

MOTIVATION FOR PURCHASING LUXURY BAGS



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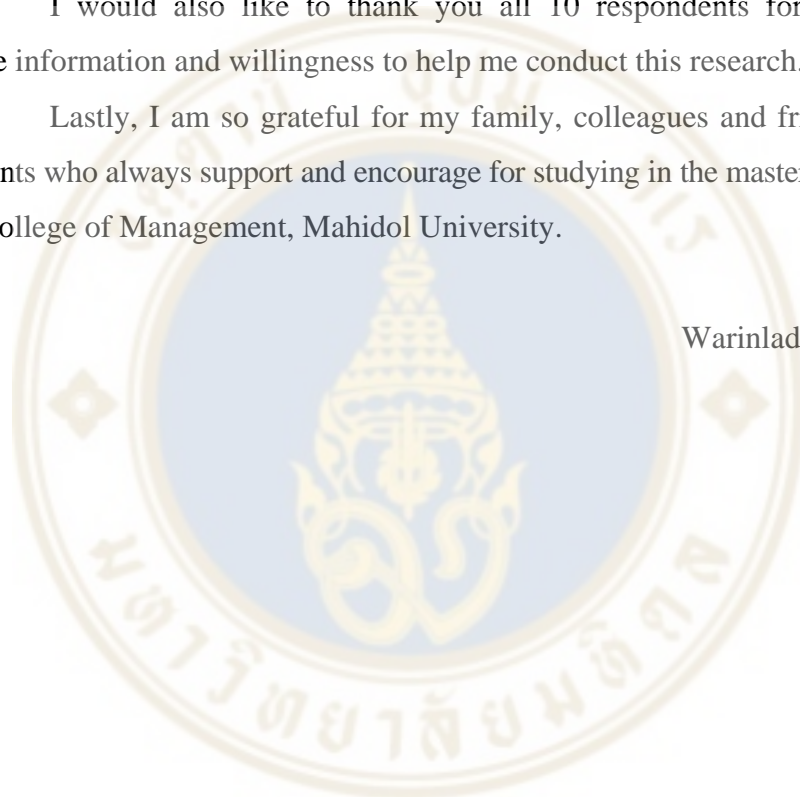
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MOTIVATION FOR PURCHASING LUXURY BAGS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to understand consumer behavior regarding to purchasing luxury bag. Hypotheses were tested by in-depth interview and collect data from ten respondents who are early majority characteristics.

The finding of this research showed that the perception and motivation are relevant to consumers' purchasing luxury bag.

KEY WORDS: Luxury/ Bags/ Luxury good/ Luxury bag

21 pages

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Currently, there are many problems related to economical issues in Thailand that affect to the most of industries. Especially, high-price product and service industries. Since the consumers have a large number of choices when choosing a product, they use many different factors for buying decision including economical concerned, social value, personal need and situation.

In the case of economical concerned, there are various price ranges of a product category for difference financial capabilities target consumers. Some people prefer buying affordable price product. In contrast, there are people who do not concern about the price tag and willing to spend more budget on luxury goods for some reasons. The luxury goods market is growing dramatically. Referred to product classification, luxury goods are specialty product. They usually not purchase for the same reasons as economical concerned (Rhee, 2012).

The majority reason that luxury goods are bought because they provide more psychological value for target people who concerned about social status (Wiedmann, Hennigs, and Siebels, 2007). Other factors that influence people to prefer buying luxury goods such as confidence in experience, cultural social acceptance, brand loyalty, personal image, brand fanaticism, function, unique design and services. Referred to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, some factor is related to self-esteem which is people's sense that they are valued while some factors support social needs (love and belonging). People consider goods with different mindsets.

Normally, luxury goods researched mainly focused on individuals' intrinsic motives. For instance, hedonistic and perfectionistic motives. It has been found that people construct their uniqueness by purchasing luxury goods (Harmon, 2007). On the other hand, this paper will focus on consumer behavior regarding to how Thai people make purchasing decision for luxury bags. This research would like to provide the answer of how these high-priced bag and products represent in these consumers' life. The

paper will study the emotional connection between luxury bag and consumers based on various different motivations.

1.1 Research Questions

1. What are consumer's perception regards to luxury bag?
2. What are the main reasons to purchase luxury bag?
3. What could luxury bag serve consumer's satisfaction?

1.2 Research Objective

1. To understand consumers' perception regarding to luxury bag.
2. To explore the reasons of consumers to buy luxury bag.

1.3 Research Scope

In this research, it will be mainly focused on exploring the perception of consumer regarding to luxury bag and their reasons to buy. Qualitative methodology will be used for the data collection. It intends to interview 10 respondents who are classified as early majority. The in-depth interview is to be used for learning and understanding current perception of people to making a purchase luxury bag.

1.4 Expected Benefit

The final report will contain recommendations that can be used for developing marketing plan of luxury bag. The result will be knowledgeable and practical for the luxury brand that are aim to implement the most effective marketing strategy and plan to serve the customer satisfaction and persuade them to make a purchase. It can be guideline for the brand to understand target consumer's perception, behavior and their pain point that could be improve marketing communication plan.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews the literature about the research problems to provide a theoretical fundamental which research hypotheses could be presented. Firstly, Section 2.1 begins with a review for definition of luxury. Secondly, following by Section 2.2 with regards to the literature on motivation of luxury. Thirdly, in Section 2.3 will be present consumer behavior and consumption for luxury goods purchasing regarding to income.

2.1 Definition of Luxury

First of all, this section mainly separate definitions of luxury into three types including experts' definitions, academic definitions and economical definition.

2.1.1 Definition of luxury from expert

The authors mostly agreed that the term luxury does not exactly refer to a specific category of goods. In contrast, it instead by showing a conceptual and symbolical dimension that strongly recognized social values of the society at a particular period.

In contrast, it instead by showing a conceptual and symbolic dimension, which is strongly identified with the cultural values of society at a particular historical period. There is an ambiguity of the term luxury, it became obvious when finding the definition from the experts in luxury industry. Luxury is a fulfillment which provides more pleasurable lifestyle by adding more comfortable function (Danziger, 2005). Life is easier with luxury (Ford, 1998) Consumers designed luxury by exclusivity and customization (Armani, 2000). Moreover, luxury is providing a safe and enjoyable public oasis (Norman, 1989). Another important definition of luxury is the nonexistence of vulgarity (Chanel, 1937) while some expertise's had definition of luxury as keeping and promising to provide the excellence brand experience for consumers (Silverstein and Fiske, 2003).

2.1.2 Definition of luxury from academic

For academic definitions, there are some relevant term related to luxury including prestige and status although they actually distinction of meaning for customers (Dubois and Czellar, 2002). Sometimes, luxury investigates as a feature of brand and could be described it as dream value (Dubois and Paternault, 1995).

2.1.3 Definition of luxury regarding to economical issue

As per economical issues, a luxury good is a good for which increases demand higher than proportionally as income rises. Despite, mass products have demand increases less than proportionally as income growths (Phau and Predergast, 2000).

2.1.4 Concept of luxury and the luxury product or service

Luxury provides more relaxation time in the days (Dubois and Czellar, 2002). Additionally, when people think about goods, unique features of luxury brands may come into their mind. For example, Cartier watches, Hermes bag and Chanel clothing that shared some characteristic features consist of high price, super premium quality, unique design, exclusivity, reputation, inaccessibility, heritage, desirability and very clear reflection of identity (Dubois and Duquesne, 1993). Furthermore, there is roots in history of luxury concept

Among the great civilizations of society, luxury goods were always associated with power, exclusivity and wealth. Referred to Oxford Latin Dictionary, the term luxury is the latin *luxus*, which mean prodigal living, magnificent and richness (Dubois, 2005). There is obvious differentiation when compare characteristics of luxury goods with characteristics of mass consumption goods. Luxury goods focused on niche market segments and have special distribution while mass products are targeted in mass market. For mass products, consumers normally give priority to reasonable price and functionality during purchasing consideration. In contrast, they are influenced mainly by famous branding when making decisions for luxury products. Mass market consumers focused on point of sales while after-sale service is extremely important for luxury goods consumers. Innovation and technology are key factors that drive mass brands to be success while luxury brands focused on craftsmanship and heritage. (Djelic and Ainamo, 1999).

2.2 Motivation of Luxury

2.2.1 Motivation of luxury regarding to quality

All luxury products consistently delivering premium quality along the whole supply chain including both conformity to product specifications and superior material quality (Kapferer, 2001). Moreover, the best technical performance affects to consumers' emotion and allow them to differentiate luxury products from mass products. For these type of products feature, high performance innovation help to maintain product positioning. (Catry, 2003)

2.2.2 Motivation of luxury regarding to reputation and loyalty

Luxury brands communicate with target consumers by world-class branding with high reputation. (Nueno and Quelch, 1998). An association of origin country mostly is a strong factor that help to increase reputation as an excellence source for a product category. For instance, Champagne from France (Nueno and Quelch, 1998).

2.2.3 Motivation of luxury regarding to uniqueness

Luxury represents craftsmanship and heritage, which guarantee the essential expertise for manufacturing with high quality and the best performance (Catry, 2003). Another important factor is exclusivity of the products that came from limited editions, naturally source of materials, selective distribution, special production runs and creation of waiting lists (Kapferer, 2001). The special emotional factors of consumers occurred when they can recognize style and design without label visibility (Catry, 2003).

People proud with lifestyle that allows them to present a special and unique lifestyle, which can be happen in their daily life by possessing a products from luxury brand (Nueno and Quelch, 1998). However, exclusivity seems to be the majority aspect which is normal for the most luxury goods (Catry, 2003).

2.2.4 Motivation of luxury regarding to service

A luxury brand approach that combining emotional appeal with product excellence is important for creation of impression. For example, interesting product display help to enhance shopping experience and the point of sale with luxury atmosphere

affects the brand value (Moore, 2004). Moreover, there are some reasons related to luxury experience including social positioning, ostentation and status symbol accumulation (Fionda and Moore, 2009).

2.2.5 Motivation of luxury regarding to culture and social acceptance

According to cultural issue, age is an important factor. It has been found that people who born in the same period of time and also facing similar situations during their late adolescence and early adulthood years are considered to form a group (Meredith and Schewe, 1994). Furthermore, the late teen and early twenties interested in luxury since it has psychological effect to them. (Holbrook and Schindler, 1989). There is differentiation among people in different generation.

It has been found that perception of one generation will be able to affect to next generation (Berry, 1994). A luxury consumer would like to purchase luxury goods and show other people how much they paid for it. At the same time, some people are encouraged to purchase luxury goods by sensibility of certain values and aesthetic pleasures. They carefully selected a luxury good by individual taste (Tsai, 2005).

2.3 Consumer Behavior and Consumption of Luxury Good Purchasing Regarding to Income

The term luxury cannot be understood without understanding of target consumers' characteristic. A main factor that affects these consumers is income. Their income affect to decision making significantly (Dubois and Duquesne, 1993). Since expensiveness is considered as a majority perception of luxury products and brand. Thus, consumers can afford to buy luxury goods only when they has more money.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The objective of this research is to understand consumers' perception of luxury bag and explore what reason and factor could make them purchase luxury bags. The study will need to be involved in the details of understanding inform of exploratory research. Therefore, the qualitative interview approach will be used in this research. To answer the research question, in-depth interview techniques were used as the data collection approaches since this paper has focused on consumer behavior and their perspective for purchasing luxury bag. Moreover, in-depth interview provide opportunity to learn consumer deeply and know the exact insights and pain points from real customers. It will help to improve performance among luxury bag industry by knowing consumer need and answer their pain point exactly with the right products.

3.2 Data Collection Methodology

3.2.1 Population

For data collection, the target group to answer the questions are people who normally purchased and used luxury bags focused on female. In this research design, the researcher will select respondents who live in Bangkok. The target group is 25-35 years old. These people can provide exact information because they are the real buyers and users so they got an idea and real experiences related to purchasing and using luxury bags. The answers from the target group will serve the research objectives to study about the factors of purchasing luxury bag and apply these consumer behavior and perspectives to develop the luxury bags together with promote them in the most effective strategies.

3.2.2 Sampling

In this research, the researcher select to conduct 10 sample sizes with depth-interview. To related with motivation of purchasing luxury bag, the researcher aims to interview 10 respondents of early majority who pay a big role in luxury market because this target group is top spender who tend to have the most purchasing power.

Thus, exploring in this target group will let us know more about their perspective and motivation toward purchasing luxury bag. To explore what could convince this target group to purchase luxury bag with higher price, the researcher will perform preliminary judgment for each individual to be interviewed to ensure that the participants are capable to response the questions with well understanding and represent the characteristic of early majority.

3.2.3 Data Collection

Data collection will be gathered during the interview conducted to explore on consumer's feeling, motivation, perception and behaviour towards purchasing luxury bag. The data collection will include the opinion and motivation to buy and hopefully could get useful recommendation from consumers' insight.

The opening questions will begin with regards to respondents' attitude toward luxury bag. After that, the researcher will get deeper information by question to find out the exact motivation to purchase luxury bag. More detailed questions will be asked in order to get in-depth understanding how the make decision to buy luxury bag and which factor is the most important to buy.

3.3 Research Instrument

The interview sessions will be conducted and then transcribed for analysis and part of them will be used for the presentation.

The following questions will be used to gather information from the participants.

The questions are structured into four part as the following:

Part 1: Personal information

- Age
- Education

- Occupation

Part 2: General information about luxury bag

- What do you think about luxury bag?
- Do you normally use luxury bag?

Part 3: General information about purchasing luxury bag

- Do you usually buy luxury bag?
- How often do you purchase luxury bag?

Part 4: Motivation to purchase luxury bag

- Why do you prefer luxury bag?
- What is the most important factor for you to purchase luxury bag?



CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDING

4.1 Findings

After interviewing 10 respondents who are the majority purchasers and users of luxury bag. These 10 respondents were selected based on the characteristics of majority purchasers who are the main target group in luxury industry today. The researcher would like to explore about this group's perceptions toward luxury bag and find out what motivation could convince them to make a purchase. All of them live in Bangkok and show the characteristics of early majority as pragmatic purchasers and users of luxury bag.

Table 4.1 Participants Information

Sex	Occupation	Age
Female	Office worker	31
Female	Business Owners	27
Female	Housewife	33
Female	Office worker	26
Female	Office worker	25
Female	Office worker	30
Female	Student	25
Female	Office worker	30
Female	Student	25
Female	Office worker	25

To start the interview, the researcher started the question with the personal information and then following by the question "What do you think about luxury bag?" to explore the respondents' perspective with luxury bag. Most of them mentioned to high

price but valuable. They normally use luxury bags as usual and make a purchase minimum twice a year.

4.2 Perception of Luxury Bag

According to perception of luxury bag from all respondents, the researcher found 7 out of 10 respondents thought that the luxury bag came with high price but also provide high value. Two respondents normally use luxury bags since their family have been using luxury goods as usual. There are mainly three perceptions from the respondents which are price, quality and design.

4.2.1 Price

After interviewing, the researcher found that 6 out of 10 respondents mentioned about the price of luxury bag as the first priority. The first perception that came into their mind when talked about luxury bag was expensive price. Some respondents defined the term luxury as high price or expensive goods while some respondents thought these high price luxury bags were valuable goods and worthwhile for investment. Some of them thought they rarely buy luxury bag, they normally buy it twice a year since it cost high budget. However, they still want to buy luxury bags because every time that they purchases, they feel it worthwhile. In contrast, some respondents said that the price was not high as long as they can use these luxury bags for several years.

4.2.2 Quality

Quality was also mentioned by the most of respondents, 9 out of 10 respondents talked about the quality of luxury bag. They had high expectation from luxury bag which need to come with super premium quality, especially materials that provided long useful life of the bag. Some respondents mentioned about neatness of the bag. They expected something very neat and detail oriented that made them feel worthwhile with the money that they invested. The most of respondents prioritized quality of luxury bags as a main perception. Some of them said that they think about the premium quality when discussed about luxury bag. For example, a respondent, aged 31, she said that her Louis Vuitton

bag has been with her for ten years. It has very high quality that provide practical usage than general bag.

Moreover, she said that this high quality bag can keep the memorable time with her since she got this bag as a birthday gift from her family. Thankful with this high quality bag that has been reminding her with a good memory.

4.2.3 Design

A part of pricing and quality, beautiful and unique design has been mentioned. The researcher found that 9 out of 10 respondents concerned about the design when they looking for luxury bags. According to the design of luxury bag, 2 out of 9 respondents said that the uniqueness of the design is very important for luxury bag because they wanted fancy design when they pay have to spend higher budget. The unique design will add value for those luxury goods and create different status of the products. Contrastingly, 7 out of 9 respondents preferred minimal design which they can use more often and longer without boredom. They thought that if they need to spend very high budget with luxury bag, they would like to use them as long as possible to be worthwhile with the investment. Some of them said they believed in some specific designer brands as loyalty. They feel confident to purchased these luxury bags from trustable and famous brand. For instance, a female respondent, aged 27, she said that she really trusted in luxury bags from Chanel because she thought the brand always present a cool design and never get old fashion. She trusted that her Chanel bags will always stay cool and fabulous in the next ten years. Another respondent, aged 25, she trusted that the brand Dior is great in represents feminine identity via the bag. She said she loved its design and it always increase her confidential when she carries it. The most of respondents have their own favorite brand and design which are the most important factor that keep valuable emotion between brand and design with the consumers.

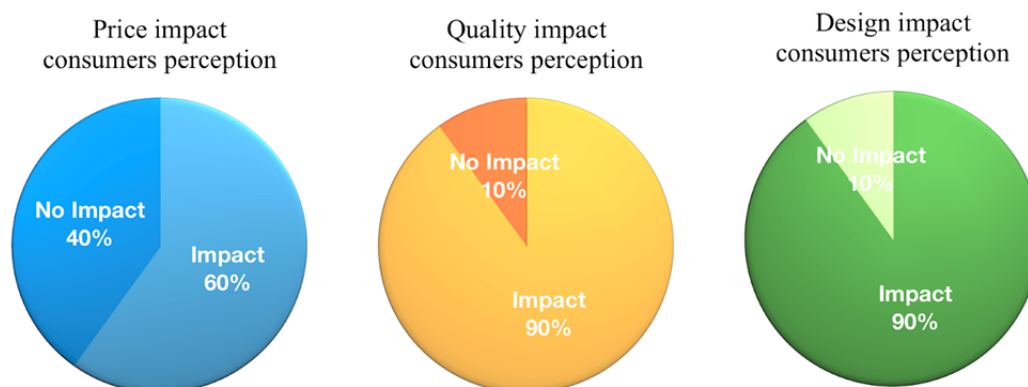


Figure 4.1 The pie chart shows relationship between three variables including price, quality and design impact to consumer's perception for luxury bags

The researcher found that high impact variables are quality and design. For consumers, they accepted that luxury bags came with over price and they need to be concerned about pricing when purchase. However, all of them are willing to pay if the quality and design meet their expectation. For sellers, the important factors to focus are quality and design. Thus, the brand should focus on these two factors to create positive perception among consumers.

4.3 Motivation of Luxury Bag

According to purchasing luxury bags, there are various motivations that persuade people to purchase. The interviewer asked all 10 respondents with the same question "Why do you prefer luxury bag?" and then dug down into their most important factor to purchase with the question "What is the most important factor for you to purchase luxury bag?" to find exact motivation to purchase luxury bag from their insight. There are mainly five motivations that the researcher can capture from the interview including motivational quality, motivational reputation and loyalty, motivational uniqueness, motivational service and motivational culture and social acceptance.

4.3.1 Motivational quality

After interviewing, the most respondents mentioned about quality. They said what they expected from luxury bag is super premium quality bag as a main priority.

Although luxury bag cost higher budget but they believed that it came with higher quality as well. They were ready to pay more if it could be used longer than a cheaper one. Many of them said that they like to carefully review the whole bags to make sure that it was neatly produce with great materials which will be worthwhile to invest. Many of them mentioned about their pain point when they spend money with low quality bags and they were fail quickly that disappoint them. Thus, they tend to invest with luxury bag and hopefully it provides longer useful life. From their user experience, they said the most of their luxury bags came with great materials that worthwhile to invest. The quality of luxury bags create impression. Thus, all of them still want to continue purchasing luxury bag.

4.3.2 Motivational reputation and loyalty

The interviewee found that 2 out of 10 respondents said that the starting point of using luxury bag has begun by their family background that normally use luxury bag. Thus, they thought that using luxury bags were their familiarity and finally became the loyalty. These two respondents said that they can share their luxury bags with their family members and feel that these bags were worthwhile. Both of them have loyalty luxury brand in their family. They said luxury bags can be heritage from generation to generation. For instance, a respondent, aged 25, she said that her mother like to use Louis Vuitton and she also adored with those bags like a family loyalty brand. In contrast, some respondents use luxury bag since they have known the brand's reputation and thought that was positive socialism from their society. They thought that luxury bag was necessary for a good looking. They tend to purchase a luxury bag from their reputation because they thought it was trendy and also sell as a used bag easily. For example, a respondent, aged 33, she said that she usually purchases a luxury bag and used it with good condition. After 2 years, she will sell some luxury bag as used bag and she normally got very good price because luxury bag has increasing its price every year. Sometimes she can sell her used luxury bags in the price that she has bought it even she has used it for 2 years already. Thus, she normally purchases a luxury bag from their reputation since it is the main factor that help her sell it as used bag easily with good price.

4.3.3 Motivational uniqueness

From the interviews, the design has become very important factor that people concerned since 9 out of 10 respondents mentioned about it. There are 2 respondents who concern about the uniqueness design, they willing to pay higher price to be unique and outstanding. They also said that spending higher budget will be valuable if they got something different and will be proud to use it. Sometimes they thought that they did not buy a bag, but they buy a design. The researcher found that many of respondents thought unique design that represent the strong luxury brand identity is very valuable. For instance, a respondent, aged 27, she said that she her favorite luxury bags were from Chanel.

The brand was great in represent the unique design with very strong identity. People could know the brand from its design without seeing the brand logo. This is all strong identity of the design which is the valuable criteria and it was charming of luxury bags. Another respondent, aged 31, she explained her opinion that she loved to purchase luxury bags with limited edition design. She thought this unique and limited design are very valuable.

She was so proud with them. Moreover, in the case of selling used bag, limited edition designs have very high price to sell even she normally does not sell her bags.

4.3.4 Motivational service

For service factor, the researcher found only one respondents out of 10 that mentioned about service. She said that she trust in the luxury brand and always receive great experience when purchasing luxury bags. She also feel comfortable to know that there was repairing service for her luxury bags because she seem her luxury bag as valuable goods and want good service to treat them and expand their usage life.

4.3.5 Motivational culture and social acceptance

The last motivational factor is culture and social acceptance. The most of respondents mentioned about this factor as a main priority, they said cultural socialism has lots of effects. It was the fact that people like to be in trend and fashionable. Especially, young female like themselves. Their society such as family, friends and the famous celebrities took a huge area to influence them to purchase luxury bags. For example, a

respondent, aged 30, she said that she like to follow her favorite celebrities that she trusts in their fashionable sense and often purchase a luxury bag as same as they used.



CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the interviewing, the respondents are real purchasers and users of luxury bag. From the finding, this target group has similar perceptions with luxury bag including price, quality and design. Moreover, there are the same kind of motivations to purchase luxury bag which are motivational quality, motivational reputation and loyalty, motivational uniqueness, motivational service and motivational culture and social acceptance.

Furthermore, the researcher found that each perception and motivation has different level of priority.

5.1 Recommendations

From the finding, there are several helpful information that can help the luxury industry to understand target consumers' perception, pain point and motivation regarding to luxury bag. There are two main topic from the interviewing consist of target consumers' perception and their motivation to purchase luxury bag. Additionally, there are some consumer pain points that the researcher has got from the interviewing which will be useful for luxury brand to deeply understand consumer insight and serve them with the right pleasure point to convince them purchase luxury bag.

5.1.1 Target consumers' perception with luxury bag

The most of respondents expected that luxury bags will provide the best premium quality that better than lower price bags. They set the quality factor as priority to choose luxury bag. Thus, luxury bag brand should present the high quality materials and neat production to add values into every single piece of bag. For seller, need to keep in mind that the consumer should be able to feel that every luxury bag is a masterpiece product from their brand that very worthwhile to invest. Although the first perception

that come into people's mind when talked about luxury bag is expensive and high price but the most of respondents are still willing to pay more if they believe that it is the right investment. The objective of the brand is to present their luxury bags as the right investment for target customers.

5.1.2 Target consumers' motivation to purchase luxury bag

According to the interviewing, there are five points of motivation that the respondents are concerned as the following:

- **Motivational quality:** The most important motivation that most respondents concerned is quality of luxury bag. Since it is high price product, all consumers would like to make sure that it present appropriated quality. High price with high quality are make sense for them. Thus, the luxury brand need to invest with the quality of their bag to satisfy the consumers and keep them to purchase.
- **Motivational reputation and loyalty:** Reputation and loyalty are also important in the case of repurchasing, the strong brand loyalty will help to convince the target group to repurchase the same brand. Moreover, the reputation of the brand will gather consumer attention and increase the opportunity to purchase. Thus, the brand need to invest with promoting the brand to be famous and memorable as well.
- **Motivational uniqueness:** Regarding to luxury product, most of respondents thought that unique design is the main factor to create outstanding point to the brand. They are really care about brand identity and design during their purchase consideration process. The brand should tend to create unique design and build strong brand and design identity to satisfy the target customer.
- **Motivational service:** A part of direct factor, service is also important for some consumer. From the interviewing, a respondent care about service quality and after sale service including repairing their bags and expansion the usage life.
- **Motivational culture and social acceptance:** Another important motivation are culture and social acceptance, the most of respondents tend to care about social acceptance, they would like to be trendy and fashionable as socialism. The society and celebrity endorsement still very important for convincing people to purchase luxury bag. Furthermore, word of mouth could be effective strategy to build strong relationship between

brand and consumers. The brand should create the familiarity with target consumers and make them feel that purchasing a luxury bag is the cultural behavior to do.

5.2 Limitations and Further Researches

This paper has purpose to understand perception of target consumers towards luxury bags and explore motivation to purchase luxury bag. The researcher choose to collect qualitative data with 10 respondents and found that the main perceptions toward luxury bag are price, quality and design. Importantly, there are five motivational factors to persuade target consumers to purchase luxury bag which are motivational quality, motivational reputation and loyalty, motivational uniqueness, motivational service and motivational culture and social acceptance.



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