Influential Factors in Luxury Apparel Purchase Intentions among Iranian Customers

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ABSTRACT

It is very important for luxury marketers to know what are customer expectations and perceptions of luxury brands and how their perceptions will affect their buying behaviour. Luxury purchase intention is increasing extremely among the people in the Middle East especially in Iran. Therefore, this study focuses on investigating the influence of "Cultural dimensions", "Interpersonal" and "Personal effects" on luxury apparel purchase intentions in the Iranian market. In order to collect data, a self-administered questionnaire was designed by using determined scales. Moreover, a convenience sample with a volume of 123 individuals was selected randomly through mall intercept method. The data were analyzed via person correlation and hierarchy multiple regression with using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The gained results are as follows: firstly, the personal effects which are including; emotional and quality value influenced on luxury apparel purchase intention significantly and positively. Secondly, interpersonal effects which includes; conspicuous, uniqueness and social value influenced on luxury apparel purchase intention significantly and positively as well. Thirdly, Power distance index and individualism as cultural dimensions of Hofstede model had a positive impact as well; however, other dimensions including masculinity, uncertainly avoidance and long-term orientation had no significant influence on Iranian consumers' willingness to purchase luxury apparel brands. The results showed that Iran as a Muslim country has its own cultural features. Therefore, advertisers and strategists should consider the most especial and remarkable cultural features for Iranian customers and also they should consider a more personal and interpersonal effects.

KEYWORDS: Luxury brand apparel, Cultural dimension, Interpersonal effects, Personal effects

INTRODUCTION

Today's people consumption`s pattern is not only to satisfy basic physiological needs but also to create a "self" and define one's role in society. Consumption has now become a means of self-realization and identification (Chaudhuri & Majumdar, 2006). One of the most interesting aspects of consumption is luxury consumption which is not vital for consumer's survival but they are engaging in the consumption of luxury products. Since the early 1995, the market of the luxury brand goods has been growing in the world (Rigby & Bilodeau, 2009). The luxury goods products could be divided in four main groups: fashion, which means ready to wear, perfumes and cosmetics, watches and jewellery, wines and spirits(Jackson, 2004). Lately, some other groups were added in the recent group: furniture, tourist, banking, hotels, airlines, and luxury cars (Chevalier & Mazzalovo, 2008). Based on some previous studies, Luxury brand products are defined as goods at the highest level of the market according to their price and quality (Teimourpour & Hanzaee, 2011). Symbolic brands are often used as vehicles for interpersonal communication and as a expression of an individual's self-concept and the need for social conformity (Chaudhuri & Majumdar, 2006; Phau, Sequeira, & Dix, 2009). Luxury products could be categorized as unnecessary goods that just provide pleasant feelings for users (K. W. Miller & Mills, 2012). The perception of the luxury products, is considered as high prestige products for helping to decrease the counterfeit consumption (Teimourpour & Hanzaee, 2011; Wiedmann, Hennigs, & Klarmann, 2012).

There is a belief that indicates, all of the people from all levels of society, from poor to wealthy, are somehow involved in consuming luxury brand goods (Acikalin, Gul, & Develioglu, 2009). Generally, it is very important for luxury marketers to know what are customer expectations and perceptions of luxury brands and how their perceptions affect their buying behaviour. Nevertheless, there are two major reasons for consuming luxury brand goods: in one side, "external motivations, social and interpersonal", and on the other side, "internal motivations, subjective and reserved" (Amatulli, 2009). The external motivations refer to the purpose of indicating of customers position when consuming the luxury brand goods (Amatulli & Guido, 2011; Christodoulides, Michaelidou, & Li, 2009; O'Cass & Frost, 2002; Smith & Colgate, 2007; Tynan, McKechnie, & Chhuon, 2010; Vigneron & Johnson, 2004; Wiedmann, Hennigs, & Siebels, 2007) and internal motivations is based on feelings and one's self-perception (Amatulli & Guido, 2011; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999, 2004). It is

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totally expected that different customers have different perceptions and intentions of the luxury value from the same brand products, and the total value of the luxury brand would be mix of all these perceptions, intentions, and several viewpoints. customers luxury brand`s perceptions and motives are completely different and could be depend on their social status, desires, and also their financial status (Wiedmann, et al., 2007).

By increasing the population size, it seems that the number of the customers for luxury brand goods is rising. However, most of the products in Asia and western countries are the same; customers in different part of the world may not buy goods for similar reasons. Iran as a developing country is one of the places that have high demands in luxury products. These days, it became very important for Iranian customers to use luxury products for different reasons (Teimourpour & Hanzaee, 2011).The study of Luxury brand in Iran has not been explored extensively. In fact, it is considered to be at a very preliminary stage.

This research is trying to fill the gap between the concepts of luxury goods in Iran and investigate the different motives of Iranian customers in purchasing luxury brand apparel. Firstly, the main purpose of this study is to investigate whether factors namely cultural dimensions (power distance index (PDI), individualism (IDV), masculinity (MAS), uncertainty avoidance (UAI), and long-term orientation (LTO)), interpersonal effects (Conspicuous Value (CV), Uniqueness Value (UV), Social Value (SV)), and personal effects (Emotional Value (EV), Quality Value (QV)) affect Iranian customers to buy luxury apparel or not. Secondly, which of the aforementioned factors have the most impact on Iranian customers to purchase luxury brand apparel? It also indicates how Iranian customers think about luxury brand goods and what makes them willing to pay higher price for those special products. This paper is organized into specific sections; beginning with a relative literature, followed by the theoretical framework. After that, a description of the research methodology will be presented. It will be followed by the discussion of findings and analysis .Finally, the concluding comments, managerial implications and limitations of the study will be highlighted.

1. The importance of studying luxury consumption in Iran

Luxury purchase intention is increasing extremely among the people in Middle East. There is a little academic literature addressing luxury products in the context of these markets. It should be taken into account that, consumers from different countries consume the same luxury product, but their motivations are not considered same. Based on the literature, culture dose not influence similarly in different countries. Iran as a Muslim country has its own cultural features and also Iranian customers have their own motivation. Teimourpour and Hanzaee (2011) stated that, luxury brands purchase has grown sharply in Iran in recent years and also illustrated the income gap in Iran by Gini coefficient. The income gap is one of the reasons for consumption of luxury products. The majority of research papers have focused on different motives that caused customers to purchase luxury brand goods around the world, some of them focused on particular country and special company. In this particular area, the same studies have been done (Amatulli & Guido, 2011; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999, 2004) in order to investigate the hidden causes of purchasing intention for fashion luxury brands in Italy. Consequently, this study is going to investigate the relationship between cultural dimensions, interpersonal and personal effects with luxury brand purchase in Iran.

2. Theoretical framework
2.1. Personal Effect and Luxury Brand Purchasing

Vigneron and Johnson (1999) presented personal effects over the luxury brand products as shown in Figure 1. Personal effects, divided in two following effects: EV and QV.
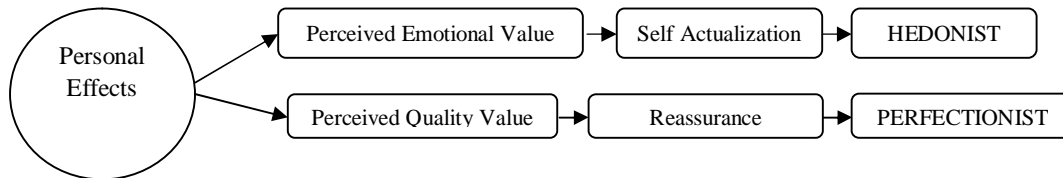

Fig1: Interpersonal effect over the luxury brand products
Source: Adopted from Vigneron and Johnson, 1999

2.1.1. Emotional Value

EV is named as hedonic effect. Dichter (2002) indicated that customer's choice could be the cause of the non-cognitive and unconscious motives. Special kinds of products and goods have been known as EV separate from their functionality (Sheth, Newman, & Gross, 1991; Teimourpour & Hanzaee, 2011; Tsai, 2005). Based on previous studies, luxury brand products could prepare intangible benefits for the owners. For instance, Dubois and Laurent (1996) indicated that EV is a critical feature of the perceived utility developed by luxury products. Based on the mentioned literature, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Emotional value is positively correlated with luxury apparel purchase intentions.

2.1.2. Quality Value

QV is named as perfectionism. Prestige brands are products expected to have a great quality (Ergin & Akbay, 2010; Teimourpour & Hanzaee, 2011). Based on previous studies, product's price could have important role in identifying the quality perception of the products (Erickson & Johansson, 1985; Lichtenstein, Bloch, & Black, 1988; Teimourpour & Hanzaee, 2011; Tellis & Gaeth, 1990). In addition, Groth and McDaniel (1993) stated that "high prices may even make certain products or services more desirable" because people may believe that high prices of products shows better quality of that certain products (Rao & Monroe, 1989; Teimourpour & Hanzaee, 2011). And also, there is a belief that customers who believe that price is a symbol of quality, also believe that high prices of the products are a great indicator of a high degree of the prestige (Lichtenstein, Ridgway, & Netemeyer, 1993; Teimourpour & Hanzaee, 2011). Based on the latest researches and what is mentioned before, the quality of products could be the clue for the customers to assess the level of brand's prestige. For instance, if we assume that poor quality of product plays a negative role over the perception of customer's prestige, we can see that the perception of the customers over the high quality of the luxury brand would play a positive role over the customer's perception on the same brand. Based on the mentioned literature, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H2: Quality value is positively correlated with luxury apparel purchase intentions.

2.2. Interpersonal Effect and Luxury Brand Purchasing

Vigneron and Johnson (1999) presented interpersonal effect over the luxury brand product as shown in Figure 2. Interpersonal effects divided in three following effects: CV, UV and SV.
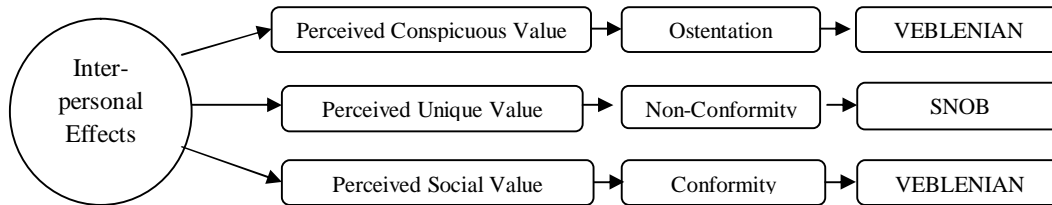

Fig2: Personal effect over the luxury brand products
Source: Adopted from Vigneron and Johnson, 1999

2.2.1. Conspicuous Value

Since the early 1980s, some studies have investigated CV in two categories: publicly and privately consumption. Bearden and Etzel (1982) have indicated that publicly consumption is more conspicuous than private consumption of luxury products. Conspicuous consumption plays a very important role in forming product preferences, which purchased and used in public context (Bagwell & Bernheim, 1996; Braun & Wicklund, 1989; Corneo & Jeanne, 1997; Fionda & Moore, 2009; Hong & Zinkhan, 1995).

Amatulli (2009) has claimed that conspicuous consumption was utilized by some customers in order to show their wealth, power and social status. Therefore, one of the reasons of using luxury brand products is may be to display wealth and social level of the owner. Based on the mentioned literature, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H3: Conspicuous value is positively correlated with luxury apparel purchase intentions.

2.2.2. Unique Value

The snob effect has two interpersonal and personal effects on LAPI (Grinblatt, Keloharju, & Ikaheimo, 2004; SHAMINA, 2011). The snob effect could be happened in two situations: firstly, when a new luxury brand product launched, the snobs will go to take that in order to be the first one of those who takes advantages of the limited numbers of customers among all, and secondly, "snob effect is in evidence when status sensitive customers come to reject a particular product and when it is seen to be consumed by the general mass of people" (Amatulli & Guido, 2011). Based on previous studies, limited number of products could lead to brands' product references for the customers (Lynn, 1991; Pantzalis, 1995). Solomon (2006) stated that "Items that are in limited supply have high value, while those readily available are less desirable" and "Rare items command respect and prestige".

Moreover, Verhallen and Robben (1994) have claimed that shortage and scarcity of products has even more impact on people demands and also could be perceived as unique and expensive products. Therefore, there is a belief that people need uniqueness (Teimourpour & Hanzaee, 2011). This perquisite from users could be the verdict of being different from other people in the society (Amatulli & Guido, 2011). Groth and McDaniel (1993) stated that the uniqueness of the product could be related to its price. They have shown that "brand exclusivity is the positioning of a brand such that it can command a high price relative to similar products". Based on the mentioned literature, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H4: Uniqueness value is positively correlated with luxury apparel purchase intentions.

2.2.3. Social Value

SV is implied as bandwagon effect. The bandwagon effect might be theorized from snob effect (Amatulli & Guido, 2011; Berry, 1994; C. M. Miller, McIntyre, & Mantrala, 1993; Rogers, 1995). "Even though snobs and followers buy luxury products for apparently opposite reasons, their basic motivation is really the same; whether through differentiation or group affiliation, they want to enhance their self-concept" (Dubois & Duquesne, 1993). The bandwagon effect, impacts on individuals to be in the prestige group of the people and can be distinguished from non-prestige group (Belk, 1988; Dittmar, 1994; French & Raven, 2001; Mick, 1986; Midgley, 1983; Sirgy, 1982). Therefore, an individual may utilize a luxury brand product during the week in order to show its professional position and in the other week use simple one in order to match with social standard that it shows they use luxury products to keep their self-concept. Based on the mentioned literature, the following hypotheses are proposed

H5: Social value is positively correlated with luxury apparel purchase intentions.

2.3. Cultural Dimensions and Luxury Brand Purchasing

Cultural aspect as an environmental factor has impact on consumer behaviour in using luxury brands (Laroche, Kalamas, & Cleveland, 2005; Malai, 2007; Mourali, Laroche, & Pons, 2005). Culture is impacted under the individual preferences of how the human make decisions (McDonald, 1994) and then needed action is taken according to their decisions and also how it could be understood by the world (McCort & Malhotra, 1993). Different cultures come from different countries that could have impact on the level and nature of the luxury brand consumption. It has a very important impact on customers purchasing behaviour, principals, and attitudes on both societal and individual levels. Among several models which have been developed to clarify cultural differences, Hofstede's model is probably the largest and arguable model in this area. His five dimensional model, is still used by management, marketing and human resources departments throughout the world, to understand the mechanisms of national cultural differences (Kopnina, 2007). Based on the previous studies, the Hofstede's cultural dimensions have positive relationship with the LAPI (Berthon, Pitt, Parent, & Berthon, 2009; De Mooij & de Mooij, 2010; Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). Cultural dimensions have divided into five dimensions in Hofstede model: PDI, IDV, MAS, UAI, and LTO.

PDI is a degree of powerless members of organizations, which accept the unequally distribution of power. IDV is explained as everyone who is expected to look after himself/herself and also his/her family. If the score of IDV in one country is higher than the others, it means that the individual just pay attention to himself/herself, otherwise, if the IDV score in one country is lower than the other countries, it shows that all the people are living together. MAS demonstrates that how much one country distribute the values between men and women. In one masculine country, the gap between men and women's value is clear. If in one country, the MAS is high, it will indicate that the country is so assertive and competitive. On the other hand, if the MAS is less, it will show that the country is under the women's value control. UAI refers to the degree of tolerance about the uncertainty and ambiguity. LTO is explained as the level of the acceptance of long-term traditional values (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2001) and also it tries to differentiate the level of thinking. Based on the mentioned literature, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H6: Power distance is positively correlated with luxury apparel purchase intentions.

H7: Individualism is positively correlated with luxury apparel purchase intentions.

H8: Uncertainty Avoidance is positively correlated with luxury apparel purchase intentions.

H9: Masculinity is positively correlated with luxury apparel purchase intentions.

H10: Long-term orientation is positively correlated with luxury apparel purchase intentions.

2.4. Model Development

Based on what has been said in theoretical framework section, a theoretical model has been proposed. This model depicts the relationship between culture dimensions, interpersonal and personal effect with LAPI which is shown in Figure 3. The model includes five dependent factors (PDI, IDV, UAI, MAS and LTO) for culture dimension and three dependent factors (CV, UV and SV) for interpersonal effects and two dependent factors (EV and QV) for personal effects. All these ten dependent factors are adapted from relevant literature. The single-headed arrows show hypothesized relationships between ten dependent aforementioned factors and LAPI.
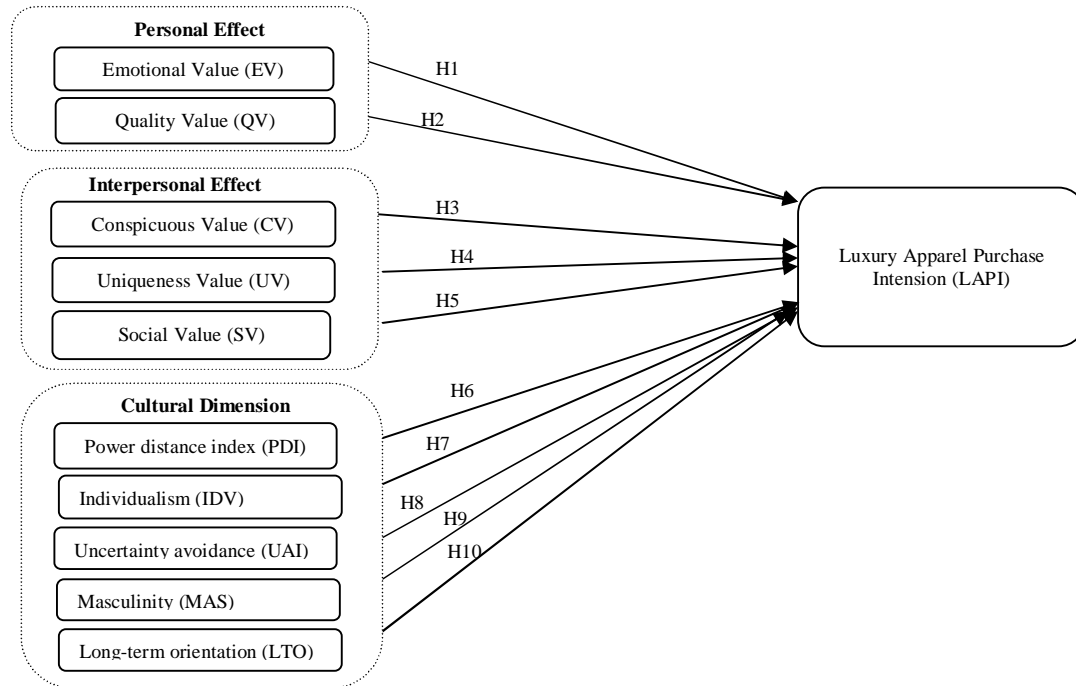
Figurer 3: Conceptual framework

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

Iran as a Muslim country has its own cultural features and also Iranian customers have their own motivation. In addition, study of luxury consumption of the Iranian market as a sample of Muslim society gives a deeper understanding of consumer behaviour in different cultures (Teimourpour & Hanzaee, 2011). For this reason, Iran is chosen as the context of this empirical study. Apart from the general definitions on luxury brands as disclosed above, we focused on luxury brands apparel that are recognized more useful in life. That is why apparel is an established product that is both cross-gender and presents well as a luxury item. This study used the mall intercept method for data collection because numerous past studies have favoured that mall intercept method would be more appropriate method for data collection and also ensures ecological validity where a more varied sample can be obtained (Thøgersen, 2004). A convenience sample was chosen among those customers who visit selected luxury brand apparel stores (Tandis, Almas and Fereshteh which are more recognised as a luxury mall) in Tehran, the capital of Iran.

3.2. The Survey Instrument

A six-section survey form was developed for self-administered completion. The survey began with a cover letter in order to invite respondents to participate to fill up the questionnaire. The participants were invited to answer to each item of questionnaire based on their level of agreeableness or disagreeableness by utilizing five-point scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). In addition the first page includes a brief description of luxury brand apparel. Section A consisted of six demographic questions related to general information of respondents such as gender, age, education level, marital status, occupation and income. Thereafter, in section B, they were asked to choose which luxury brands are their favourites and which one they prefer most to purchase from. In section C, respondents were asked to rate their likelihood to purchase luxury brand apparel. Section D contained eighteen scale questions in order to measure interpersonal influence in purchasing luxury brand apparel. Section E consisted of twelve scale questions to measure personal influence in buying luxury brand apparel. Finally, section F consisted of series of established scales to measure each cultural dimension; PDI, IDV, MAS, UAI and LTO.

In order to determine the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used through internal consistency approach. If Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is more than 0.7, the reliability will be acceptable (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). Table 1 presents the number of items and the reliability coefficients for each of the variable used in the current study. The Cronbach's Alpha for all variables ranged from 0.843 to 0.926, it shows an acceptable level of reliability. So no items were deleted based on results.

Table1: Confirmatory factor analyses			
Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Reliability Status
Culture	5	0.926	Reliable
Conspicuous Value	6	0.896	Reliable
Uniqueness Value	6	0.923	Reliable
Social Value	6	0.843	Reliable
Emotional Value	6	0.906	Reliable
Quality Value	6	0.891	Reliable
Luxury Apparel Purchase Intention	6	0.886	Reliable

3.3. Data Collection

The surveys were mainly gathered within three famous shopping centres of the Tehran which have more popular luxury brands. Before commencing on the survey, a brief explanation of the study was presented for the participants. 30 to 45 minutes were enough for participants to answer the questions. In total, 150 survey forms were distributed among the targeted population. Only 128 surveys (85 percent) were received. Five of them, were dropped that is why the information provided was inconsistent or incomplete, and subsequently the total number of 123 surveys (82 percent) were entered into SPSS 19 for analysis. This high response rate was likely due to two reasons: a quick check on the spot was performed to avoid potential errors, the gift for answering all questions charily. The common reasons given for not participating were: late for a (n) appointment/meeting, a general lack of interest, or lack of knowledge about luxury apparel.

4.   RESULT

The results give a deep overview of Iranian consumer behaviour in buying luxury brand apparel. In order to investigate the relationship between "LAPI" with "personal effects" (EV, QV), "interpersonal effects" (CV, UV, SV) and "cultural dimensions" (PDI, IDV, UAI, MAS, LTO), person correlation analysis and Hierarchical multiple regression were conducted simultaneously. If the results of both methods support each of hypotheses, it will be accepted otherwise they will be rejected. The Table 2 demonstrates the correlations between "LAPI" with all independent variables used in this study. In order to apply Hierarchical multiple regression, average items for each independent variable were entered into the regression followed by the steps below. First personal effects which include "EV" and "QV" were entered at step one (H1, H2), interpersonal effects such as CV, UV and SV were included at step two (H3, H4, H5), and finally five dimensions of culture were added at step three (H6, H7, H8, H9, H10). Table 3 presents the results of Hierarchical multiple regressions for each hypothesis.

Table 2: Pearson correlation Between LAPI and other independent variable										
		EV	QV	CV	UV	SV	PDI	IDV	UAI	MAS	LTO
LAPI	Pearson Correlation	.825**	.668**	.787**	.790**	.751**	.516**	.666**	.589**	.281**	.714**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.002	.000
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).										

The data from table 2 confirmed that all variables were correlated with "LAPI" positively and significantly (p-value < 0.01). This means that, with increasing the score of each variable the level of "LAPI" is increased as well, and also the level of "LAPI" will be decreased with decreasing the score of each variable. "EV" and "MAS" had the highest and lowest positive correlation with "LAPI" equal to 0.825 and 0.281, respectively.

Table 3: Heretical multiple regression results				
	Dependent Variable	H1,H2	H3,H4,H5	H6,H7,H8,H9,H0
		Model1	Model 2	Model 3
Personal Effects	Emotional Value (EV)	0.655****	0.394****	0.388****
	Quality Value(QV)	0.347****	0.230****	0.184**
Interpersonal Effects	Conspicuous Value (CV)		0.173**	0.131**
	Unique Value (UV)		0.143**	0.138**
	Social Value (SV)		0.162***	0.132**
Cultural Dimensions	Power Distance Index (PDI)			0.097**
	Individualism (IDV)			0.116**
	Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI)			0.064
	Masculinity (MAS)			-0.115**
	Long-Term Orientation (LTO)			0.079
R^2		0.772	0.849	0.877
Adjusted R^2		0.769	0.842	0.866
R^2 Change		0.772	0.076	0.028
Sig		0.000	0.000	0.000
Note: p* < 0.10; p** < 0.05; p*** < 0.01; p**** < 0.001				

The following paragraphs provide an explanation about the results of each hypothesis according to Pearson correlation analysis and Hierarchical multiple regression which are shown in the Table 2 and 3.

In terms of personal effects, the results of the Pearson correlation coefficient indicated that both "EV" with (Intensity correlation=0.825, p-value < 0.01) and "QV" with (Intensity correlation=0.668, p-value < 0.01) are positively and significantly correlated with "LAPI". Moreover, the results of Hierarchical multiple regression test indicated that "EV" with (B=0.655, p-value<0.001) and "QV" with (B= 0.347, p-value<0.001) influence the "LAPI", positively and significantly. Thus, it can be said that there is a positive and significant correlation between "LAPI" and both" EV" and "QV". It means the results supported H1 and H2, therefore, they were fully accepted. So, the marketing managers can use "EV" and "QV" as predictors for "LAPI "among Iranian customers.

In terms of interpersonal effects, the results of the Pearson correlation coefficient found that "CV" with (Intensity correlation=0.787, p-value < 0.01), "UV" with (Intensity correlation=0.790, p-value < 0.01) and "SV" with (Intensity correlation=0.751, p-value < 0.01) are positively and significantly correlated with "LAPI". Meanwhile, the results of Hierarchical multiple regression test showed "CV" with (B= 0.173, p-value< 0.05), "UV" with (B= 0.143, p-value<0.05) and "SV "with (B= 0.162, p-value<0.01) had a significant and positive influence on "LAPI" among Iranian customers. Thus, based on the results of aforementioned methods, all the three hypothesis; H3, H4 and H5 were supported and fully accepted. Therefore, they can be useful predictors for marketing managers in Iranian market.

In terms of cultural dimensions, the results of the Pearson correlation coefficient proved that there is a positive and significant correlation between "LAPI" and "PD"I with (Intensity correlation=0.516, p-value < 0.01) and also the results of Hierarchical multiple regression test showed that "PDI" with (B= 0.097, p-value<0.05) had a positive and significant influence on "LAPI" among Iranian customers. Therefore, "PDI" is a predictor in order to know expectations and perceptions of Iranian customer of luxury brands. It means the H6 is fully accepted. In the following, the relationship between "LAPI" and "IDV" were tested in H7. The results of Pearson correlation coefficient found that "IDV" with (Intensity correlation=0.666, p-value < 0.01) is positively and significantly correlated with "LAPI". In addition, the results of Hierarchical multiple regression test proved that "IDV" with (B= 0.116, p-value<0.05) had a significant and positive influence on "LAPI" among Iranian customers. Thus, based on the results of aforementioned methods, H7 were supported and fully accepted. Therefore, "IDV" can be useful and significant predictor for marketing managers in the Iranian market.

In terms of investigating the H8, however the result of Pearson correlation coefficient indicated that "UAI" with (Intensity correlation=0.589, p-value < 0.01) is positively and significantly correlated with "LAPI", the results of Hierarchical multiple regression test indicated that positive relationship between "UAI "and "LAPI" is not enough significant (B= 0.097, p-value>0.10), thus with considering the results of aforementioned methods, the H8 was fully rejected. It means "UAI" cannot be useful predictor for marketing managers in the Iranian Market.

In terms of investigating the H9, however the result of Pearson correlation coefficient indicated that "MAS" with (Intensity correlation=0.281, p-value < 0.01) is positively and significantly correlated with "LAPI", the results of Hierarchical multiple regression test indicated that "MAS" with (B= -0.115, p-value<0.05) did not influence positively "LAPI" among Iranian customers. It had significant influence but the relationship was negative not positive. Thus, based on the conflict that was seen between both aforementioned methods, H9 was fully rejected as well as H8. It means "MAS" cannot be useful predictor for marketing managers in the Iranian Market.

In terms of investigating the H10, however the result of Pearson correlation coefficient indicated that "LTO" with (Intensity correlation=0.714, p-value < 0.01) is positively and significantly correlated with "LAPI", the results of Hierarchical multiple regression test indicated that positive relationship between "UAI" and "LAPI" is not enough significant (B= 0.079, p-value>0.10), thus with considering the results of aforementioned methods, the H10 was fully rejected. It means "LTO "cannot be useful predictor for marketing managers in the Iranian Market.

In conclusion, the result of Pearson correlation coefficient showed that all independent variables were correlated with "LAPI "positively and significantly (p-value < 0.01). Coefficient correlations between each independent variables and "LAPI" from the highest to the lowest are "EV= 0.825", "UV= 0.790", "CV= 0.787," "SV= 0.751", "LTO= 0.714" "QV=0.668", "IDV=0.666", "UAI=0.589", "PDI=0.516" and "MAS=0.281". In order to be sure, Hierarchical multiple regression was also conducted. The results of this method only supported the first seven hypotheses. Therefore based on the result of Pearson correlation coefficient and Hierarchical multiple regressions, the seven first Hypotheses were accepted but the H8, H9 and H10 were fully rejected. In aggregate, the results show that personal and interpersonal effects have more correlation with "LAPI" in comparison with cultural dimension. Therefore, the marketers and strategists are suggested to consider interpersonal and personal effect more than cultural dimension, in order to forecast "LAPI" for Iranian customers.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Based on the proposed theoretical model, this study investigated the influence of cultural dimensions, interpersonal and personal effects on luxury apparel purchase intentions in the Iranian market. This study tried to find what factors will affect Iranian customers to buy luxury apparel. These factors may be useful for marketing managers and advertisers and strategists for considering in their policies, business plans, and organizational mission and achieve success in the future and also to handle communication or advertising in luxury brand apparel stores and desire to focus on fundamental consumer values. In this section, we make sense of the hypotheses that were confirmed and give potential interpretations for those that were not supported.

In the first stage, in terms of investigating the personal effects, the results of the present study proved that "EV" and "QV" affect Iranian customers to buy luxury apparel positively and significantly similar to those obtained in literature (Dubois & Laurent, 1996; Groth & McDaniel, 1993; Rao & Monroe, 1989; Tsai, 2005). In conclusion, "EV" and "QV" have a profound effect; therefore, marketing managers should consider these two factors when they aim to sell luxury brands in the Iranian market. Since "EV" among all variables had the most influence on LAPI, it is recommended to be considered more than others in the Iranian Market. "QV"s impact is weak in comparison with "EV"; but is strong in comparison with other independent variables. It can be concluded that Iranian customer's choice may be caused by non-cognitive and unconscious motives similar to the research of Dichter and Berger (2002). The marketing managers are recommended to consider that Iranian customers are more individualist than collectivists; and totally, individualists possess higher levels of hedonic motivation for the consumption of luxury products (De Mooij & de Mooij, 2010).

In the second stage, in term of investigating interpersonal effects, the results of present study proved that "CV", "UV" and "SV" cause Iranian customers to buy luxury apparel positively and significantly similar to those obtained in literature (Amatulli & Guido, 2011; Bagwell & Bernheim, 1996; Bearden & Etzel, 1982; Braun & Wicklund, 1989; Corneo & Jeanne, 1997; Hong & Zinkhan, 1995; Lynn, 1991; Pantzalis, 1995; Solomon, 2006; Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). In conclusion, "CV", "UV" and "SV" have a profound effect; therefore, marketing managers should consider these three factors when they aim to sell luxury brands in the Iranian market. Since "CV" plays a significant role in shaping preferences and also is the valuable item for Iranian consumers, the marketing managers are suggested to show this factor in luxury apparel advertising in order to convince Iranian customers to buy luxury apparel brands. It can be concluded that "CV" as an independent or predictor variable is a better variable among interpersonal effects. "UV" also enhances Iranian customer's preference for luxury brand apparel. Totally; the marketers and mangers are recommended to consider "UV" in their plans and advertisement in order to promote luxury brand apparel among Iranian customers; because of the following reasons: (1) Iranian customers deemed unique brands as expensive, more valuable and luxury brands; (2) Iranian customers tend to be unique in social and they wish to be different and exclusive; (2) regardless of this fact that there is Islamic culture in Iran and people have religious beliefs they spend more in purchasing a luxury and certain brand in order to fulfil this type of need. "SV" had a high significant and positive influence on "LAPI" in comparison with other variables of interpersonal effects. Since Individual behaviour is situational and it varies from one situation to another; and from one time to another time (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), luxury apparel may be important to Iranian consumers in series of social status and representation. In conclusion, marketing managers are recommended to consider "SV" as a useful factor in prompting luxury brand apparel in Iranian markets because of the following reasons: (1) Iranian consumers prefer to have a social facet of one's self; (2) social ranking associated with a brand, plays a significant role in consumption.

In the third stage; in terms of investigating cultural dimensions, the results of present study showed that among five cultural dimensions, only "PDI" and "IDV" can cause Iranian customers to buy luxury apparel positively and significantly. Therefore, marketing managers are recommended to consider these two factors when they aim to sell luxury brands in the Iranian market. Meanwhile, the results proved that "UAI", "MAS "and "LTO" did not have a significant and positive influence on "LAPI" and therefore they cannot affect Iranian customers in order to purchase luxury apparel brands. The marketing managers and strategist are recommended to not consider "UAI", "MAs" and "LTO" in order to promote luxury apparel brands in Iranian market; although, they may be important in marketing luxury items elsewhere. Maybe it has some reasons which are as follow: (1) Iran as a Muslim country, has its own cultural features, (2) religion influences consumers' perceived values, motivations, and beliefs about products.

Finally, it can be said that, (1) Based on the results; H1 to H7 were fully accepted while H8, H9 and H10 were completely rejected,; (2) the findings of this research contribute to the literature by verifying that personal effects including "EV" and "QV", more than interpersonal effects including "CV", "UV" and "SV", are the key factors in influencing "LAPI" in the Iranian mature market; (3) this study suggests that, marketing managers and advertisers and strategists should consider most especial and striking cultural features for Iranian customers and also they should consider putting a more personal and interpersonal effects.

6. Limitation and future studies

There are a number of limitations in this study that are worthy in order to improve for the future studies. However; numerous past studies believed that mall intercept method would be more appropriate method for data collection (Thøgersen, 2004), while, this study was conducted by limited respondents in the capital of Iran and did not involve another Iranian people in other cities. Also this study focussed on the luxury apparel, replication with other products, such as car or home may elicit different results. Finally other factors such as counterfeiting, fashion, price, elegant, trust, and even convenience factors, which could have influence on luxury brand purchasing, were not considered in this research.

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