

MKM227 Postgraduate Dissertation

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An Evaluation of consumer perceptions and motivations towards luxury fashion brands- A case of consumers in London and Paris

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Royal Docks Business School, University of East London for the degree of **International Marketing Management**

October 2014

14 395 words count

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An evaluation of consumer perceptions and motivations towards luxury fashion brands – A case of consumers in London and Paris

KEYWORDS:

Luxury; Luxury concept; Fashion retailing; Consumer Perception ; Cross-Cultural segmentation ; Motivations ; Consumer ; Values Perceptions ; Attitudes ; Fashion Industry; Brand-Value ; Brand Identity; Consumer Behaviour.

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Abstract

During the last centuries, the history has shown that the luxury good consumption was not unfamiliar among individual in a society; In fact, this specific type of consumption has been an essential process. Nowadays, this phenomenon is still evolving and growing significantly within the global luxury goods market.

PURPOSE The purpose of this study is to investigate consumer perceptions towards fashion luxury brands in two European developed countries as the United Kingdom and France.

OBJECTIVES/AIMS The principal objective is to determine luxury perception from French and British mind-set likewise to establish and to build an actual structure concerning marketing luxury Goods present within these two countries, more precisely an evaluation of consumer perceptions and motivations towards luxury fashion brands – A case of consumers in London and Paris as well as, to analyse the disparities for these both countries, regarding luxury perceptions.

A strong sensation of willingness has been wished, that the results obtained will encourage and leads to further research in this context, and eventually bring to the evolution of the luxury environment and consumption behaviour.

METHODOLOGY For the implementation of the research, a quantitative approach is directed through questionnaires distributed mainly physically (hand-to-hand) to the sample understudy, and on the other hand, surveys diffused online through Internet via social media channel such as Facebook.

The design of survey was based on a template available and supplied by Google docs –free accessible application that facilitates the creation of a super link directly accessible to social network with an online. Also, Surveys and questionnaires include open questions and multiple choice questions in order to explore British and French consumer's assumptions; preferences; motivations towards luxury brands.

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I would like to thank those who were intentionally a major part of my aim within my studies, my whole family and especially my lovely parents, I always make sure that I would manage things that you could not able to do, and thanks the God worship and your support I made it today. You were my motivation, my determination and my strength, even if I met a lot of obstacles through my way, I always kept on my mind your advices and your love... We come from far away ...so we know what we aim to ...This thesis is entirely dedicated to you Ou'mi and A'bi. One Love.

I would like to make a huge dedication to those who helped me and, to my closest friends from Paris, Goussainville Nine Five poto!!!! Who are proud of my career so far, I am thanking the Greatest and the highest for its blessings, because not much persons from our neighbourhood did what I did, I would have never imagined such a great accomplishment from myself, Hence, I am profoundly proud and honoured, I guess to be the one as an example for the others, that we can also do it, whatever the way we treat you according to your origins based on irrational stereotypes.. Wherever the place are you coming from, even if it is seen as difficult or being a sensible area from the majority of people; I tell them Knowledge is a weapon. Bless you all.

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Since the ancestral Egyptian period, the phenomenon of luxury has evolved historically with humans for many years. (Berry, 1994; Evrard & Roux, 2005) Consequently, it is evident that this concept, today is still accompanying individuals throughout the time. During the last years, it is well-evident that Luxury consumption has changed and tends to be, clearly wide and accessible to various types of consumers, then an actual knowledge of these differentiated characters and entities have to be analysed and considered from global luxury companies.

Over the recent years, the market of Luxury goods has shown a significant improvement and development in terms of growth and expansion at international scale.

According to the Boston Consulting Group, a profit of \$400 billion has been generated in 2004 by the luxury market of goods and services, mainly produced in European countries such as United Kingdom, France, Italy and Germany, likewise secondly in Asian countries as China and Japan. Additionally, since 2001 the European Union plays an essential role in terms of growth consumption concerning Luxury products, as well as in emerging markets such as Russia, China and India.

In fact, as stated by Mc Kinsey & Co, since 1990 an estimation of \$60 billion has been reckoned in terms of growth for the global luxury goods market, which shows the rapidity and the importance in terms of development of this sector in the world. (Dubois & Duquesne, 1993; Vickers & Renand, 2003)

Moreover, regarding the recent effects of the globalization, western European countries tend to be leaders in terms of luxury market. Nevertheless, amongst the top 10 luxury markets on earth, four countries from the European area are acknowledged as leading and highest luxury market in the world; first Italy (3rd) , France (4th), Germany (7th) and Spain (9th). The sixth highest luxury market is

United Kingdom which it does not appear as a Euro zone country. (Euromonitor International, 2014).

However, Euromonitor International has conducted a research recently that shows the luxury goods market is well-active across Asian countries, which where it has been generated at the beginning of 2014 , an average of \$ 390 billion, mainly produced from Asian emerging markets such as Malaysia, India and China. (Euromonitor International, 2013)

As well as, the European market , in spite of being presented as the biggest and the most durable market regarding Luxury products, it tends to meet barriers and difficulties from luxury brands, due to the poor percentage (only 2%) of growth predicted in terms of rate development; (D'Arpizio, 2013).

Further, a lack of interest and consideration toward luxury has been noticed coming from European consumers, which appears as an obstacle for them in terms of targeting. (Remy and Tochtermann, 2012)

Indeed, the luxury goods market tends to become more sophisticated throughout the time, and marketers as well as luxury brand managers, are well-aware of the importance in considering those features that makes luxury brands 'luxurious', but also to acknowledge the existence of actual consumer's differences model upon cultural differences and choices likewise significant rivalry

(Remy and Tochtermann, 2012).

In order to being recognized and perceived as powerful in terms of quality by consumers, Brand names are one of these instruments. It is well significant that brands dedicates strongly a majority of their investment in building image, creating values in order to increase their profit and gaining a valuable reputation.

Moreover, according several studies undertaken by many researchers, the level of development relating to a product concerning its origin country, may affects the consumption-perceptions in terms of quality, which means the quality perceptions may depends on the country where the products has been fabricated. (Usunier, 1996; Papadopolous et al., 1990)

Hence, from a marketing leader outlook, it is fundamental to understand the process of consumer-perception towards luxury goods in terms of quality, and even if they assume or not the country of origin as an indicator of quality.

Nevertheless, many researches show that the country of origin depends and reduces its power (Josiassen, Lukas & Whitwell, 2008; Verlegh & Steenkamp, 1999) hence, it is significant to check, whether or not this concept that also stands for luxury goods.

Moreover, several key factors will be analysed such as involvement in terms of brand relationship, brand awareness and cultural demographics.

The project will be based mainly on luxury goods and especially on a specific type of product –fashion luxury brands *ready-to-wear*, as many perspectives involves into luxury goods, our study will focus on one dimension known as apparel designer *ready-to-wear*.

Within the luxury, the segment of the *ready to wear* is characterized as female and male handcrafted clothing manufactured from luxury houses factories, and then, after being finished, garments are regulated by sizes and sold to customers. Furthermore, *ready to wear* garments fabricated by Luxury big brands such as designers, are mainly addressed to fashion houses, and generally considered to be inferior compared to the *Haute couture* collection.

The first appearance of the appellation *ready-to-wear* across luxury was made by Yves Saint Laurent in the 1950's, – French fashion designer; – Key figure and famous entity of the Luxury history, also nowadays this term referring to a specific segment of the fashion Luxury could be called in different forms of appellations.

The principal research question of this study is to analyse the perception expressed toward luxury fashion products. In addition, to explore across two different European countries (United Kingdom and France) how the perceptions may differ towards luxury brands while consuming from Londoners and Parisians, as well as to define the disparities regarding motivations, interest and enthusiasm across these two countries. Thus, this research is to determine luxury among British and French sample of Young people aged between 18–40

years, as well as, linking these findings based on a cross-cultural perspective in order to enhance the meaningful of this study.

The structure of this research is composed of three important parts. First, the first part of our research will produce a main contribution introducing the concept of luxury and its evolution through its environment based on the literature associated to luxury. Then, secondly, in the second part, a development of the mains research questions will be established, and an understanding explaining the results achieved from the two countries mentioned understudy concerning the young people's perceptions toward luxury, indeed the findings and results will be gained from a quantitative approach from questionnaires and surveys, as well as to justifying the methodology adopted for this study.

In conclusion, we will terminate on the mains tasks of this research and on the eventual future recommendations through a general discussion that could be undertaken in terms of future research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

"Luxury is a necessity that begins where necessity ends"

Coco Chanel

INTRODUCTION

Within this chapter a critical review of the literature about the study has been implemented, based on theoretical fundamentals involving potential research proposition that can be developed.

This chapter will begin with a review of a signification and meaning of Luxury goods and supported by a perspective of luxury brands evolving within the

luxury industry, also, an extensive review will be approached concerning the luxury market consumption.

In the following part of the chapter, it includes a literature in reference to the behavioural and cultural consumption regarding luxury product. Also, as a major part of the research, regarding to cultural disparities in terms of perceptions and purchasing behaviour, an effective representation of a multidimensional framework based on cultural orientation is undertaken.

2.1 CONCEPTION & MEANING OF LUXURY

I. Definition of Luxury

In a general perspective, Luxury can be determined as service or products reasonably comfortable, exceptional or out of commons, more precisely as an unnecessary item that involves a sum of traits that make it desirable and expensive from the consumer sights.

Through the times many researchers have investigated and approached Luxury under different angles, that is to say this particular topic was widely studied by many authors within the consumer behaviour and marketing area ; some of these authors have approached and defined this concept differently, constantly referring to fundamental theories that takes part of this concept.

Vickers and Renand (2003) emphasizes the different special aspects involved in luxury goods, and gives a dimensional description of Luxury and its purpose:

“Luxury goods can be differentiated from normal or “non” luxury goods by the extent to which they exhibit a distinctive mix of three important dimensions of instrumental performance in terms of functionalism, experientialism and symbolic interactionism”.

Conventionally, Luxury goods and luxury brands are defined as being (premium)

–*supreme image, exceptional high quality, aesthetics, uniqueness, with strong reputation* in terms of *history, traditional heritage and knowledge*. (Dubois, Laurent & Czellar, 2001; Kapferer & Bastien, 2009; Keller, 2009)

Wiedmann et al, (2009) suggested a definition of luxury that would be interpreted as the whole features desired or expressed by a luxury consumer, –sum of elements that refers to *Elegance, high quality and price* (Keller, 2009; Christodoulides et al. 2009; Atwal & Williams, 2009) and *rarity*, as well as corresponding with brands using their capability to transmitting values to consumers such *Exclusivity, Awareness, high perceived quality* (Phau & Prendergast, 2000); *Premium Price* (Keller 2009) additionally, *status and conspicuousness* (Okonkwo 2009; O’Cass/McEwen 2004), as well as *symbolic value* (Keller 2009; Vickers & Renand, 2003) and *non-essentiality* (Wiedmann et al.2009), *hedonism* (Christodoulides et al. 2009 ; Vigneron & Johnson 2004) are linked to luxury brands.

Moreover, Luxury is characterized as a principal key that designs a distinctive aspect to a brand within a specific product type. (Kapferer, 1997; Alleres, 1991)

II. Concept of Luxury within Fashion sector.

The concept of luxury can be characterized in many ways, however as previously mentioned above; this study will particularly be focused on the ready-to-wear domain evolving into the fashion luxury segment.

Infact, within this sector specific characteristics are acknowledged compared to others segments, especially for its complexities, however these specific characteristics are essential have to be involved to maintain the luxury aspect of this sector.

A brief description of luxury from authors will give an approach of what luxury stands and its complexities, as well as what is evolving within this sector.

Therefore, according to Okonkwo (2007), through this segment, luxury is an expansive word defined by terms as ‘*innovation*’, ‘*authenticity*’, ‘*uniqueness*’,

'premium price' and 'high-quality' (p.11), accordingly Chevalier and Mazzalovo (2008) , agrees as well as that cognitive impalpable benefit and creativity (p.8)

Furthermore, within the fashion segment, three major levels are identified representing the separated levels of luxury goods performed by most of luxury brands. Chevalier & Mazzalovo (2008, p.8)

In fact, these different levels are determined as following the table below.

Table 1

<p>LEVEL 1 : Inaccessible Luxury</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusive models hand-made in single units • Haute couture
<p>LEVEL 2: Intermediary Luxury</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expensive replicas of individual models. • E.g. specially made outfits, duplicating all or part of a haute couture model.
<p>LEVEL 3: Accessible Luxury</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Products made in factories or workshops, in larger series • E.g. the ready-to-wear collection.

Chevalier & Mazzalovo (2008)

Similarly, Kapferer (2006) state the importance of the interdependence and connection existing between the three levels, as for instance, goods from the first level of "*inaccessible luxury*" are mostly created and reinforced in terms of brand identity due to profits and revenues generated from the third level - "*Accessible luxury*". (Pp.72-73)

III. Luxury fashion brands

It is widely clear for any researchers when consumers think about fashion brands such Christian Dior, Louis Vuitton or Chanel, such a feeling of déjà vu may cross their minds, this sensation is often related to “luxury”, which involved *sophisticated*, *aesthetic*, *finest*, *high price*, *exclusivity*, and *high premium quality*. Consequently, the majority of luxury fashion brands offer a multitude of features and elements which makes them valuable and distinctive from the others.

According to Pickton and Broderick (2005, p 242) a brand would be defined as

“The totality of what the consumer takes into consideration before making a purchase decision”;

Through this definition these authors expressed that brand represents the whole elements considered and acknowledged by consumers due to features as the logo, symbol, brand and the design; which is the same principle with luxury fashion brands.

Therefore, luxury fashion brands are well-distinguished from the other normal fashion brands, yet it is undoubtedly assumed that luxury fashion brands must to be distinguished from the others, however how these particular brands manage to keep themselves out from the crowd; What are the factors that gives them the ability of being distinctive from other brand; Luxury fashion brands involves principles that cannot be declined and plays an important role in enhancing their “luxurious” aspect.

In fact, according to Casterede (2008) in the further section (see Luxury market) provides three different categories of the luxury, based on this, it is obvious that luxury has a particular classification and differentiation concerning the range of luxury, therefore categorizing this range from the lower to the upper. Additionally, luxury brands are often considered as indicators, that gives an indication of *“functional utility to price is low”*, whereas the indication for the

“intangible and situational utility to price is high”; which means that every brands are not particularly luxurious. Nueno and Quelch (1998)

From this, several elements and features of luxury brands may have an effect and a driving-force toward the consumption, in terms of image and perception.

Additionally, according to Okonkwo (2007, p 107) all these features involved in luxury fashion brands are extensively coordinated through the design and communication, which makes them differentiated from the competition regarding their company identity and their range of goods.

Also, the fact of establishing a brand represents the process of branding, which means that all the features previously stated such as the *logo, symbol, brand* and *design* are all putting together and interconnected , with as a result – giving a valuable differentiated aspects to a product.

Similarly, according to Pickton and Broderick (2005, p. 242), the process can be characterized as:

“Strategy to differentiate products and companies and to build economic value for both the consumer and the brand owner”.

Therefore, Okonkwo (2007) argues that some functionalities are constituted financial value for the consumers – these functionalities are defined as functional and emotional benefits; involved in a strong brand using these functionalities as signals to satisfy consumer needs, as a consequence giving to the consumer a certain insurance and knowledge about the brand, and at the same time transmitting a secure experience.

Then, a satisfied consumer identifying the brand as favourable will tend more to create such strong affective and cognitive interests vis-a-vis the brand, as a consequence, developing a financial value for the owner of the brand, will allow him to generate beneficial and superior aspect, as for instance competitive advantage and greater value – due to the customer loyalty (p.9)

From this, as our research topic in the background, it is widely obvious that consumer perceptions includes all the previous notions mentioned, that gives

insight of how consumers build their aspirations towards a luxury fashion brands.

Accordingly, in order to understand how luxury fashion brands are solicited more in-depth, principal concepts are approached in the following paragraphs; those concepts are based on consumption and are the main features that drives consumers to build a relationship with these particular brands or products.

Indeed, the following paragraphs introduce concepts taking part of the brand management. They are relevant for the study and widely linked to our subject, as the consumer perception towards fashion luxury brands. Those concepts will provide a comprehension in why brand management is fundamental through the recognition process for consumer, resulting to perception.

IV. Brand Equity

The brand equity is one of the main traits that is being in contact with consumers, luxury fashion consumers tend to prove their attachment for a brand through brand equity.

Therefore, the brand value represents the economic benefits that the equity is interpreted inside. (Pickton and Broderick 2005, p 254) High brand equity and brand values, as a consequence leads considerably to profits.

According to Kapferer and Bastien (2009), these authors' states that the brand equity can be characterized as the *DNA of the brand*, and thus represents the basis of brand, that refers more precisely the two facets of the brand -tangible and intangible -consists of defining and distinguishing the brand from the competition. (p.122)

Furthermore, Pickton and Broderick (2005) determine that, as an intangible facet the brand equity, which is defined more precisely as:

“The value and strength of the brand’s name, symbols, associations and reputation to all target audiences who interact with it”

Moreover, thanks to the evaluation of some aspects within the brand equity, as for instance the strength of the brand –degree of Loyalty, awareness, heritage, and dominance; as well as the portrayal of the brand –Perceived quality and brand associations; brings a hypothesis of the brand durability within the market. (pp 254–260).

Hence, from this perspective of luxury regarding the transmission of added values, logically luxury articles are aiming to satisfy a psychological need.

Nevertheless, Meyers (1995 p.189) stated, that luxury does not involve all things that can be related to necessity, and, this is a reason why that luxury is firmly and assumed as everything that is more than typical or necessary.

The principal reason of this phenomenon can be explained, mostly due to the growth of the luxury market, indeed Kapferer (2009) indicated the main reason of growth of this sector is explained by the new actual mass consumer desire’s, that they are motivated to own an item that represents the daily life items’ from whose belongs to the upper class.

Thus, when consumer are willing to possess luxury items, it is due to unique emotions and feelings that it delivers to them, signs such as *pleasure, power, love* and *social belonging*. It shows also how people do fancy luxury.

Therefore, purchasing luxury products is not only attached to social facets such as *power* or *status*, but also related to benefits of the luxury brand –individual, functional and financial. (Sheth et al. 1991)

Thus, if a brand is perceived positive and also as great for a consumer, then he will buy it and will appear as a “*valuable asset*” argued Murphy (1998) (p.3)

Nevertheless, a redundant question is often posed concerning the consumer response to brand, and how do brands manage to distinguish themselves from others; the response to this is simply the Brand Equity.

Indeed, based on vision of De chernatony (2003), such a significant accent has been allocated to brands in order to differentiate symbols between same offers “*at the turn of the century*”. (p.32) In other words, in order to differentiate and

to trigger a response–action from consumer towards certain brands, with the Brand equity effect, brands can be assimilated to symbols.

Additionally, according to Brand Equity Board, equity supported by Brand can bring to consumer a *“trustworthy, relevant, and a distinctive promise”*.

Similarly, according to Keller (1998), the author declare that various results of a product or service depends on the marketing of it, as for instance the brand name or other branding elements, whereas if this similar product or service did not contain this brand identification, which means marketing assets, that will make the brand equity an underpinning aspect of the brand value. This can be interpreted as an example, the fact that how consumers and individuals do respond and perceive a brand

V. Brand Identity

As another important aspect of the brand, the brand identity plays a dominant part in the consumer–decision process, in fact, this component mainly created by businesses is an indispensable asset for customers’ perceptions.

Indeed, the identification of brand will allow consumer to identify themselves to it, as a reference or as an icon, and this depends on how the consumer perceives this particularly brand, which happens especially within the luxury fashion sector every day.

Indeed, the brand identity is the *“essence of the brand”* (Okonkwo, 2008; Ross & Harradine, 2011) and a *“vital concept of brand management”* (Kapferer, 2012).

Furthermore, De Chernatory (2010) determines brand identity as *“the distinctive or central idea of a brand and how the brand communicates his idea to its stakeholders”*, (p.53) in other words as stated by Okonkwo (2007) posed it under form a query, *“who is the brand”* and *“how consumers perceive the brand”* (p.110). Indeed, as determined by Aaker (1996), brand identity represents a main central element of a brand in terms of vision, and also plays a driving role concerning brand associations, which gives a certain signification, direction and intention to a brand.

Also, when a brand is seen as identity, it is widely obvious that this principle goes further and beyond all minor brand elements such as logo. Thus, according to De Chernatony and Riley (1998) it represents a combination of six facets: “*personality ,culture, self-projection, physique ,reflection and relationship*” (p.420) This allows companies to have a protection of their brand against the competition, as well as producing strategic positioning and gaining profit. Maintaining brand identity with an aspect of durability is entirely significant for long term brand success. (Gioia, Schultz & Corley, 2000 p.65)

A famous illustration from Kapferer (2009) (See below FIGURE 1) defining in depth the conceptual model of the brand identity is the Brand identity prism.

Based on Kapferer and Bastien (2009) this figure designate two main facets

- INTERNAL composed by Personality, Culture and Consumer self concept,
- EXTERNAL involving Physical element, Relationship and Reflected consumer.

Furthermore, this model has already been approached by few authors such Ross and Harradine (2011) as an academic model to determine a connection of brand image and brand identity for particular fashion luxury brands.

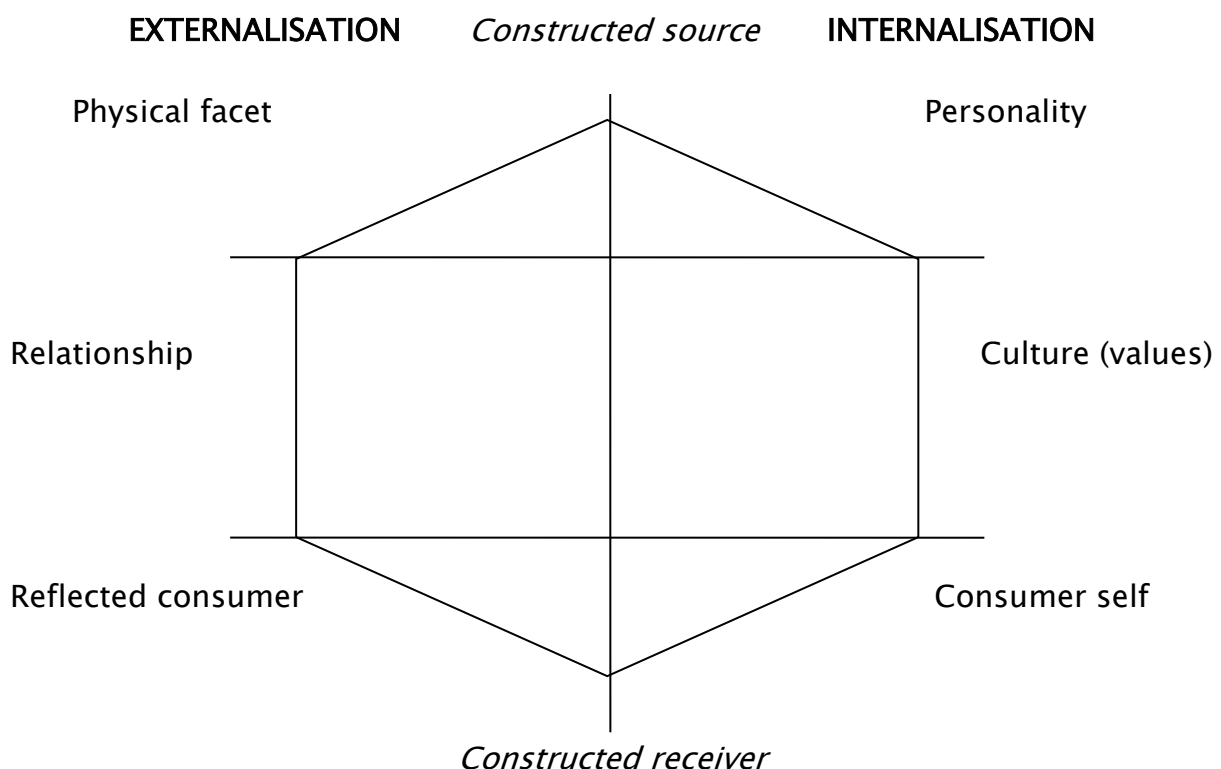


Figure 1: Based on BRAND IDENTITY PRISM of Kapferer, 2009

As well-defined on the model, at the top there is the constructed source that contains the physical and personality facets of the Brand.

- The "*Brand physique*" represents the whole elements that make the brand perceived and acknowledged without the brand name or the logo; colours, design, code.
- The "*Brand personality*" represents is rooted from the constructed learned from its creator's personality and character.

On the other hand, the constructed receiver refers to the customer reflected image and self concept facets.

- The first facet "*Customer reflected image*" reflects the brand in the mind of the consumer, whereas the second facet "*customer self-concept*" is the process of building a self through a brand, which is established on the relationship that consumers have with a brand.

To conclude, at the centre of the prism (Middle) –the facets are "*Relationship*" and "*Culture*".

- The "*relationship*" facet represents the kind of relationship established between consumers and their luxury brand, while the "*Culture*" is a major character of luxury brand identity that is attached to values and the heart of the brand.

Accordingly, Phau and Prendergast (2000), states that the character of the brand identity is conspicuous and outstanding for luxury brands. Furthermore, luxury fashion brand identity suggest two types of brand particularities –Tangible and Intangible based on origin, heritage and core of the brand. (Kapferer and Bastien, 2009).

According to Okonkwo (2007), the following features have been associated to reliable fashion luxury brands, which make them firmly distinctive from the other brands : "*(1) innovative, creative, unique and appealing products; (2) consistent delivery of premium quality; (3) exclusivity in goods production; (4) tightly controlled distribution; (5) a heritage of craftsmanship; (6) a distinct brand identity; (7) a global reputation; (8) emotional appeal; (9) premium pricing; and (10) high visibility*". (p.105)

It is strongly evident that Brand identity is essential for consumers to identify their desire toward a brand, however, this cannot be performed without the extensive participation of the Brand Image.

VI. Brand Image

As a relevant component in the consumer recognition process, primarily based on the perception and beliefs in customer mindset, the brand image.

Indeed, this concepts plays an important role when consumer viewing a fashion brand, many elements that is involved in to it specify the imagery of the brand and determine the viewer satisfaction, hence, depending on experiences related to that particular brand, the perception may be interpreted differently by consumers.

In fact, Okonkwo (2007, p 110) states that the brand consumer's perception refers to Brand Image. Also, he defined the brand Image as:

"The way the brand is seen by people that it is exposed to".

Furthermore, Dobni and Zinkhand (1990, p 118) define the importance of the brand image as strongly linked to perception, as shown in this extract:

"It is affected and moulded by marketing activities, by context variables, and by the characteristics of the perceiver. Where brand image is concerned, the perception of reality is more important than the reality itself".

Moreover, de Chernatony and McDonald (2003, p 444) specified that brand image resides on the mind of customers as the perceptions towards the brand's attributes and can be evaluated by the relations and affinity that they maintain in memory.

The main feature of the brand image is *brand intangibility* – fact that the brand is intangible; which involves various sort of brand attributes such as history, culture, heritage and experiences of the brand (Keller and Lehmann, 2006) Similarly, Keller (1998) assumes that a brand with a favourable image is based on marketing plans that dedicates positive and unique attributes to the brand in

mind. In addition, (Keller, 1993; Dobni & Zinkhand, 1990) brand image as an essential approach within marketing field, also since many years, that is an indispensable concept in consumer behaviour research.

Also, Dobni and Zinkhan, 1990; Gardner and Levy conception (1955) investigates that products possess a double nature –Social and Psychological likewise Physical; and it refers to the series of sensations, thoughts and attitudes that consumers expressed concerning brands; the representation that they have about brands is strongly essential in purchasing decision process. In fact, especially for the influences' buying behaviour, which is not only based on desires to use a product, but also by expressing their mental state from that liking brand. Furthermore, these authors have confirmed as an argument that brand image attention can be crucial in a buying decision process in terms of choice (Dolich, 1969); also that generally products are not mandatory purchased for their functional benefits, but also due to the influence that features affect the buyer and its ego (Levy, 1959).

In fact, these extensive features that attracts consumer are generally considered as a sort of physical human aspect of the brand, and hence a sort of personification of the brand. Indeed, according Dobni and Zinkhan (1990), based on two aspects, brands possess human characteristics resulting in the appearance of the brand itself. The first one is the fact that the brand holds a specific personality of itself, while the other one, is concentrate on combining the imagery reflected by the brand with the personality of the consumer.

Besides, those authors have extensively developed, still from Gardner and Levy study, that it does exist a significant variation pertinent to “*brand image*” features that involves –the names that have been solicited; –the precise definitions that have been proposed; – the characteristics of brand image; –the elements that have permitted the measurement of the brand image; –the source, formulation and handling ability aspect's of brand image. (Dobni and Zinkhan, 1990).

In fact, for fashion luxury brands, image is connected to “*quality, performance and authenticity*” (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990; Atwal & Williams, 2009). Additionally, to have a supportive gain for luxury brand as for instance a leverage, a significant marketing concepts is necessary recommended (Beverland, 2004; Phau and Prendergast, 2000)

Also, luxury brands are strongly suggested to adopt a favourable and great brand image (Miller and Mills, 2012) and to supply an exceptional image for their customer, who tends to be aspired to show their belonging to a social class. (Phau and Prendergast, 2000)

One of the principal aspects that evolves in the fashion luxury field, and if it is missing, can strongly harm the valuation of the brand, – *Exclusivity*. Therefore, according to Kapferer and Bastien (2009) states that as a way to increase benefit in terms of growth, luxury brands tends to be less *exceptional* and *chic*, hence resulting in a desirability and affordability from the consumer. This process resulting in a changing of the traditional mode of production and distribution of luxury products, likewise enlarging the target market has come out with a negative result relating perception, indeed consequently, brands tends to be seen less *exclusive* and then causing a clear risk to their authenticity (Dion and Arnould, 2011).

Moreover, since the emergence of online stores by a majority of big luxury brands, and unable an easier accessibility to luxury goods, as the front barrier of exclusivity has been detached by a the luxury market, now any consumer can cross the barrier of entry and make a purchase a luxury goods online, which means that everyone can reach to similar products and services. From this perspective, the real objective for them is to conserve their appearance of being *exclusive*. (Keller, 2009, p.292)

2.2 LUXURY CONSUMPTION & THE LUXURY MARKET

I. The current Luxury Market

In the last decades, the world of luxury has significantly increased in terms of presence and growth.

Indeed, as mentioned from Okonkwo, 2007, (p.225), our actual society has been subject to change in a many ways, particularly in terms of development.

Moreover, the principal factor contributing to this phenomenon is globalisation, which allows the market of luxury to be exposed at international state. (p.38)

Additionally, due to some improvements concerning the business management process, the competition has augmented across the sector of fashion luxury, hence increased the competition between brands evolving into this field, but

also created a diminishing of the entry barrier, which means that luxury brands tend to challenge and appear for the consumer's consideration. (p.225)

Furthermore, the growth of fashion brands from "mass" to "premium" has intensified competition and affects the luxury market, indeed as consumers perceive these goods as an option or substitutes to luxury goods at an attractive price-value. (p.228)

Similarly, Truong et al. (2009) employs the term 'Masstige' brands to define a rise of new type of luxury brands that are reachable for a wider category of consumer. Especially, this aspect relates to consumer of the middle class who are aspired and demanding for premium luxury goods, due to augmented disposable revenue, ending in a high prosperity (Yeoman and Mc Mahon-Beattie, 2005).

Also, according to Chevalier and Mazzalovo (2008, p 150), one of the biggest aspects of the current luxury market is *democratization*, which particularly involves the fact that the majority of consumer markets have enlarged and tends to include more and more customers. This is essentially due to the augmentation of wealth from the middle-class which is a recent phenomenon, as well as among the wealthier class ('*High net worth individuals*') who become wealthier through the years. (Kapferer and Bastien, 2009, p.13; Okonkwo, 2007, p.71).

Indeed, the situation of having more and more '*aspirational consumers*' across the luxury market is indicated as '*democratization of luxury*' or '*luxurification of society*'. (Atwal and Williams, 2009; Tsai, 2005; Yeoman and Mc Mahon-Beattie, 2005)

Three different categories of the luxury market, based on this, it is obvious that luxury has a particular classification concerning the range of luxury, hence categorizing this range from the lower to the upper.

The luxury market has often be divided by category, and characterising the different elements that emerges into the luxury environment.

Casterede (2008) has separated the sector of luxury into three distinct categories with each of them having their own components.

- The first sector refers to the '*super luxury category*' which is can be reached only by a few individual. Most of the products are rare and unique, including transportations such luxury cars, yachts and private jets.

- The second sector is more indulgent in terms of accessibility and therefore more affordable where the desire of consumer to pay more is expressed in order to get an '*elegant*' and '*classy*' good. This category is coupled with social recognition, and belonging to a social class, e.g. luxury designer bags, luxury branded shoes.
- The third one is the one that relates to the mass luxury category and can be defined as '*hedonistic*' and '*self-pleasure*'; it refers to goods such cosmetics, perfumes.

2.3 BEHAVIOURAL CONSUMPTION OF LUXURY

I. Consumer's motivation towards luxury.

The main task within this research is regarding the relationship existing that can be settled between luxury brands and consumers, more precisely to acknowledge the actual process and to determinate in what perspective consumers aspires their interests and desires towards brands that they perceives luxurious fashion items based on their cultural background. Therefore, many researchers have developed the enrichment of the classic image of luxury consumption (Wong and Ahuvia, 1998; Vigneron and Johnson, 1999; Tsai, 2005; Wiedmann et al., 2009).

From this perspective, there are two main sorts of luxury consumption orientation that exists and plays a dominant role in the management of luxury brands; -the *Social* and *Personal* orientation.

The first authors were able to prove that the social orientation toward luxury brands was considerably lesser essential than the personal orientation which was more important from a range of consumers understudied; more over when these same consumers aspire to luxury brands, their personal orientation was generally influenced by symbolic, utilitarian and emotional dimensions. In spite of the outlook approached, in previous study within the luxury environment demonstrated that the brand is considered as a vital organ of strategies, as it plays a significant role in a decision making process for consumers. (Kapferer, 1998; Vigneron and Johnson, 2004, Dubois et al., 2005).

Consequently, previous researches investigated the influence concerning the consumption of luxury products. Especially, Vigneron and Johnson (1999) in

their study, have determined the model of the five principal element that influences consumption toward luxury, according to them, they pointed out the fact that consumers trust that they earn values as “*perceived conspicuous value, unique value, social value, hedonic value or perceived quality value*”.

From this perspective, the actual consumer behaviour can be categorized into five several categories (see Figure below Table 2)

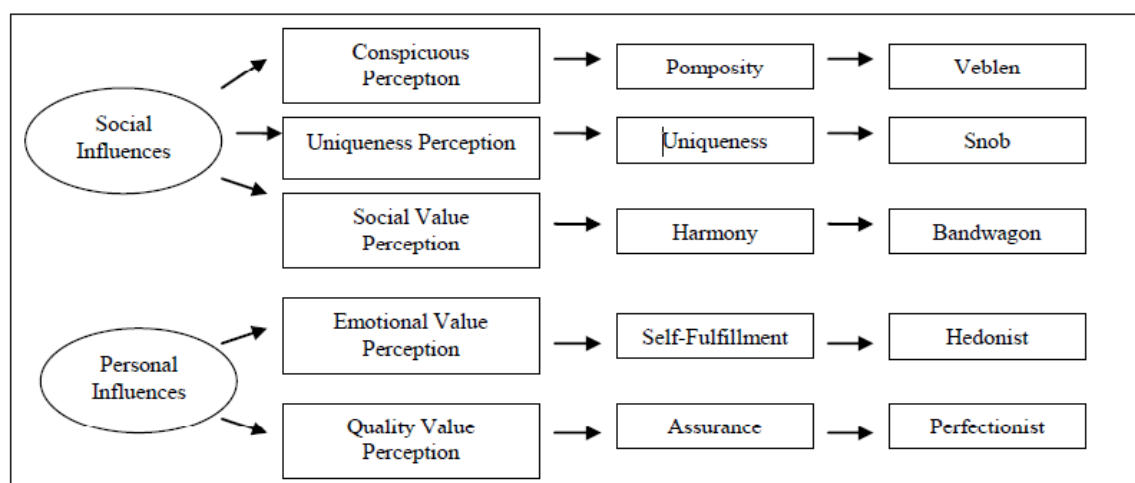


TABLE 2 “The five factors model of luxury consumption” Vigneron & Johnsson (1999)

- The “*Veblen consumer*” by buying luxury products perceives conspicuous attributes. They have a strong consideration to the price as a criterion of esteem, due to their first desire is to astonish people.
- “*Snob consumers*” have a different way of price-perception; they identify price as a criterion of Exclusivity and generally avoid to achieve familiar known brands to examine with internal-directed consumption.
- the ‘*bandwagon consumer*’ have less interest to price as a criterion of prestige , however they pay more attention in impression created on other people when consuming exclusive brands.
- ‘*Hedonist consumers*’ are more attracted toward their own belief, feelings and mindset. Hence, their perceptions is different they observe an emotional value from buying procedure instead of promoting their prestige or seeking for outstanding quality.

According to many researchers, the basis of the concept of “*conspicuous purchase*” has been limited, and it is based on motivations resulting in

purchasing and achieving luxury brands. For the management of luxury brands, this notion is mainly assumed as a fundamental strategy. (Corneo and Jeanne, 1997; O’Cass and Frost, 2002; Vigneron and Johnson, 1999, 2004)

From this perspective, it is obvious that consumers are actively concerned in establishing a positive social image based on purchases that they have made, which it is sourced from two areas focuses on social actions, –sociology and socio–psychology. (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993)

Accordingly, as introduced by Gentry et al. (2001), for consumers, one of the main reasons for purchasing luxury fashion brands is mainly due to the *quality* communicated by the brand name. Also, based on the perception, luxury goods such as hand crafted products shows a superior aspect than those from the mass produced, in terms of quality.

Thus, it is evident that brands are playing a major element in the consumer decision process, but also considered as a vital organ through two particular aspects in the consumption process.

Firstly, they are the viewable figures appearing as the affinity of consumers, (e.g. “*social conspicuousness*”) and on the other hand, they are deemed as symbols defining particular social class, hence giving a support to consumers to reinforce and to maintain their belonging to these social groups (e.g. “*social identification*”).

II. Cultural motivational aspect in consumption

As a motivational factor, the cultural dimension can be assumed as an essential element in decision purchasing process from consumer. In fact, the cultural perspectives linked to motivations has an effect on it, thus plays an important role.

In fact, the culture is considered as a common measure that can be employed to determine consumption across cultural–nationalities. (Bourdieu, 1984; Dubois and Paternault, 1995)

Moreover, a study about luxury perceptions and purchasing behaviour of consumer has been undertaken by De Banier et al (2006), exploring disparities in three countries, United Kingdom, France and Russia. They have certified that conception deliberated in a previous study given by Dubois, Laurent and Czellar (2001), validates the *Premium quality, own history, Expensiveness* and *Aesthetics* dimensions. Furthermore, they observed an interesting findings in terms of new trends in luxury product consumption, as for instance an evolution of *Self-pleasure* and a lassitude from consumer regarding *Uniqueness* and *Superflousness*. This phenomenon occurred across the all three cultures, mainly due to the globalization.

Furthermore, they have undertaken another study which this time was internationally focused on 12 countries, taking in account as a principal element the *attitude*. They managed to define three main traits of attitudes that categorized luxury products. The findings were *democratization, elitism* and *distance*.

In this chapter a description of the research approach has been developed, as well as the strategy of the data collection and the method of the data analysis. In conclusion, a brief discussion concerning the credibility issues of the study will be implemented.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is considered as the most important part in the research because the effective accomplishment of the research also depends on the methods that are solicited by the researcher (Collis and Hussey, 2003)

Thus, as a main objective is to investigate the young (aged between 18–40 years) British and French consumer perception's towards luxury fashion brands.

Indeed, in order to implement this study a positivist and quantitative approach were solicited as well as determining variables relating behaviours, description and attitudes of the consumer, such as Recognition; personal values; desire to purchase products and demographics.

The positivist approach refers to research based on assumptions obtained from a “positive verification of observable experience rather than, for instance, introspection or intuition”. (Cohen, and Crabtree, 2006.)

Also, this was used because it depends and suits more with quantitative research than qualitative, and more precisely due to its high reliability. In fact, quantitative research is more accurate in terms of precision within methodology, then more scientific and trustworthy. Hence, this is a reason why Quantitative and positivism are used together, and were assumed to allow the ability of answering efficiently our research question.

In addition, in order to gather data Primary and Secondary data were widely approached, simply because primary data can bring an effective additional support when secondary data is used, as well such as journals articles, magazines and books.

3.1 DATA COLLECTION

I. Primary data

“Surveys are a very traditional way of conducting research. They are particularly useful for non experimental descriptive designs that seek to describe reality.

So, for instance, a survey approach may be used to establish the prevalence or incidence of a particular condition.

Likewise, the survey approach is frequently used to collect information on attitudes and behaviour.”

Mather et al.2009

Survey

Regarding research and study, surveys are more rigorous than interviews. Also, they are generally approached to gathering thoughts and opinions from a large scale of a population as it is considered as quantitative research. (Bryman, 2008)

Thus, questionnaires were produced to investigate the young British and French consumers, precisely individuals from both capital cities, Thus Londoners and Parisians.

Online survey

For the study an additional element has been added, an online survey, its design has been implemented in a way to be friendly, concise and reliable for the participants. The online survey was created by using Google doc; an online application provided by Google, the online survey is reachable from a URL link that allows participants to access the survey. Also, this allows being accessible by a large number of participants due to its presence online. Besides, online survey is different to email questionnaire that mainly consist of enhancing participants toward a website in order to fill a questionnaire.

Moreover, online survey is much positive and effective than the email survey especially concerning its design but also in terms of choice; participants are able to add filtered questions. (Bryman, 2012)

Indeed, “the electronic-only survey is advisable when resources are limited and the target population suits an electronic survey” (Yun and Trumbo, 2000 p.23).

3.2 SAMPLING STRATEGY

Young British and French consumers aged between 18 and 40 years, who lives respectively in London and Paris, are identified as the main target sample. The author has identified the components of the population that will be questioned, a specific sampling method has been solicited, and more precisely the non-probability method was approached in analysing this population.

Moreover, Non-probability sampling is the process of selecting participants, within a population, which are more likely to be solicited than others (Bryman, 2008).

In other words, Non-probability technique is generally using to aid the researcher to select a part of the population that will represent the concerned sample and to investigate it. Accordingly, this sampling method is approached when researchers want to investigate only a relevant unit.

Also, the procedures of selecting units concerning this technique offers much easier and faster expectations than probability sampling, which is relatively more convenient for the researcher.

In fact, there are several types of non-probability sampling methods, and one of them is well-recognised and efficient, then used effectively in this study;”
–“*Purposive sampling*”.

This type was evaluated as relevant for the sampling implementation; in fact, the purposive sampling has as main goal to focus on specific traits of the desired population that will give the ability to researcher to answer the research question.

Thus, the authors will be mainly focus on purposive sampling to arrange a representative analysis of the participants approached that gives a precise result.

In fact, According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003), the purposive sampling method consists of approaching samples from the target body to symbolize the whole population. Also, as long as the components of the target group are relevant, this sampling method will be efficient for the author.

Also, as required for the primary data in a Master of sciences dissertation, a minimum of 100 questionnaires were implemented by the researcher for a quantitative study. Consequently, the researcher has decided to create 50 questionnaires for each target sample (50 for Londoners/50 for Parisians) in order to make an efficient balance between the two samples understudy.

3.3 STRUCTURE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES

For a maximum of participation from the respondent, it has been decided to construct a friendly questionnaire with questions that allows a short time and that do not take too long to fill in. The author has decided to pick some constructed questions that he thought would be relevant for the research.

Also, the author make sure that the questions were enough simple and comprehensible.

An introduction has been implemented at the beginning of the survey, in order to inform participants the goals of the analysis and to ask them to participate.

The online survey was divided by three categories: perceptions towards luxury fashion brands, personal details of participants and consumption habits toward luxury items.

Regarding the perceptions towards luxury fashion brands (*social recognition*), participants were asked about their opinions, feelings and how they define luxury within the ready-to-wear segment.

The category concerning personal details of participants and social status (*demographics*) relates to information about the respondents; their age, salary between Londoners and Parisians.

The last category is concerning their consumptions habits towards luxury fashion items, as well as their aspiration to achieve luxury items; also defining their purchasing motivations in luxury brands. Indeed, as the researcher assumed that motivations are well-related to perceptions, some questions were asked concerning this field. However, these variables will be developed more in depth in further paragraphs (see Measurability of the variables)

In order to determine values such as brand image and brand equity, questions about trust, relationship, and purchasing motivations were asked to respondents. Moreover, additional questions relating future recommendations and assumptions were implemented in order to define extra needs of the consumption structure, like for instance the effects of the country of origin on a consumer's choice.

Also, as the research is based on British and French consumer's perceptions, some questionnaires were translated into French language to facilitate the understanding and destined to participants for the French sample targeted.

The url link where participants can reach the survey developed via Google Docs, has been copied and pasted by email through the website of the university of East London, on the section called Moodle, a database gathering all address mails of students and personnel of the university– as well as the personal account of the author via social network such Facebook– Moreover, it has been diffused by participants to others individuals.

I. Design of the Questionnaires

In the following paragraph, a descriptive explanation of the theoretical approaches that have been developed in the questionnaire. It demonstrates in which part questions belongs to.

Part 1: "Definition of Luxury". Social Recognition

Question n11 = this question were implemented in order to get How participants of both countries (British & French) perceive about Luxury item, and how do they

feel about it. In this question, respondents have the choice to respond by multiple answers.

Part 2: Demographics

As the author has already specified the profile of the participants approached, in other words the targeted profile as young individuals (18–40 years), consequently, the age have not been asked to respondent in the questionnaire.

Therefore, their group-age (Question n4), the gender (Question n1), the social roles (Question n5), marital status (Question n6), and the salary/income per annum (Question n7) were implemented.

Indeed, Question about income/salary is essential to investigate and mainly related to purchasing luxury items. (Dubois and Duquesne, 1993).

Part 3: Purchasing motivations & Consumption habits

Questions n2,n3,n8,n9,n10,n12,n13,n14,n15 were all related to the purchasing motivation expressed by participants , in fact they were developed in order to investigate intentions and aspirations that involves willingness and desire to achieve luxury products; like for instance as in question 15, where respondents communicate its favourite luxury fashion brands, or in question 10, where participants chose features that they find relevant before to purchase a luxury fashion product ;as well as question 9, where individuals were asked about attributes that attract them within luxury items. Accordingly those questions numbered give an idea of the brand equity and brand loyalty of the participants. Also, the phase of recognition in the buying process is necessary to maintain existing clients, as a result of defining customers who previously purchased luxury fashion products, will allow valuable information in terms of orientations and influences for luxury marketers.

Also, these questions will allow to evaluate the ethnocentrism, need for uniqueness, and consumer materialism degree.

Questionnaire both in English and French language can be found in appendix.

II. Methods of spreading the questionnaires

According to the subject of the research dealing with Young British and French consumers , more precisely among Londoners and Parisians, survey distributed physically through facilities of the university of East London (such as library, canteen ...) particularly for the British target; but also an online survey was created through Google Docs allowing participants from both countries to respond the survey online.

In fact, as previously mentioned, after the creation of questionnaire and send it to participants respondents were asked to forward this survey to their colleagues, relatives who have potentially consumed luxury fashion products and meet the target criteria's.

The author can access and analyse responses and results generated by respondents from its own email address via Google Spreadsheets, an extensive application linked to Google docs that send results obtained through to the researcher.

3.4 ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Also, several parts were organized divided separately as mentioned above concerning the data, in order to investigate the data, the author adopted a coding technique: A coding method is an interpretive techniques that while classifying the data it also producing a means to offer the understanding of it in a quantitative way.

The coding process involves the researcher to consider and to classify the data into parts. Each part is labelled with a code; generally represented as a sentence or number that specified data classified in the parts. When the process of coding is finished, the researcher arranges a description of a synthesis concerning the disparities and relations between codes, comparison of codes and a discussion.

This method was used for the majority of the questions, moreover, for the rest of the questions like for instance those relating the gender (Male/Female) or the marital status (Single/Married etc), a quantifiable order has been implemented.

In fact, for the data analysis, results have been accurately investigated through a program called SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). This application

has been generally selected for analysing statistics. As mentioned above, analysis will be based widely on the coding techniques for each question, and as a result of the analysis all codes will be entered in SPSS software to investigate efficiently the data.

I. Measurement of Variables

In order to measure variables, the author has approached to use questionnaires. In fact, questionnaire allows to identify variables such as personal values; or demographic. In this study the variables were Recognition ("*social status*"); personal values ("*consumer materialism, ethnocentrism, and need for uniqueness*"), Aspirations and desire to purchase luxury fashion items ("*age, salary and purchasing frequency*").

The questionnaire is composed of 14 questions and divided by 3 parts. (Consumptions, demographics and social recognition). It includes mainly "close ended questions" in order to facilitate the time-respondents when answering the questionnaire. (Bradley, 2007)

II. Secondary data

The efficiency of the secondary data is widely acknowledged and always been a positive benefit that been approached for gaining a significant understanding into the research complexity.

The researcher has mainly approached secondary data collecting from Google Scholar, EBSCO and ABI/Inform which supplies many relevant researches and articles relating to the authors subject. Moreover, an additional different database reached online was library of MOD'Art International, which refers to the biggest private international institute of fashion design and management based in Paris, France; where some of the data were collected as well as useful and well-known references of the luxury fashion were found. Since many years Europe has been an iconic region of luxury fashion worldwide, and Paris has been one of those greatest European cities acknowledged as fashionable top city, due to the large numbers of luxury brands established within this city, this is a reason why, MOD'Art has been solicited. Additionally, some sources were from University of East London, where valuable and quality books were provided.

3.5 CONCLUSION /LIMITATIONS/RELIABILITY

As limitations concerning online survey, the physical appearance between the respondents and its interlocutor is missing, especially within online survey with a loss of face to face is noticed. Thus, the risk of fraud within online survey is generally committed; nevertheless the researcher has not proposed anything for the accomplishment of the survey, then an avoidance of the risk was made.

A total number of participants was significantly smaller than the number expected; in fact a total of 100 participants (50 for both nationalities) was expected from the researcher but only 86 participants (36 for UK / 50 for France) were keen to fill in the questionnaire; This number of participants generated warns the author to make a general observation of the findings as the number obtained was not equal to make a concise conclusion.

Also, in order to gain a high reliability, a post-test was performed concerning the survey. In fact, three persons from both nationalities were asked to attempt the questionnaire. This was implemented in order to check the fluidity of it, and if the terminology and language were well-appropriated; moreover, relating the reliability of the survey, it might be possible that minor unknown mistakes may take place into the research findings, this is due to the lack of measurement mistakes.

Indeed, survey based online was solicited because it offers a high number of persons in a vast geographical area, but the risk of misconception is highly probable with online survey. Then, it is relevant to state that we mentioned that participation from respondents was anonymous and voluntarily, and so it is entirely normal if some of them did not fill the questionnaire.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 ANALYSIS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

As mentioned , the researcher has distributed physically some questionnaires through facilities of University of East London (Library, Canteen, student room) but also some of them were displayed through Google Docs application (database that allows to broadcast survey online)

The information obtained from respondents were analysed in a précised manner from the researcher, the use of charts and tables has been solicited in order to introduce the analysis of answers generated from participants of the survey.

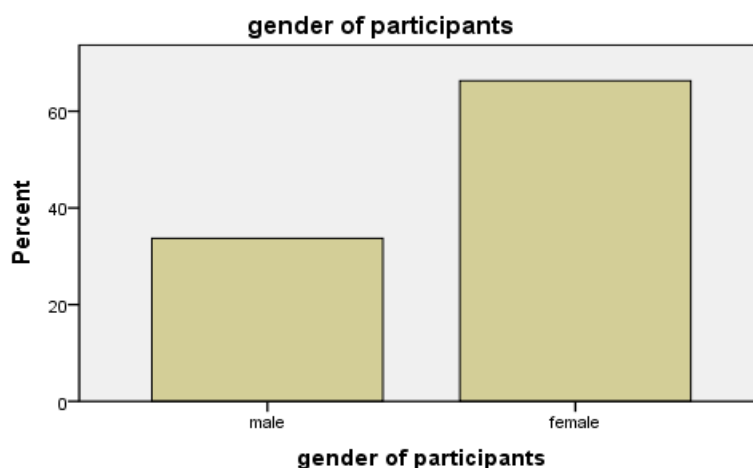


Figure 1: GENDER OF RESPONDENTS

The first question of the survey is focused on identifying the percentage of male and female participants. The researcher has managed to involve an equal number of the two genders of participants in order to have a concise balance in

terms of point of views and opinions. However, the results reveal a higher participation from the female side. Indeed, within a research the equal presence of both genders is relevant in order to avoid any sort of biased attitudes or feelings, which also plays a significant interest for the researcher (Johns and Hevrard, 1998)

Therefore, among the 86 respondents who have participated to the survey, respectively 50 were Parisians and 36 were Londoners. Also, among the young Parisians sample, 27 were female and 23 were male, while for Londoners sample, 33 were female and only 3 were male, which results to a total in percentage of 34 % of male and 66% of female. Yet, it shows that a relative low percentage of participations is noticed from the male gender. This can be explained by the lack of interest or consideration from this specific gender compared to women; in fact, it is relevant to indicate that luxury purchases are most likely more made by women than men (Whitehorsedigital.co.uk, 2013; Silverstein et al, 2008)

The following question of the survey refers on examining the percentage of people who have already purchased before luxury fashion products (at least once); it is widely noticeable that the large majority of our respondents' have already once acquired a luxury items in their life. Indeed, 83 % answered 'yes', 17% answered 'no'.

This fact can be explained as the effect of 'democratization of luxury' (Okonkwo, 2007; Chevalier and Mazzalovo, 2008; Kapferer and Bastien, 2009), likewise to the ordinariness regarding luxury consumption, which confirms that more and more consumers tend to be aspirational within the luxury market (Atwal and Williams, 2009; Tsai, 2005; Yeoman and Mc mahon-Beattie, 2005)

Accordingly, this question is well related to the figure 3, which shows the purchasing frequency of luxury fashion products.



Figure 2: RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE ALREADY PURCHASED LUXURY FASHION PRODUCTS BEFORE.

Indeed, the following question brings an identification of the frequency of purchase made from the respondents towards luxury fashion items (see [FIGURE 3](#)). It is essential to identify how much percentages, respondents are regularly purchasing luxury fashion products, the analysis has brought, as a result, that most of the respondents makes a purchase “every 6 month” (48%) which tells about the relative existing attachment among the participants towards luxury items; for those who purchasing “monthly” (11%), and “once in a year” (35 %).

An explanation for those purchasing “once in a year”, could be given as the reason of the high price and expensiveness of these particular products, thus that they cannot afford to buy constantly these items; also most of those who answered “monthly” are mainly respondents with a high salary.

Yet, only 6% of respondents have answered “Other”, which where we could find responses as “it depends”, “Never” or “I can’t remember”.



Figure 3: PURCHASING FREQUENCY

Still related to Demographics, the following table (Figure 4) demonstrate a cross tabulation of two variables; the city of origin and the group age of our respondents.

In fact, according to this table, we have analyzed the age group by provenance, in fact for both cities, it is noticeable that the highest participation of people was made by those aged between 25–30 years (33 % among Londoners and 48% for Parisians). Also, in second position, concerning the participation the group aged “above 30 years and under 40” (8% among Parisians and 5% for Londoners).

Also, only 1.2% of respondents aged between 18–24 years were Parisians, compared to 5% for Londoners.

age of participants * which city do you from Cross tabulation

	which city do you from	Total

			London	Paris	
age of participants	18-24years	Count	4	1	5
		% of Total	4.7%	1.2%	5.9%
	25-30years	Count	28	41	69
		% of Total	32.9%	48.2%	81.2%
	above 30 under 40	Count	4	7	11
		% of Total	4.7%	8.2%	12.9%
Total	Count	36	49	85	
	% of Total	42.4%	57.6%	100.0%	

Figure 4:
AGE OF
RESPOND
ENTS

The following tables (FIGURE 5, FIGURE 6 and FIGURE 7) describe the demographics questions implemented in the survey, based on the origin of the respondents. Indeed, as one of our important research questions, it is to investigate the disparities, whether cultural or behavioural among Londoners and Parisians. Hence, the procedure of displaying cross tabulations tables is widely used for determining demographics variables of the participants.

			which city do you from		Total
			London	Paris	
social roles	student	Count	24	16	40
		% of Total	27.9%	18.6%	46.5%
	employee	Count	11	18	29
		% of Total	12.8%	20.9%	33.7%
	unemployed	Count	0	5	5
		% of Total	0.0%	5.8%	5.8%
manager/cadre	Count	1	11	12	
	% of Total	1.2%	12.8%	14.0%	
Total	Count	36	50	86	
	% of Total	41.9%	58.1%	100.0%	

Figure 5: OCCUPATION/ROLES OF RESPONDENTS

		which city do you from		Total	
		London	Paris		
marital status of participants	single	Count	21	30	51
		% of Total	24.4%	34.9%	59.3%
	in relation	Count	9	13	22
		% of Total	10.5%	15.1%	25.6%
	married	Count	5	6	11
		% of Total	5.8%	7.0%	12.8%
	other	Count	1	0	1
		% of Total	1.2%	0.0%	1.2%
	99.00	Count	0	1	1
		% of Total	0.0%	1.2%	1.2%
	Total	Count	36	50	86
		% of Total	41.9%	58.1%	100.0%

Figure 6: MARITAL STATUS OF RESPONDENTS

		which city do you from		Total	
		London	Paris		
average salary per annum	£10000-£15000	Count	25	25	50
		% of Total	29.1%	29.1%	58.1%
	£15000-£30000	Count	9	15	24
		% of Total	10.5%	17.4%	27.9%
	Above £30000	Count	2	10	12
		% of Total	2.3%	11.6%	14.0%
	Total	Count	36	50	86
		% of Total	41.9%	58.1%	100.0%

Figure 7: AVERAGE SALARY PER ANNUM OF RESPONDENTS

The table (Figure 5) refers to social roles divided by Parisians and Londoners, this table shows that among Londoners most of them were students (28%) against (18.6%) for Parisians. Moreover, 21% of respondents were currently employed or working for a company among Parisians, against 13% for Londoners. Yet, none of Londoners were unemployed against 5% among Parisians. Also, 12.8% were manager (among Parisians) against 1.2% for Londoners.

According to the table Figure 6 (Marital status of respondents) which refers to the marital status analyzed among the participants a high presence of Single respondents is noticed (59.3%) for both Londoners and Parisians, which respectively defined as 24.4% among Londoners, and 34.9% among Parisians.

In second position, respondents have stated their status as “in relation” concerning the whole participants (25.6%), among Londoners (10.5%) and Parisians (15.1%). Also, 5.8% of Londoners describes themselves as “married”, whereas 7% among the Parisians respondents.

Concerning the table Figure 7 (Average salary per annum of respondents) which shows the average salary earned per annum from our respondents. Indeed, the figure analyzed demonstrates that there is an equal and high percentage (50%) representing that for both citizens, the average salary gained refers to “£10 000– £15 000”, that refers to the lowest average salary asked in the survey. Moreover, 17.4% of Parisians have affirmed that they earn an average salary of £15 000– £30 000 per annum against 10.5 % among Londoners, and 2.3% among Londoners earns above £30 000, and among the Parisians respondents (11.6%), those respondents were mainly Managers (see Figure 5).

The following figures below (Figure 8 and Figure 9) determine the motivational factors that drive consumers to purchase luxury fashion products, which are well related to perception in terms of consumption (Balcetis & Dunning, 2006; Wiedmann et al, 2007). Indeed, in this current question several factors are announced in order to identify the relevant elements depending on their visual, perception, and sight, thus, all aspects linked to branding attributes ; in other

words, all fundamentals attributes to consider before purchasing a luxury fashion product. Thus, in order to demonstrate these variables effectively, a graph has been implemented, including the whole respondent answers from both cities, then a cross tabulation of these factors asked in the survey.

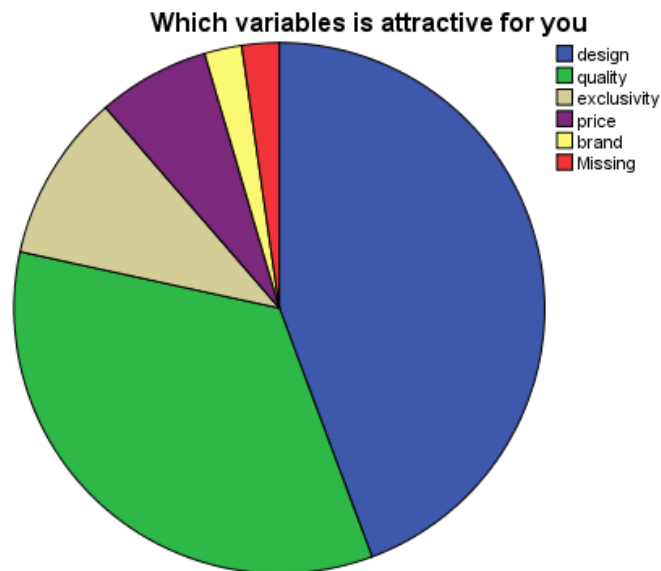


Figure 8: GRAPH OF ATTRACTIVE VARIABLES FOR RESPONDENTS

The figure above (FIGURE 8) represents the illustration of variables that respondents take in consideration firstly while purchasing luxury fashion items. It has surprisingly noted that the majority of respondents are mainly attracted by the design (45.3%), and quality (34.1%). These two variables are hugely cited into the luxury environment, indeed these results can be considered to the 6 main facets of luxury (Dubois, Laurent and Czellar, 2001; Gentry et al, 2001) and the 5 factors model of luxury consumption (Vigneron and Johnsson, 1999) which involves mainly quality and aesthetics. Also, a percentage of 10.5% related exclusivity has been generated which can also be associated to the scarcity and Uniqueness of the 6 facets and the 5 models factors.

Finally, only 7% of respondents argued that they were attracted by the price and 2.3% by the brand.

As mentioned above, the table associated to the graph (FIGURE 9) is presented in order to investigate the variables per city of origin of respondents.

			which city do you from		Total
			London	Paris	
Which variables is attractive for you	design	Count	14	25	39
		% of Total	16.3%	29.1%	45.3%
	quality	Count	14	16	30
		% of Total	16.3%	18.6%	34.9%
	exclusivity	Count	4	5	9
		% of Total	4.7%	5.8%	10.5%
	price	Count	4	2	6
		% of Total	4.7%	2.3%	7.0%
	brand	Count	0	2	2
		% of Total	0.0%	2.3%	2.3%
	Total	Count	36	50	86
		% of Total	41.9%	58.1%	100.0%

Figure 9: ATTRACTIVE VARIABLES SEEN AS IMPORTANT FOR RESPONDENTS

Indeed, in the survey 16.3% (among Londoners) were attracted by the design and quality, whereas among Parisians, 29.1% were attracted by the design and 18.6 % relating quality. Concerning the exclusivity 4.7% of Londoners have manifested their attractiveness to this variable, against 5.8% among Parisian respondents. Regarding the price, 4.7% of Londoners and 2.3% for Parisians were concerned to take this variable as attractive when purchasing Luxury fashion items. However, the interesting result of the analysis is that none of Londoners found the brand as important while consuming Luxury branded fashion goods, against 2.3% among Parisians respondents.

The following questions were mainly implemented in order to determine the influencing factors that push our respondents to consume luxury fashion products. It has been noticed that most likely except from Advertising or other

means of communication, consumers may be influenced by several other factors, as for example their family and friends (Prendergast & Wong, 2003).

Hence, it will be interesting to investigate what are the influences of our British and French citizen respondents.

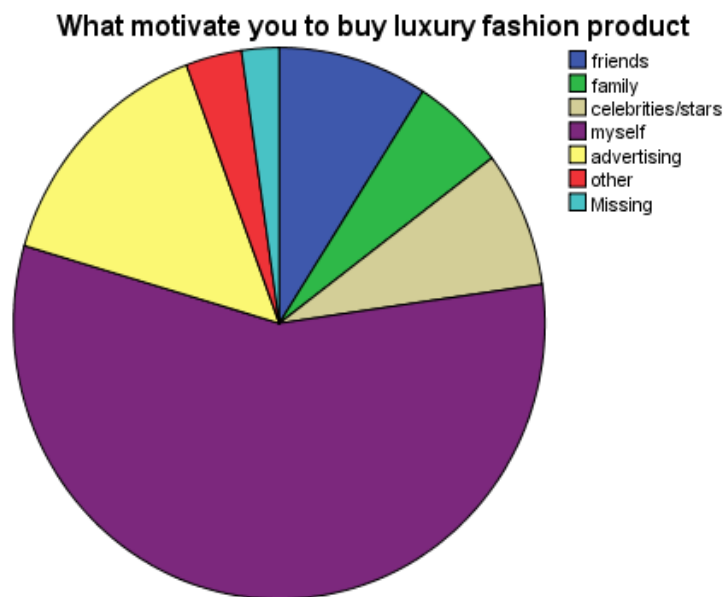


Figure 10: GRAPH OF MOTIVATIONAL ELEMENTS FOR RESPONDENTS#1

This graph (FIGURE 10) shows an overall illustration of the answers generated concerning motivational factors of our respondents. It is widely clear that the majority has claimed that they were influenced, firstly by their own (“myself”), then, the factor “advertising” is mainly answered by the participants; which is well understandable and obvious; huge budget is dedicated to advertising from luxury big brands in order to appeal customers (Okonkwo, 2009).

As previously mentioned, family and friends can play a motivational role, therefore, in our study these two variables could be coupled together, as a result make a huge impact in terms of aspirations to consumers; also, it has been interestingly noticed that famous celebrities influence consumers.

Concerning the last section called “other”, among these answers (only 3 respondents) some responses were collected such as “trends, sales promotions”.

Therefore, the analysis among Londoners has provided that approximately 21% were motivated by their own belief (“myself”), by advertising including all means of communications (9%); friends (3.5%) and family (1.2%).

While Parisians proclaimed that 37.2% of them were motivated by themselves, by their friends and advertising (5.8%), family and celebrities (4.7%). (See figure 11)

			which city do you from		Total
			London	Paris	
What motivate you to buy luxury fashion product	friends	Count	3	5	8
		% of Total	3.5%	5.8%	9.3%
	family	Count	1	4	5
		% of Total	1.2%	4.7%	5.8%
	celebrities/stars	Count	3	4	7
		% of Total	3.5%	4.7%	8.1%
	myself	Count	18	32	50
		% of Total	20.9%	37.2%	58.1%
	advertising	Count	8	5	13
		% of Total	9.3%	5.8%	15.1%
	other	Count	3	0	3
		% of Total	3.5%	0.0%	3.5%
	Total	Count	36	50	86
		% of Total	41.9%	58.1%	100.0%

Figure 11: TABLE MOTIVATIONAL ELEMENTS FOR RESPONDENTS#1

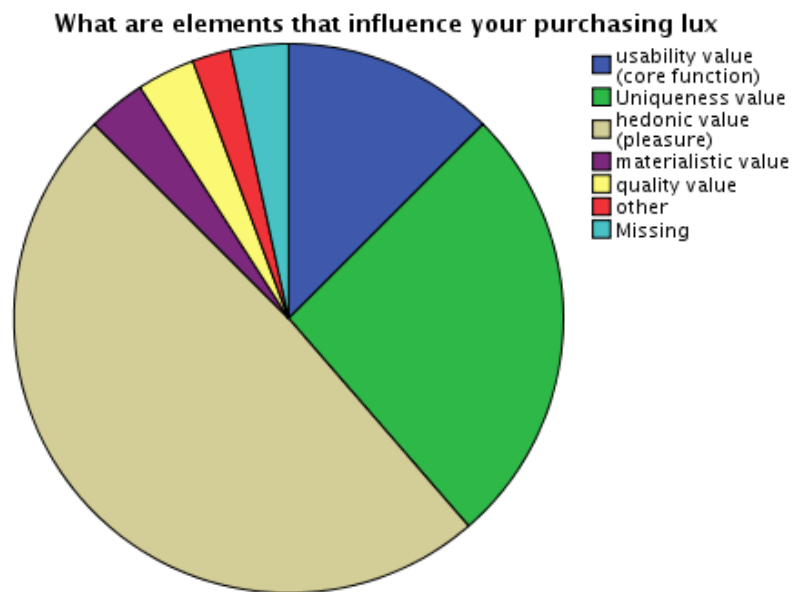


Figure 12: GRAPH MOTIVATIONAL ELEMENTS FOR RESPONDENTS#2

			which city do you from		Total
			London	Paris	
What are elements that influence your purchasing lux	usability value (core function)	Count	3	8	11
		% of Total	3.5%	9.4%	12.9%
	Uniqueness value	Count	9	14	23
		% of Total	10.6%	16.5%	27.1%
	hedonic value (pleasure)	Count	17	26	43
		% of Total	20.0%	30.6%	50.6%
	materialistic value	Count	2	1	3
		% of Total	2.4%	1.2%	3.5%
	quality value	Count	3	0	3
		% of Total	3.5%	0.0%	3.5%
	other	Count	2	0	2
		% of Total	2.4%	0.0%	2.4%
	Total	Count	36	49	85
		% of Total	42.4%	57.6%	100.0%

FIGURE 13: TABLE OF MOTIVATIONAL ELEMENTS FOR RESPONDENTS #2

Similarly , still relating to motivational factors that influences consumer when consuming luxury branded products, this question is implemented in order to

analyse what are the features that our respondents takes in consideration while purchasing luxury fashion items. Therefore, according to [Figure 12](#) and [Figure 13](#) (see above), these figures demonstrates an analysis of the all answers generated from the whole respondents based on tangible or intangibles values of these particular products. The analysis reveals that primarily, the hedonistic value is extremely expressed from our respondents (20% among Londoners and 30% between Parisians). It is also, well acknowledged that generally luxury consumers are seeking for pleasure and comfort when consuming Luxury products (Kapferer & Bastien, 2009; Keller, 2009). This refers to facets that luxury fashion brands communicates to their customers, thus it is widely relevant that the majority of respondents have chosen this answer in the survey.

Secondly, the Uniqueness value is mostly selected from respondents (10.6% among Londoners and 16.5% between Parisians), this fact can be explain by the need for uniqueness from luxury consumers when they want to acquire a luxury product. Indeed, this phenomenon represents one of the main reason why Luxury customers consume those specific branded items (Dubois, Laurent, Czellar, 2001; Kapferer & Bastien, 2009; Keller, 2009). Then, the usability value, which refers to the core function of luxury branded goods (305% among Londoners and 9.4% among Parisians)., as well as the materialistic value, which in terms of choice was mostly selected from Londoners (2.4%) against (1.2%) Parisians.

Surprisingly, none of our respondents among Parisians have chosen the quality value, whereas 3.5% of Londoners have picked this answer. This fact shows the lack of consideration from the French respondents regarding quality value compared to British participants, in fact, a cultural interpretation of this phenomenon could be explicate by the fact that French people are generally attentive to luxury products as a knowledge, many luxury brands are originally from France and this since many years, thus we can explain that French individuals have already experienced these products and so, they are conscious of their quality. (Hall, 1990; Hofstede, 1991; Trompenars, 1993).

The answer called "other" refers to different answers stated by respondents such as "quality of product; availability of size" (2.4% Londoners).

For the following question of the survey, this question is mainly focused on identifying what respondents regard as Luxury. This helps to indicate the perception, vision and thought expressed vis-à-vis Luxury, and how they define this specific concept. Also, this question is implemented because the researcher wanted to investigate and to observe if this difference in terms of culture and nation will carry a diversity regarding perception toward luxury.

As presented on [Figure 14](#) and [Figure 15](#) based on sentences implemented by the researcher. The respondents were expected to choose the most appropriated sentence that they feel fair and reasonable to them, relating luxury. The result shows that remarkably, the option “Best quality item” has been largely picked (44% among Parisians/9.3% for Londoners). As we previously stated, high quality is relatively implicated when Luxury subject is approached (Okonkwo, 2007; Chevalier & Mazzalovo, 2008)

On the other hand, the interesting finding among Londoners was their high attention to the selective and exclusive aspect of these particular products. In fact, the analysis reveals that British people are more concerned on these two values (15.1%) compared to Parisians (5.8%). Thus, this shows the real attachment to selectivity and exclusivity from Londoners. Moreover, still among Londoners respondents, (12.8%) they have admitted that they perceive luxury as “expensive but unnecessary”, while Parisians (8.1%). Also, none of Parisians have picked the sentence that considers luxury as an “extravagant items”, but 4.7% for Londoners.

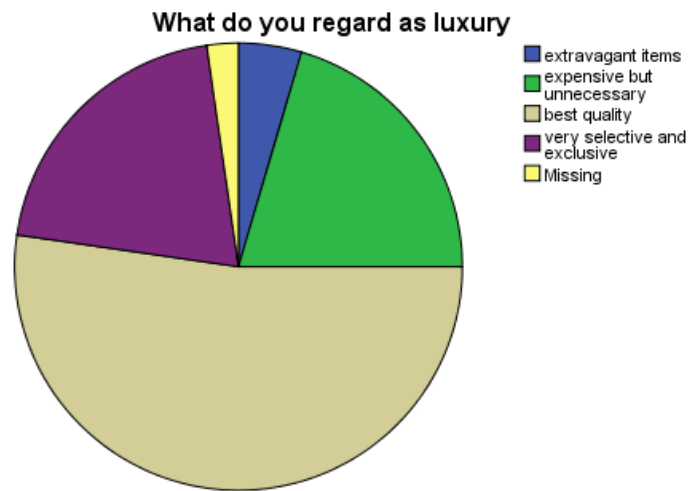


Figure 14: GRAPH LUXURY PERCEPTION OF RESPONDENTS#3

			which city do you from		Total
			London	Paris	
What do you regard as luxury	extravagant items	Count	4	0	4
		% of Total	4.7%	0.0%	4.7%
	expensive but unnecessary	Count	11	7	18
		% of Total	12.8%	8.1%	20.9%
	best quality	Count	8	38	46
		% of Total	9.3%	44.2%	53.5%
	very selective and exclusive	Count	13	5	18
		% of Total	15.1%	5.8%	20.9%
	Total	Count	36	50	86
		% of Total	41.9%	58.1%	100.0%

Figure 15: TABLE OF LUXURY PERCEPTION OF RESPONDENTS

The following question of the survey is focused on determining if consumers are affected by the country of origin while purchasing luxury fashion goods, and if applicable to choose the country they consider as the best for them. This helps

to demonstrate that these features are seen as symbolic values for customers (Keller, 2009; Shukla, 2011)

The question analysis expose that for both cities, the respondents have a strong consideration of the country-of-origin of their luxury branded products, in fact as presented on FIGURE 16, 65% answered “Yes” and 34.9% answered “No”.

Regarding the countries that they perceive as the best producer and designer related to luxury fashion, Londoners have a strong affection for French (25.4%) and Italian (20.9%) designers. Similarly, (see FIGURE 17) among Parisians the concern is relatively identical as Londoners. Parisians respondents have attachment to French designer (28.4%) and Italian producer (13.4%).

This observable fact can be explained by the cultural origin of luxury, that come from France and Italy (Bede, Webb and Farmer, 1996) as well as the large presence of luxury brands for many years within these two countries (Okonkwo, 2009; Keller, 2009 ;Shukla, 2011; Chevalier & Mazzalovo, 2012)

			which city do you from		Total
			London	Paris	
When purchasing luxury items, does the country of origin affect your choice	yes	Count	28	28	56
		% of Total	32.6%	32.6%	65.1%
	no	Count	8	22	30
		% of Total	9.3%	25.6%	34.9%
Total		Count	36	50	86
		% of Total	41.9%	58.1%	100.0%

Figure 16: EFFECTS OF THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN FOR RESPONDENTS#1



			which city do you from		Total
			London	Paris	
If yes, which country	France	Count	17	19	36
		% of Total	25.4%	28.4%	53.7%
	Usa	Count	5	2	7
		% of Total	7.5%	3.0%	10.4%
	UK	Count	0	1	1
		% of Total	0.0%	1.5%	1.5%
	Italy	Count	14	9	23
		% of Total	20.9%	13.4%	34.3%
	Total	Count	36	31	67
		% of Total	53.7%	46.3%	100.0%

Figure 17: EFFECTS OF THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN FOR RESPONDENTS#2

According to Figure 18 which represent several leading luxury fashion brands, the respondents were expected to choose their favourite fashion brand. This question was designed in order to have an approach of which Luxury fashion brands has a global impact concerning consumption, but also to recognizing the luxury fashion brands the most liked by our respondents.

This question has shown that amongst the two cities respondents mainly similar luxury fashion leading brands were picked, this shows the remarkable work in terms of global presence, knowledge, reputation of these brands all over the world. In other words, concepts largely approached (see Literature review) as brand identity, brand equity and brand image are the major theories related to this question.

By order of preference among Londoners the top 5 brands the most favoured were: Louis Vuitton (10.6%), Prada (4.7%), Chanel (4.7%), Gucci (3.5) Christian Dior and Yves Saint Laurent (2.4%).

While for Parisians the top 5 brands most preferred were: Louis Vuitton (18.8%); Chanel (8.2%), Yves Saint Laurent (5.9%), Christian Dior (4.7%) and Gucci (3.5%).

FIGURE 18: FAVOURITE LUXURY FASHION BRANDS OF RESPONDENTS

			which city do you from		Total
			London	Paris	
Your favourite luxury fashion brands	Louis Vuitton	Count	9	16	25
		% of Total	10.6%	18.8%	29.4%
	Chanel	Count	4	7	11
		% of Total	4.7%	8.2%	12.9%
	Gucci	Count	3	3	6
		% of Total	3.5%	3.5%	7.1%
	Prada	Count	4	1	5
		% of Total	4.7%	1.2%	5.9%
	Hermes	Count	1	2	3
		% of Total	1.2%	2.4%	3.5%
	Burberry	Count	2	1	3
		% of Total	2.4%	1.2%	3.5%
	Marc Jacobs	Count	1	1	2
		% of Total	1.2%	1.2%	2.4%
	Bally	Count	0	1	1
		% of Total	0.0%	1.2%	1.2%
	Balmain	Count	2	1	3
		% of Total	2.4%	1.2%	3.5%
	Paul Smith	Count	1	0	1
		% of Total	1.2%	0.0%	1.2%
Mulberry	Count	1	1	2	
	% of Total	1.2%	1.2%	2.4%	
Jimmy Choo	Count	0	2	2	
	% of Total	0.0%	2.4%	2.4%	
Yves Saint Laurent	Count	2	5	7	
	% of Total	2.4%	5.9%	8.2%	
Dolce gabana	Count	0	1	1	
	% of Total	0.0%	1.2%	1.2%	
Cristian Dior	Count	2	4	6	
	% of Total	2.4%	4.7%	7.1%	
Kenzo	Count	0	1	1	
	% of Total	0.0%	1.2%	1.2%	
D Squared	Count	0	1	1	
	% of Total	0.0%	1.2%	1.2%	
others	Count	3	2	5	
	% of Total	3.5%	2.4%	5.9%	
Total	Count	35	50	85	
	% of Total	41.2%	58.8%	100.0%	

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The following chapter of the research review with the research findings which are

obtained through the analysis of the questionnaire survey. Indeed, this survey was implemented by the researcher within the Young Londoners and Parisians consumers in order to investigate their actual perceptions towards luxury fashion brands. The respondents have supplied a collaboration to the researcher and have responded all the questions asked in the survey, this has helped the researcher to gather empirical information.

The aim of research is to investigate the young British and French consumers' perceptions toward luxury fashion brands – A case of consumers in London and Paris. The results of this research are similarly linked to the previous studies and supply a comprehension of the luxury environment.

The results confirms the previous studies that shows the perception of luxury is multilateral which means is diversified (Multi-faceted) , and contains both prominent and status oriented attributes, while the others are more concentrated towards hedonistic and affective dimensions. Moreover, we have raised some strong cross cultural disparities when investigating particular dimensions of luxury.

First of all, the researcher has established the significance of the described luxury aspects approached by Dubois, Laurent and Czellar (2001) "Premium quality, aesthetics and expensiveness". Similarly, the concepts regarding the core values and elements involved in Luxury fashion brands, such as Brand identity, brand image and brand equity are quite well validated based on Kapferer (2009), Okonkwo (2009) and Chevalier and Mazzalovo (2011) researches.

Therefore, one of the main pertinent finding the research raised is the fact that among the two nationalities understudied , a new kind of luxury is emerging from these two cultures, in fact these consumers are described as aware, conscious and familiarly attached to luxury goods. Consequently, some cultural factors related to luxury consumption seemed to have changed and appeared different from the previous studies. Indeed, the research has prove that these consumers, tends to have high concern to dimensions as Self-Pleasure (hedonistic value of the product) rather than Uniqueness dimension known

originally as the one of the predominant traits in luxury (Chevalier and Mazzalovo, 2011).

The importance of aspiration regarding self-satisfaction and hedonistic aspect can be related to previous studies, which reveal that product may be consumed for hedonic relations and reasons (Vickers and Renand, 2003). Moreover, this aspect noticed from both cultural sides (British and French) can be due to the probable effect of the Globalization that Luxury has performed the last decades all over the world, including the phenomenon of global advertising and publicity accentuating the hedonistic aspects of Luxury consumption. Also, this could be explained simply by the fact that, nowadays consumers travel and hence are more able to discover new trends as well as gaining new different knowledge regarding luxury consumption (Vickers and Renand, 2003)

Similarly, consumers are entirely independent and attentive, which means they are not longer primarily incited by advertising as traditionally known, in other words luxury consumers become more aware and tends more, at the first stage, to satisfy themselves as their own belief and mindset, rather than showing their belongings to a class social or to show their success to others through luxury products, this phenomenon is emerging in the current luxury environment. Nevertheless, regarding the perceptions within the research and findings concerning luxury, it has been interestingly observed that from a cultural background , in one hand, Parisians have strong knowledge of luxury and they tends to lacking some attributes, on the other hand that Londoners, perceives these current attributes as crucial. In fact, these attributes refer to the exclusivity and selectivity that were widely significant for Londoners. A cultural explanation of this disparity could be interpreted as following, -country as France where the presence of luxury brands is strongly established for many years, allows French consumer to consecrate hugely their interests in tradition, heritage and nation pride as the principal factors. (Bauer et al. 2011)

5. CONCLUSION

In this following section of the dissertation, a final concise conclusion has been implemented. In fact, the researcher has outlined the complete dissertation and has concluded the study. As previously observed above in the discussion section, a general conclusion can be presented as among two European developed countries as France and United Kingdom, the perceptions and motivations towards luxury fashion products regarding consumption are really dominant and generally similar. Indeed, the research has revealed that from both cultures, luxury fashion products is not unusual for them and they all , at least once, consume or purchase luxury branded goods.

I. FINAL CONCLUSION

Moreover, as discussed above, respondents from the two cultures have deliberated a high interest to the hedonistic aspect of luxury, which means they tend to consume luxury products in order to satisfy themselves for their own self-pleasure. This is the principal cause of purchasing luxury fashion products, which it is quite different compared to the current luxury consumption that marketers, businesses used to observe as general habits. In fact, a change regarding luxury consumption has emerged in on a daily basis within the luxury market. Consumer evolves mentally through the time, hence become more aware and more conscious; its willingness to show its success or to acquire luxury fashion products in order to express their belongings to an upper class is not longer mainly focused on these reasons for purchasing luxury.

Indeed, it has been mainly observed that young Londoners and Parisians consumers believes that these luxury products can transmit to them pleasant energy that makes them comfortable and happy, and this whatever the high price that costs these particular products. Also, a strong awareness and loyalty from these consumer has been noticed towards certain luxury fashion brands as both nationalities have stated their enthusiasm towards similar luxury brands

and to purchase luxury fashion items in the future. This help to show the knowledge that possess these consumers related to Branding concept established by companies, such as the brand image, brand identity , brand equity and brand loyalty. Also, it shows how the branding management is important for luxury big brands within their creation in order to maintain their image as well as being particularly distinctive in the consumer mind-set. A strong relationship interconnected between these concepts has been noticed through the research from the respondents, and it is absolutely supported in previous studies.

As principal goal to answer the research questions coupled with objectives cited at the beginning of the research, it is assured that the researcher has precisely answered all the research questions implemented. In fact, these research questions/objectives were answered through the discussions that are implemented in the literature review and data findings chapters of the dissertation. The first research question refer to what current luxury perception is performed from the British and French mindset, and this has been obtained and the analysis of the literature review within the dissertation reveals how from these two specific developed European countries their active perceptions supported with motivations regarding luxury branded goods. Also, within the data analysis section shows that among the two cultures understudied a large resemblance has been noticed in terms of consumption toward luxury. The second research question refer to what are the specific similarities and differences existing among the two cultures in terms of consumption of luxury has been answered and within the previous paragraph where the section dedicated to discussions is allocated, shows that among the two European capital cities understudied consumers have performed similar interest and desire, as well as disparities regarding some aspects included into luxury fashion products. The similarities were much higher than the differences such as the need for uniqueness, the importance of quality of these particular products; as disparities the difference was that among the French civilization attributes as heritage , prestige and tradition are much more important than exclusivity and selectivity, which these elements are considered as essential among the British nation. The research has revealed that, at some point , among

these two cultures a large majority of elements are predominant and similarly considered for them, therefore some minor disparities can be considered as crucial for one group while lesser for others. The research shows that among different cultures and nationalities the perceptions and motivations regarding consumption may differ and offering in the meantime some correspondences. This shows how luxury companies have to focus on their customers' provenance at a global state. Indeed, nowadays with the emergence of conveniences facilitating the purchasing process, such as Internet; companies have a big challenge to satisfy independently each consumer needs depending on their origin and cultures. This is the reason why that nowadays companies are more interested on identifying the origin of their target customers at the first stage in order to offer effective products that correlates with their expectations.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

In this following section a brief paragraph describing managerial implications, future research, and limitations has been implemented.

I. Managerial implications

With the consideration of the results of the empirical study, the several possibilities of implications are numerous and would be helpful for marketers and thus the marketing management of luxury fashion brands. Firstly, marketers and managers should believe that among countries the differences of

perception toward luxury is definitely real and clear. Hence, it is obvious that they should carefully examine some important concepts perceived by customers in order to avoid any misconception or risk, this will allow luxury brand companies to offer a personalized and satisfying solution to their customers as well as to enhance their satisfaction based on their cultural origin. The effect of democratization is still evolving and can still have some changes through the years.

II. Future research

This includes the probability of a qualitative research regarding perceptions attended to actual consumers; as well as the possibility of analysing the sources of brand perception of luxury fashion items; also, make a comparative analysis between developed countries and emerging markets focusing on perception of luxury products

III. Limitations

As a principal limitation, since one of the research questions was described as how the luxury perception may differ among European countries towards fashion goods, it would be interesting to investigating different countries of the European Union or in other continents. Indeed, countries as Italy and USA that have been cited by our respondents (see Findings and results chapter), represents nations where the presence of luxury fashion brands is relatively strongly acknowledged.

Also, the number of respondents from the two nationalities was unequal and not as expected at the beginning of the research, this due to the lack of participation from Londoners, thus an extensive participations from their parts would have been more representative and rational for the study, hence it would have brought additional insight regarding Londoners perceptions.

Moreover, rather than spreading the survey online, or through the university facilities, it would have been judicious to address survey to respondents where the sales are allocated which means at the point of sale such as outlet, shopping malls. This would have given the opportunity to approach the précised target consumers.

Another limitations would be the fact on focusing on a particular side of the luxury market which is the fashion sector and more precisely the ready to wear segment. It would have been more interesting to extend this scope to another part of the luxury market such as -Accessories (watches, jewellery, and belt) or handbags.

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8. APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Questionnaire form (Online Survey)

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Do you buy luxury fashion branded products, such as Versace, Armani, Gucci, Chanel, Prada, Calvin Klein, Dolce Gabbana, Fendi, Hugo Boss, Christian Dior, Ralph Lauren, Valentino, Hermes, Moschino, Giorgio Armani, Donna Karan, DKNY, Tommy Hilfiger, Louis Vuitton, Escada, Givenchy, Tiffany, Elizabeth Arden, Carolina Herrera, Cartier, Salvatore Ferragamo, Diesel, Adidas, Miu Miu, Benetton, Guess, Coach, Kenzo, etc ? *

This Question will show if wether or not you have previously purchased a luxury item

- Yes
- No

Will you attend to purchase the same luxury brand that you have previously purchased? *

How often do you purchase luxury brands fashion ? *

Consumer Purchase (Frequency)

- Weekly
- Monthly
- Every 6 months
- Once a year
- Never

Which city do you live ? *

Demographics

- Paris
- London

What is gender ? *

Demographics

- Female
- Male

What is your age group ? *

Demographics

- 18-24
- 25-30
- Other:

What is your civil status ?

Demographics

- Single
- In relationship
- Married
- Other:

Which one of the following is the most appropriate to describe your social roles (please choose only one option) *

Social Status

U 1316453

- Student
- Employee
- Unemployed
- Self-employed
- Manager
- Other:

What is your average annual salary? *

Demographic

- £10,000 – £15,000
- £15,000 – £30,000
- Above £30,000
- Other:

Which one of these following variables is the most attractive when purchasing a luxury item? *

Brand & Luxury Dimensions

- Design
- Quality
- Exclusivity
- Price
- Brand
- Other:

What motivate you to buy luxury fashion products ? *

Brand & Luxury Dimensions

- Friends
- Family
- Celebrities/Stars
- Myself
- Advertising
- Other:

What are the elements that influences or motivates your to purchase luxury items? *

Brand & Luxury Dimensions

- Usability Value (Core function)
- Uniqueness Value
- Hedonic Value (Pleasure)
- Conspicuousness Value
- Materialistic Value
- Quality Value
- Price Value
- Other:

What do you regard as Luxury ? *

Consumer Purchase

- Extravagant items

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- Expensive but unnecessary items
- Best quality items
- Very selective and exclusive items
- Other:

When you purchasing a luxury product, does the Country of Origin affect you choice? *

Consumer purchase

- Yes
- No

If Yes, Please tick which of the following countries is the best at producing luxury products for you? *

Consumer purchase

- USA
- Italy
- United Kingdom
- France

What is your favourite luxury fashion brand? *

Brand & Luxury dimensions

- Louis Vuitton
- Chanel
- Gucci
- Prada

- Hermes
- Burberry
- Marc Jacobs
- Balenciaga
- Paul Smith
- Mulberry
- Yves Saint Laurent
- Versace
- Dolce Gabanna
- Christian Dior
- Kenzo
- Other:

What influent you to buy luxury fashion products ? *

Consumer purchase

- United States of America
- Italy
- United Kingdom
- France

If Yes, Please tick which of the following countries is the best at producing luxury products for you? *

Consumer purchase

- USA
- Italy
- United Kingdom
- France

Appendix 2: Questionnaire form (distributed physically for the British respondents).

I am **Djamel Amkssa**, a current student at **UEL University of East London based in London, U.K.** As a final part of **my Master degree in International Marketing Management**, I am conducting a research **to explore the young French and British consumers' perceptions resulting to a purchasing process towards luxury fashion brands.**

I would be pleased if you would agree to be a part in my research.

This would involve **sharing your opinions on statements** in a questionnaire. Your participation is entirely **voluntary and confidential.**

This Questionnaire promises to take **only 5 minutes of your time**, all responses will be used as **main data** for academic research.

The following page provides a complete research information paper, explaining the details of the survey. After this paper, you will be asked to complete the questionnaire.

If you have any queries regarding the survey, Please do not hesitate to contact me u1316453@uel.ac.uk. **Thank you very much for your participation. ;-D**

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is your gender?

MALE FEMALE

2. Do you buy luxury fashion brand such as Versace, Armani, Gucci, Prada, Calvin Klein, Dolce Gabanna, Fendi, Hugo Boss, Christian Dior, Ralph Lauren, Hermes, Moschino, DKNY, Louis Vuitton, Givenchy, Diesel, Cartier, Kenzo etc...

YES NO

3. How often do you purchase luxury brands?

WEEKLY MONTHLY EVERY 6 MONTH ONCE A YEAR

4. What is your age group

18–24 years 25–30 years above 30 years under 40

5. What is your civil status?

SINGLE IN RELATIONSHIP MARRIED OTHER.....

6. Which one of the following is the most appropriate to define your social roles?

STUDENT EMPLOYEE UNEMPLOYED MANAGER

7. What is your average salary per annum?

£10000–£15000 £15000–£30000 above £30000

8. . Which one of these following variables is the most attractive when purchasing a luxury item?

DESIGN QUALITY EXCLUSIVITY PRICE BRAND Other.....

9. What motivate you to buy luxury fashion products?

Friends Family Celebrities/Stars Myself Advertising Other

10. What are the elements that influences or motivates you to purchase luxury items?

Usability Value (core function) Uniqueness Value Hedonic Value (pleasure)
Conspicuousness Value Materialistic value

11. What do you regard as Luxury?

Extravagant items Expensive but unnecessary items Best quality items
Very selective and exclusive items

12. When you purchase a luxury product , does the country of origin affect you choice

YES NO

13. If yes , please choose one of the following countries that you think is the best at producing luxury items

USA ITALY UK FRANCE

14. What is your favourite luxury fashion brands?

Louis Vuitton Chanel Gucci Prada Hermes Burberry Mar Jacobs Balenciaga
Paul Smith Mulberry Yves Saint Laurent Versace Dolce Gabanna Christian Dior
Kenzo Others.....