method was used.

In order to test the research hypotheses, we are going to use SEM (Structural Equations Modelling). In future researches we intend to take into account, as a moderating influence on the intensity of the relations between cultural values and motivations behind the purchase of luxury brands, the degree of acceptance of globalization on different markets. At the same time, we intend to establish a typology of luxury brands consumers according to their orientation towards values and personal or non-personal motivations. A topic that has been less discussed in field literature is the topic of whether short-term or long-term orientation creates tighter relations between consumers and luxury brands.

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