

Expressing herself through brands: the Arab woman's perspective

Baker Ahmad Alserhan

College of Business, Qatar University, Doha, Qatar

Daphne Halkias

*Institute of Coaching, Harvard Medical School,
USA and Center for Young and Family Enterprise,
University of Bergamo, Bergamo, Italy*

Aisha Wood Boulanouar

Department of Marketing, Umm Al Qura University, Mecca, Saudi Arabia

Mumin Dayan

*College of Business and Economics, United Arab Emirates University,
Al Ain, United Arab Emirates, and*

Omar Ahmad Alserhan

Cardiff Metropolitan University, Cardiff, UK

Abstract

Purpose – This paper aims to extend Wallström *et al.*'s (2010) six-nation study on brand use and notions of self-expression to Arab women in the UAE. Additionally, it extends the scope of investigation to include an extensive qualitative data corpus to inform and explain the consumption practices of this large, very wealthy and under-researched sector of the global marketplace.

Design/methodology/approach – The paper uses mixed methodology emphasizing qualitative research as a means of building on the results of Wallström *et al.*'s (2010) quantitative study.

Findings – Results reveal that Arab women are less committed to the idea that beauty care products are a *locus* of self-expression, and their purchase choices are based on perceived quality of care products, scene of use and their lack of value in the culture as vehicles of conspicuous consumption cues.

Originality/value – The paper offers valuable insights to researchers and practitioners into the use of beauty care products as a means of self-expression, and emphasizes the value of word-of-mouth communication in enhancing reach in this category. The authors recommend the investigation of relationships between expressing self through brands and variables revealed in this study such as respondents' relationships to religiosity and health concerns. An extension of this research is also recommended to produce a cross-cultural body of literature on women's self-expression through brands and how the variable of self-expression can be an important driver of consumer preferences and choices in this population.

Keywords Luxury brands, Arab women, Beauty care, Female consumers, Self expression

Paper type Research paper



Introduction

The increasingly cross-cultural nature of the world economy presents both opportunities and demands. It also requires a fresh approach to research in the area of consumer behavior, as marketers will require a better understanding of cultural influences in international markets and the related potential for growth (Vrontis and Thrassou, 2007). Globalization and international competition require firms to adapt to multicultural marketplaces and environments where consumers have different behaviors and wants (Luna and Gupta, 2001). Arab women living in countries of the Gulf Corporation Council (GCC) represent a population with a strongly embedded cultural foundation and for which family traditions and religious values reign supreme (Alserhan and Alserhan, 2012). This consumer group, well-documented for its appreciation of luxury branded goods, also represents one of the world's fastest growing and wealthiest consumer segments (Cervellon and Coudriet, 2013).

Much of the retail expansion in the UAE, in particular, has centered around the establishing of very large and magnificent malls hosting any number of prominent global luxury brands (Cervellon and Coudriet, 2013; Madichie and Blythe, 2011). Geographically, Arab women stretch across Asia and North Africa and number over 120 million. In addition to the GCC Arab populations, middle classes are emerging and developing in other Arab countries, and between just these two groups, it is clear that Arab women represent a very large and lucrative consumer sector. Despite this, they are woefully under-researched. The little reporting on their lives and consumption habits has typically been communicated through mass media publications and only recently has a trickle of research been published that uses their own voices to give life to their realities (Al-Mutawa, 2013). While this study replicates the quantitative methodology used in Wallström *et al.* (2010) on women's self-expression through beauty care brand consumption across six nations, it uses a mixed methodology to address Wallström *et al.*'s (2010, p. 236) recommendation to "[...] extend this study to other nations and to combine it in each case with qualitative research that elicits more in-depth insights from respondents".

Theoretical framework and study rationale

Attitudes influence the consumption of luxury brands, reflecting an individual's central values and beliefs or the social image they have cultivated and wish to present or both (Shavitt, 1989; Wilcox *et al.*, 2009). The functional theory of attitude (Katz, 1960; Shavitt, 1989), which this study draws on, highlights the role of attitudes in serving social functions such as self presentation and self-expression (Grewal *et al.*, 2004; Katz, 1960; Shavitt, 1989). In the context of luxury brands, a self-expression attitude is viewed as the inclination to purchase luxury brands as a means of presenting individual identity and personal values (Shavitt, 1989), and communicating core beliefs (Katz, 1960; Wilcox *et al.*, 2009). In the same context, a self-presentation attitude toward luxury brands is seen as an inclination to use luxury brands for conveying social image (Wilcox *et al.*, 2009).

There is a growing interest in researching cultural influences on consumer behavior given that core values and beliefs largely differ for Eastern versus Western consumers (Brewer and Chen, 2007). Individualism and collectivism represent important dimensions of cultural variation, with each influencing consumer behavior differently. A significant volume of research over the past three decades points to the high degree of

significance that researchers attach to these dimensions in the study of cross-cultural consumer behavior. As such, enhanced knowledge of individualism and collectivism facilitates a better understanding of consumer characteristics, attitudes and behaviors in an ever-changing society (Brewer and Chen, 2007; Thrassou and Vrontis, 2009).

The value of promoting a strong brand image or personality is well-recognized as an important strategic resource for firms to sustain a competitive advantage. Defined as “the set of human characteristics associated with a brand” (Aaker, 1997, p. 347), brand personality has an underlying symbolic or self-expressive function for consumers (Aaker and Schmitt, 2001). The symbolic function of a brand offers consumers a way of expressing, confirming and ascertaining a sense of being through the goods they own (Arnould and Thompson, 2005). Through their particular purchases, consumers communicate to others and even themselves who they are or would like to be (Keller, 2003); their consumption behaviors thus present, for example, their identity and individuality; they set them apart, provide self-esteem, underline personal achievements and grant social approval (Escalas and Bettman, 2005).

The beliefs, values and norms of a group are cognitive terms often used to define culture, with different cultures sharing common bonds with regard to identity, the experience of community, institutional systems and approach to domestic and global issues (Hofstede, 1983). Consumer behavior correlates closely with culture and lifestyle, influencing the satisfaction of needs and consumers’ perceptions and evaluations of products and brands on offer (Thrassou *et al.*, 2012). Quester *et al.*, 2000). Earlier research supports that Hofstede’s (1983) four major dimensions of culture – individualism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance and masculinity – can be used to better understand cultural lifestyle differences. While Aaker and Schmitt (2001) found that individualist and collectivist consumers both used brands for self-expression, their research also highlighted that consumers from individualist cultures used brands for differentiation while those from collectivist cultures used them for assimilation. While research has offered a substantial body of knowledge with regard to cultural differences, as international markets continue to open up and globalization goes unabated, research now needs to turn its attention to better understanding how consumers use brands across cultures (Aaker and Schmitt, 2001; Foscht *et al.*, 2008; Xue, 2008). In particular, in the context of cross-cultural settings, there is still much to be learnt about the consumption of brands as a means of self-expression (Aaker, 1997; Aaker and Schmitt, 2001; Wallström *et al.*, 2010).

Brief literature review

With the consumption of luxury brands largely determined by social-function attitudes (in relation to self-expression and self-presentation), in Western and Eastern cultures, alike consumers make purchasing decisions that set them apart and represent their social standing (Nueno and Quelch, 1998; Vigneron and Johnson, 2004; Wilcox *et al.*, 2009). Along with their scarcity value, the distinctive image afforded by the purchase of luxury brands helps meet consumer needs for uniqueness (Vigneron and Johnson, 2004) and as such underlies a self-expression attitude (Katz, 1960). As luxury brands also symbolize social standing and group affiliations that strengthen social image, in this respect, their purchase also underlies a self-presentation attitude (Park *et al.*, 2008; Snyder and DeBono, 1985).

Beyond cultural differentiations in the consumption of luxury brands, there are also cultural differences in the motivations to purchase a luxury brand. Members of collectivist societies, more connected through common values, norms, interests and social practices (Etzioni, 1968), may perceive self in a depersonalized way (Turner *et al.*, 1987). This “blurring” of personalities underlies the observed tendency of collectivist consumers to engage in more self-monitoring and to display a stronger self-presentation attitude. On the other hand, members of individualist societies have a stronger self-expression attitude (Hofstede *et al.*, 1991). They are more given to emphasizing their uniqueness, emotional independence and individual initiative (Hofstede, 1983), thereby meeting their need to stand out.

In addition to the important social functions served by self-expression and self-presentation attitudes, affect – a powerful predictor of behavior – plays heavily in influencing luxury brand consumption (Batra *et al.*, 2000), as the purchase of such goods offers pleasurable rewards and fulfillment of sensory needs (Vigneron and Johnson, 2004). This is an important consideration for marketers, managers and researchers, as both self-expression and self-presentation attitudes influence affect, impacting purchase intentions either directly or indirectly.

Arab women, defined as those who use Arabic as their primary language, make up a group totaling around 127 million. Of these women, a significant number are located in the so-called “petro dollar” states located in the Middle East and Arabian Gulf – 21 million, according to Reuters (2012). This study’s parameters neatly incorporate these consumers, given Wallström *et al.’s* (2010) specifications for the target respondents of the original study. There has been an increase in interest in the lifestyles of these mobile, wealthy consumers in marketing in recent years (Sobh *et al.*, 2008; Mady *et al.*, 2011; Vel *et al.*, 2011). It is assumed that because these populations have wealth, they would be interested in brands, and the analysis of conspicuous displays would support this assumption (Riquelme *et al.*, 2011). However, in the case of something more subtle, the often private use of preferred beauty products, would brands play any role in self expression?

While there are variations within the classification “Arabs” (Raven and Welsh, 2004; Al-Khatib *et al.*, 2005), “the Middle East can be considered a unique culture, as it has a unique pattern of life and it is generally uniform within the region compared to other parts of the globe” (Raven and Welsh, 2004, p. 9). In comparison with Wallström *et al.’s* (2010) target countries, this would place Arabs equal with China on power distance (80) and between Australia and Japan on uncertainty avoidance (68). Wallström *et al.* (2010, p. 235) state that the first result indicates that brands could be expected to reflect self-expression and “to emphasise inequality and hierarchy”. However, with the second result being a 68 per cent uncertainty avoidance rating, Arabs could also be expected to find that brands “play a lesser role in allowing individuals to express themselves”. Raven and Welsh (2004) have also linked uncertainty avoidance to the concept of fatalism, which many authors attribute to the Arab world (a misunderstanding of the meaning of *qadr*) (Itani *et al.*, 2011). In contrast, other writers, such as Sulaiman and Willett (2003), represent Muslim countries as low on uncertainty avoidance, believing this to be consistent with Islamic teaching. The Arab cultural homogeneity is also disputed by Alajmi *et al.* (2011). When compared to Wallström *et al.’s* (2010) nation divisions, this paradox is also evident, as noted above. Hofstede’s work has been

charged with inaccuracy outside of Western cultures on other dimensions, and this may also be the case here (Milner, 2005).

A particular characteristic of the majority of Arab women, especially those in the Gulf States, is their classification as Muslim. Few studies have addressed the impact of Islam on consumption directly, although the importance of this fact in how Muslim women spend their money was underlined by Briegel and Zivkovic (2008, p. 89), who found 95 per cent of respondents said Islam influenced their spending. Given that these women are in possession of completely discretionary funds (Briegel and Zivkovic, 2008), they also challenge the perception of women as “consumers, juxtaposed to men as breadwinners, [which] have been central elements of western modernity” (Gokariksel and McLarney, 2010, p. 11). These women were also committed to Islam (Rice, 1999), and as Islam is a comprehensive teaching (Kavoossi, 2000; Lawrence, 2000; Maududi, 1960; Qutb, 2001; Roald, 2001) and has shaped the culture of the region (Kalliny and Gentry, 2007; Rice and Al-Mossawi, 2002; Said, 1998), there is much to be gained by examining this “alternative” perspective.

Given that Arab cultures are collective and, it has been argued, therefore, conformist (Barakat, 1993), the consumption of luxury has become a norm in the Gulf States and, in this case, in the UAE (Vel *et al.*, 2011). Of particular importance in terms of conspicuous consumption were cars and houses, and the Emiratis sampled did link their happiness and social status to their goods and were interested to do so. Another point emphasized in this study was that Emirati nationals who had a wider experience of other cultures were more interested in purchasing luxury brands. Given the number of students from the Gulf who travel abroad to extend their education, this is likely to have an increasing influence on purchasing and consumption. Mady *et al.* (2011), in a study examining sentiment toward advertising using materialism and vanity in the “global” city of Dubai, found that while materialism could be “taught” by advertising – brought into existence by advertising and also increased in importance through it – vanity was unaffected. Dubai was positioned in the study as a global city – fast moving, many nationalities, “where shopping is the national pastime” (Mady *et al.*, 2011, p. 4) – so the study included only 15 per cent UAE nationals and 33 per cent other Arabs. Nonetheless, the outcomes are relevant here, because there is much advertising of beauty care brands, and the setting for the study is relevant, and 42 per cent of Mady *et al.*'s (2011) respondents were female.

The combination of variables represented by Arab women (complex on Hofstede's dimensions), committed to Islam, in many cases having large sums of disposable cash and with the view that money is meant to be spent (Briegel and Zivkovic, 2008), makes them an extremely appealing extension group to Wallström *et al.*'s (2010) initial research study. In addition, given the “positioning” of women's consumption in the literature in general, the consumption patterns and attitudes toward consumption, especially that of branded goods and goods relating to beauty, of Arab Muslim women potentially provide a complex and nuanced alternative model to what is currently understood in the area.

Research methodology

Wallström *et al.* (2010) used a less commonly tested involvement scale developed by Traylor and Joseph in 1984 and known as the Personal Involvement Scale Index (PISI). The PISI is composed of six items on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly

agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). The scale items are shown in Table II (see Statistical Analysis section of this paper). The sample used was limited to employed women in the age groups 21-30 and 31-40 while employment was measured as office staff, middle/lower management and professional/top management. "Respondents were recruited through an online consumer panel of a commercial marketing research company and a small financial reward was used as an incentive to respond" (Wallström *et al.*, 2010, p. 232). Table I illustrates the characteristics of the sample population of the 2010 study. The study's analysis shows that the PISI scale was unidimensional (one factor emerged accounting for 63 per cent of the variance). The scale was also internally consistent (i.e. reliable) with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.88. The differences between countries in terms of the PISI score were measured using a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and the significance of differences was measured using the Tukey-Kramer honest significant difference (HSD) test. ANOVA results indicated that the importance of brands for self-expression differed significantly across the six countries. On average, women in China, India and the Philippines perceived these brands to be more important for self-expression than women in Australia, Japan and Malaysia. However, Australian and Japanese women perceived brands as less important for self-expression than Malaysian women. Finally, the analysis indicated that a strong negative correlation exists between brand expression and wealth. In summarizing, the researchers made several recommendations, including, but not limited to, considering:

[...] other factors such as age, gender, education, and income level as categorical predictor variables of brand involvement [...] to extend this study to other nations and to combine it in each case with qualitative research (Wallström *et al.*, 2010, p. 236).

Research objectives and methodology

Based on the discussion in the previous section, this study seeks to understand the importance of beauty care products as vehicles for self-expression by Arab female consumers. Needless to say, as the population under consideration is Arab women, the

Country	Respondents		Age		Occupation		
	Responses	Response rate (%)	Age 21-30 % (Res) ^a	Age 31-40 % (Res) ^a	Professional/top management % (Res) ^a	Meddle/lower management % (Res) ^a	Office staff % (Res) ^a
UAE ^b	1,981		58.8 (1,165)	12.8 (253)	2.8 (56)	5.1 (102)	16.6 (325)
India	160	16	66 (105)	34 (55)	26 (42)	58 (93)	16 (25)
China	185	18	65 (120)	35 (65)	24 (45)	51 (94)	25 (46)
Philippines	198	20	65 (129)	35 (69)	29 (58)	45 (98)	26 (52)
Malaysia	188	19	67 (126)	33 (62)	28 (53)	47 (88)	25 (47)
Japan	186	19	66 (123)	34 (63)	27 (50)	47 (87)	26 (48)
Australia	150	15	65 (98)	35 (52)	28 (42)	48 (72)	24 (36)

Notes: ^a All figures in brackets for India, China, Philippines, Malaysia, Japan and Australia are based on calculations by the authors of the current study based on the percentages and responses provided by the authors of the original study. Therefore, due to approximations there is a margin of error of ±1 response in the number of responses; ^b this country is an extension of Wallström's *et al.*, 2010 research
Source: Wallström *et al.* (2010)

Table I.
Response rates and demographic profile

PISI index was translated into the Arabic language. Female students in the marketing research class were asked to help in the distribution of an online questionnaire through their networks inside and outside of the university. Also, in addition to the online survey, paper and pencil copies were completed by a research assistant outside of the university. In total, 1,981 questionnaires were completed online and 150 by the research assistant.

In addition to the structured questionnaire, respondents were asked to add their qualitative assessments (a more suitable approach for under-researched groups, according to [Hogg and Banister, 2001](#), p. 75), which in turn provided significant insights into women's perceptions of their favorite brands and the relationship to their self expression. Moreover, the research assistant was asked to form focus groups to discuss their beauty care brands.

These groups were warmly supported by participants and yielded a wealth of details that structured questionnaires simply could not capture ([Maxwell, 2005](#); [Patton, 2002](#)). These groups were female only, held in the comfort of the participants' homes, informal, neighborhood gatherings without any restrictions. Based on the feedback, participating women clearly enjoyed the discussions, each lasting for hours, literally.

Findings from these informal gatherings were that Arab women were very forthcoming about the very personal aspects of their lifestyles and welcomed the chance to "use their own voices" ([Al-Mutawa, 2013](#); [Burton, 2009](#); [Coates, 1996](#); [Read and Bartowski, 2000](#)) – provided that the right setting was available ([Al-Mutawa, 2013](#); [Nawal, 2009](#); [Tuncalp, 1988](#)). Thus, other researchers are strongly encouraged to explore this largely untapped research potential.

Results

Sample characteristics

[Table I](#) shows the UAE sample characteristics and compares them with those of the other six nations in the original study. As can be seen in the table, the UAE sample size is almost double the size of the entire sample of the original study (1,981 vs 1,067 or 186 per cent). At a more detailed level, three new age groups and one new employment level were added to the levels in the original study. Moreover, additional details were collected, including education, income and marital status. These additions, although they are in line with the recommendations of the original study additions, represent the subjects of a subsequent study that investigates their relationship with self-expression through brands.

Although the number of respondents in the age and occupation levels was small in terms of percentage in comparison to the original study, the number of respondents in any given level was at least twice the numbers in the former. For example, the occupation level of top management represented only 2.8 per cent of the total sample size of 1,981 respondents in the current study. However, this seemingly small percentage corresponds to 56 responses, almost twice the size of the sample from the Philippines, which is the largest of all countries in the original study (29 responses only). The same applies to all other comparison points.

Moreover, if all the additional sample characteristics that were added to the current study are excluded, the number of responses is 1,418 for the two age groups mentioned in study one. For the occupation item, the total number of responses was 483 divided between three employment levels as shown in the table. Both figures of 1,418 and 483

responses are much larger than the largest figures for any country in the former study, i.e. the Philippines with only 198 responses only. However, it should be noted here that the difference in the sample size between age (1,418) and occupation (483) is related to the additional levels that were added to both of them. For example, the additional age groups represent 563 responses while the additional occupation levels represent 1,482 responses.

Statistical analysis

Table II summarizes the mean responses and the standard deviation for each of the six items.

A principle component factor analysis, using varimax rotation, was performed to test the dimensionality of the scale. As seen in Table III, the results showed that only one factor emerged, accounting for 63.197 per cent of the variance, which implies that the scale can be regarded as unidimensional.

The Cronbach's alpha score was calculated to assess internal consistency of the scale. The alpha was 0.88, which is above the general accepted level of 0.70 (Hair *et al.*, 2008) and in line with the alphas (0.92 and 0.88) achieved in the original study (Wallström *et al.*, 2010).

Figure 1 shows the mean score for each country. As proven in the study by Wallström *et al.* (2010), the importance of brands as vehicles of self-expression differs significantly across the first six countries belonging to three groups, namely, China, India and the Philippines; Japan and Australia; and Malaysia and UAE by themselves. Consumers in China, India and the Philippines, on average, perceived that brands were more important for self-expression than consumers in Australia, Japan and Malaysia

Item	Mean	SD
When other people see me using my favorite brand of beauty care products, they will have a positive opinion of me	3.09	1.405
You can tell a lot about a person by seeing that they use my favorite brand of beauty care products	2.65	1.354
My favorite brand of beauty care products helps me express who I am	2.97	1.405
My favorite brand of beauty care products is really me!	2.76	1.412
Seeing somebody else using my favorite brand of beauty care products tells me a lot about that person	2.50	1.327
When I use my favorite brand of beauty care products, others see me the way I want them to see me	2.95	1.428

Table II.
Descriptive statistics

Component	Total	Initial eigenvalues		Extraction sums of squared loadings		
		% of variance	Cumulative (%)	Total	% of variance	Cumulative (%)
1	3.792	63.197	63.197	3.792	63.197	63.197
2	0.669	11.157	74.354			
3	0.593	9.891	84.245			
4	0.436	7.263	91.508			
5	0.270	4.495	96.003			
6	0.240	3.997	100.000			

Table III.
Total variance explained

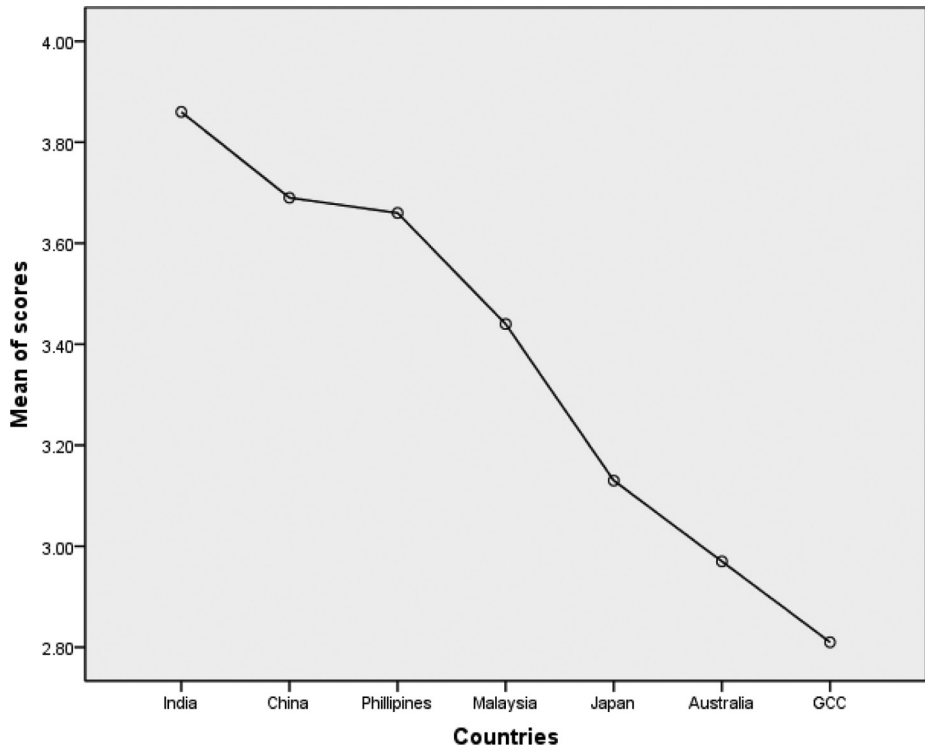


Figure 1.
Mean scores

did. The same study also showed that consumers, on average, in Australia and Japan perceived brands as less important as vehicles for self-expression than consumers in Malaysia did. The study's results show that GCC perceived brands as less important as vehicles for self-expression than all other countries with the mean score of 2.81.

Discussion of results

Although the fact that this is an extension study, based on the foundations and recommendations of an earlier study, it must also be mentioned that Arab female consumers represent one of the largest, wealthiest and fastest growing female consumer segments in the world (Cervellon and Coudriet, 2013). However, despite their importance as a significant consumer group, there is a dearth of studies targeting this aspect of their lifestyle. While the absence of studies in this field could be partially attributed to cultural reasons restricting Arab females from discussing certain parts of their lives, it is not enough to justify the clear avoidance observed by researchers. Such a lack of attention toward this important consumer group will certainly leave both the academic and business worlds speculating, in light of the lack of any evidence beyond mass media newspaper articles.

In addition to that, there are several advantages to the extension of this study to include Arab women. First, Arab women are racially and culturally different from the six groups that were studied originally. Applying this study to them will provide further evidence on the effect of different cultures on self expression. Second, nearly half of the

Arab population lives in Northwestern Asia and the other half lives in North Africa (Raven and Welsh, 2004). This study delves into this highly uncharted, very sensitive and personal terrain with the aim of providing a better understanding of Arab women and thus contributing toward understanding the less familiar female consumer world, not only in Arabia but also in the entire world.

The fact that Arab women living in the GCC region perceived brands as less important vehicles for self-expression than women in all other countries is interesting indeed when considering how much they spend on brands and the sheer size of the market, which is expected to reach a value of nearly 2.9 billion USD in the year 2015 in the UAE alone (Euromonitor International, 2010). Moreover, and according to the same report from Euromonitor International, the GCC market is characterized as a “label me” one, where the person becomes the sum of the brands possessed (Alserhan *et al.*, 2014).

Therefore, if respondents reported that brands are less important for self-expression, how come they spend so much to acquire them? Why do they converse so much about the brands they own and the places they acquired them from (Alserhan *et al.*, 2014)? Did respondents report the ideal, not the factual? Obviously, they were not affected by the interview evaluation, as the study was completely anonymous and the only details that were collected about respondents were the IP addresses of their computers, which was done automatically through SurveyMonkey and which is not useful to identify respondents. Moreover, no rewards were offered for the “right” answers, and no stigmatization of any sort was implied or at all possible.

To try and resolve the apparent discrepancy between deeds and words, the focus turned to the qualitative part of the study. Many of the respondents provided lengthy comments in explanation of the answers they provided. An overwhelming response was that one's personality and self-perception is not related to the brand of the beauty care product being used and that women buy brands not for self-expression but for the perception that branded beauty care products provide better care of their skin (Alashban and Burney, 2003). For example, Mona explains that “the beauty care products and especially makeup is sometimes harmful and could cause many symptoms and diseases to the skin”. Therefore, according to Mona and many others, women buy not only the beauty advertised in the products but also the less advertised but equally important care associated with the brand.

Other respondents explained that due to the Arab culture and the teaching of Islam, which prohibit women from using makeup outside of their close family or female circles, they refrain from using makeup except at special gatherings; therefore, these products do not become as important in their daily lives, as they might be in other women's lives. This explanation is further strengthened by the fact that Malaysian women in the original study and who might be majority Muslims, although this cannot be confirmed, as this detail is not provided in the original study, also perceived cosmetics to be of less importance to self-expression than it is to most other groups in the Wallström *et al.* (2010) study (Alashban and Burney, 2003).

In addition to culture, religion, health concerns and brand recognition, some respondents argued that price is an important factor affecting their purchase decision. For example, Latifa explains that when she buys a beauty care product, her decision will be affected more by the objective properties of the product, such as price. In her opinion, price is related to ability and has nothing to do with personality. She argues that her decision is also affected by the actual results she gets from using certain brands. In her

opinion, if a lady's personality is associated with beauty brands then women not using these brands will be facing social problems. Her colleague Layla agrees on her notion about the price, but adds that the price of the makeup does indicate which social class the women belong to, assuming of course that the price can be proven. However, Layla adds that looks associated with brands are very important and that whether a branded beauty product turns a woman into "princess or monster" is a key purchase factor. Intsar, on the other hand, disagrees with the notion on prices and contends that:

[...] the high prices of these brands don't add more beauty features on the face. From my side, makeup brands don't attract me as much as the high quality of products and the level of colors which are suitable with my skin (Alashban and Burney, 2003).

Finally, other respondents said that they did not buy the brands advertised but rather bought what their friends recommended ending an emotional connection to the brand. The Arab culture strongly encourages socialization and especially same-sex gatherings. During these gatherings, women speak freely about their interests and lifestyles, including the exchange of ideas about products and brands. These gatherings are very powerful marketing tools where word-of-mouth (WOM) becomes potent for brands. As a result of building an emotional relationship with their customers, luxury brand companies will make their customers positively talk about their brands. If this is attained, the number of customers using the luxury brand could probably be increased, and in turn, the company may report a jump in profits.

Implications for theory

Drawing on the functional theory of attitude and the cognitive-affective model as the framework, this study examines the impact of individual characteristics on consumers' social-function attitudes toward luxury brands, which in turn influence affective attitude and purchase intention for luxury brands. The findings support the functional theory of attitude showing that attitudes serve important social functions, as they impact both affect and behavior. Further, the findings show that emotions are linked to central attitudes and play an important role in purchase intention formation. More specifically, this research contributes to the functional theories of attitudes in two distinct ways. First, the results indicate that the functions served by attitudes toward one object (i.e. luxury brands) can impact consumers' preferences for other related sub-products of the original object, (i.e. cosmetics). The significance of this finding is underscored by its potential to generate theoretical inquiry into marketing domains such as that of brand extensions and brand alliances. Second, this study indicates that the functions served by consumers' attitudes in a specific consumption context are determined not just by the consumer (DeBono, 1987) or the product category but also by more subtle yet controllable aspects of the marketing mix. While the results implicate brand conspicuousness as marketer-based determinants of attitude functions in the luxury consumption context, additional research can extend this line of theoretical inquiry by investigating other aspects of the marketing mix that can have a similar influence.

This study expands on previous research by examining the formation of purchase intentions for luxury brands and comparing purchase intention formation across cultures. This study examines the impact of social-function attitudes toward luxury brands on consumers' affective attitude and purchase intentions, and shows that

emotions are linked to central attitudes, suggesting that consumers tend to respond favorably to brands that are perceived to be consistent with their values and goals (Bian and Forsythe, 2012; Snyder and DeBono, 1985). The marginally positive relationship between social-function attitudes and purchase intention suggest that consumers have a greater intent to purchase their favorite luxury brands when the luxury brands are consistent with their intrinsic beliefs and social image. Extending the findings of other researchers (Bearden and Etzel, 1982; Grubb and Grathwohl, 1967) that people consume luxury brands for social-function reasons, these findings show that social-function attitudes toward luxury brands is related to purchase intention for luxury brands both directly and indirectly through their impact on affect. Furthermore, affect has a dominant and powerful influence on consumers' purchase intention, as it plays a mediating role between social-function attitudes and purchase intentions, thereby supporting the cognitive–affective model given that both social-function attitudes (cognition) and affective attitude (affect) impact purchase intention for luxury brands (Bian and Forsythe, 2012).

Extending the findings of other researchers (Bearden and Etzel, 1982; Grubb and Grathwohl, 1967) that people consume luxury brands for social-function reasons, these findings show that social-function attitudes toward luxury brands play an important role impacting purchase intention for luxury brands both directly and indirectly through their impact on affect (Bian and Forsythe, 2012; Wilcox *et al.*, 2009). Furthermore, affect has a dominant and powerful influence on consumers' purchase intentions, as it plays a mediating role between social-function attitudes and purchase intentions, thereby supporting the cognitive–affective model given that both social-function attitudes (cognition) and affective attitude (affect) impact purchase intention for luxury brands (Ko and Megehee, 2012; Zhang and Kim, 2012). Further, the findings show that emotions are linked to central attitudes and play an important role in purchase intention formation. This study expands previous research by examining the formation of purchase intentions for luxury brands and comparing purchase intention formation within an Arabic cultural context. These findings align previous conclusions that individuals in a collective society could adopt and display individualistic elements without changing its collectivist culture (Bian and Forsythe, 2012; Brewer and Chen, 2007).

Finally, a result worth discussing is that the insignificant influence of brand image on WOM. This relationship need to be replicated and further studied in future marketing research. Although the significant impact seems to be negligible, it can be argued that the effect of brand image on the WOM is mediated by “loving” the brand. This is logically valid from a practical point of view, when the projected brand image fit with the image customer wants others to hold about him/her, it will make him positively talk about the brand. Future research could also examine this framework on different categories of luxury brands.

Limitations and implications for managerial and entrepreneurial practice

As in all research initiatives, this study has a number of limitations. The study did not test for non-response bias. Based on self-reports in response to Likert scales, the results of the survey offer a general picture of the attitudes of women in the UAE studied toward brands as a means of self-expression. Unlike previous studies, this research does incorporate a qualitative research component, in the form of focus groups/in-depth

interviews. As a result, the information generated provides context as the methodology and supports in-depth examination of the various and complex ways in which consumers use luxury brands as a means of self-expression. Mixed methods research aims at providing generalizations; therefore, in this case, the data collected allow for a consideration of differences between luxury brands and consumers. Another limitation is that this study focuses on just the UAE region. This does not allow for generalizations concerning conclusions related to the influence of culture or income on the use of brands as a vehicle for self-expression.

Entrepreneurial activity is at the forefront of luxury brand marketing in the Middle East. The knowledge generated in this study has implications for decision making and action among entrepreneurs for international market entry. An awareness of national differences and the importance of brands as a means of self-expression, different for consumers in different countries, will facilitate the development of branding and marketing communication in country-specific contexts. By better understanding differences, entrepreneurs can better evolve those brand personality dimensions that appeal to consumers in different countries. Similarly, organizational entrepreneurship can act as an indicator for the effective implementation of successful international market entry for luxury brands. Beyond the success rate, entrepreneurial behavior is a function of the ability to exploit opportunities, and businesses with developed informal internal and external networks, and sharing of resources, across cultures, exhibit a higher degree of entrepreneurial behavior in marketing luxury brands internationally.

Research results open up a number of avenues for future research. As the study did not distinguish between “luxury” and “non-luxury” brands, focusing only on beauty care products, these variables may be included in subsequent research to determine if differences exist in levels of brand expression.

Self-expression is an important individual characteristic that impacts social-function attitudes across cultures, consistent with the functional theory of attitudes concept that individual personality arouses attitude. This finding has important strategic implications for marketers of luxury brands; for example, luxury brand retailers can emphasize the role of the brand in facilitating self-presentation by conveying a status image and/or social group membership. These findings also provide practical implications for marketing luxury brands in wealthy Arabic markets. Emphasizing exclusivity of the brand may be an effective marketing strategy for luxury brands in the Arabic market, as it focuses on using luxury brands to avoid similarity and conveys membership in a specific social group and the exclusion of other groups. Finally, these results have a number of implications for luxury brand managers. First, luxury brand managers should conduct research with their target customers to understand the relationships between the luxury brands and their customers. Second, brands should give careful consideration to the concept of “loving the brand” and how can they develop it.

Recommendations for future research

The fact that Arab women in the GCC perceived brands to be less important for self-expression, coupled with the explanations provided by respondents themselves for this perception, prompt us to suggest that marketers hear the voice of the Arab female consumers when targeting them. Off the shelf marketing campaigns – which might be very successful elsewhere – will only undermine the power of the brands those

marketers are trying to promote. Factors such as product application, religiosity, culture, health concerns associated with the brand and the physical differences this group of consumers believes characterize them (i.e. skin difference in terms of color and sensitivity) should be key campaign factors, side by side with the beauty aspect, which usually takes front seat in these campaigns.

For researchers, an extension of this research into more world regions with the aim of producing a global map of women, self expression and brands is recommended. Such a map would be similar to Hofstede's and would be of great academic significance, in addition to its obvious business relevance. Further recommendations include the investigation of the relationships between variables revealed in this study such as religiosity, health concerns and demographics with expressing self through brands.

References

- Aaker, J.L. (1997), "Dimensions of brand personality", *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 34 No. 2, pp. 347-356.
- Aaker, J. and Schmitt, B. (2001), "Culture-dependent assimilation and differentiation of the self preferences for consumption symbols in the United States and China", *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, Vol. 32 No. 2, pp. 561-576.
- Alajmi, S., Dennis, C. and Altayab, Y. (2011), "The effect of national culture on service provision within Takaful industry", *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, Vol. 2 No. 3, pp. 225-245.
- Alashban, A. and Burney, M. (2003), "Key antecedents to cosmetic use among women: empirical evidence from Saudi Arabia", *Journal of International Selling and Sales Management*, Vol. 9 No. 1, pp. 3-20.
- Al-Khatib, J.A., Vitell, S.J., Rexeisen, R. and Rawwas, M. (2005), "Inter-country differences of consumer ethics in Arab countries", *International Business Review*, Vol. 14 No. 4, pp. 495-516.
- Al-Mutawa, F.S. (2013), "Consumer-generated representations: Muslim women recreating western luxury fashion brand meaning through consumption", *Psychology and Marketing*, Vol. 30 No. 3, pp. 236-246.
- Alserhan, B.A. and Alserhan, Z.A. (2012), "Researching Muslim consumers: do they represent the fourth-billion consumer segment?", *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, Vol. 3 No. 2, pp. 121-138.
- Alserhan, B.A., Bataineh, M.K., Halkias, D. and Komodromos, M. (2014), "Measuring luxury brand consumption and female consumers' religiosity in the UAE", *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship*, Vol. 19 No. 2.
- Arnould, E.J. and Thompson, C.J. (2005), "Consumer culture theory (CCT): twenty years of research", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 31 No. 4, pp. 868-882.
- Barakat, H. (1993), "The Arab family and the challenge of social transportation", in Moghissi, H. (Ed.) (2005), *Women and Islam: Critical Concepts in Sociology*, Routledge, New York, NY.
- Batra, R., Ramaswamy, V., Alden, D.L., Steenkamp, J-B.E.M. and Ramachander, S. (2000), "Effects of brand local and nonlocal origin on consumer attitudes in developing countries", *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, Vol. 9 No. 2, pp. 83-95.
- Bearden, W.O. and Etzel, M.J. (1982), "Reference group influence on product and brand purchase decisions", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 9 No. 2, pp. 183-194.
- Bian, Q. and Forsythe, S. (2012), "Purchase intention for luxury brands: a cross cultural comparison", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 65 No. 10, pp. 1443-1451.

- Brewer, M.B. and Chen, Y.R. (2007), "Where (Who) are collectives in collectivism? Toward conceptual clarification of individualism and collectivism", *Psychological Review*, Vol. 114 No. 1, pp. 133-151.
- Briegel, T. and Zivkovic, J. (2008), "Financial empowerment of women in the United Arab Emirates", *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, Vol. 4 No. 2, pp. 87-99.
- Burton, D. (2009), "'Reading' whiteness in consumer research", *Consumption Markets & Culture*, Vol. 12 No. 2, pp. 171-201.
- Cervellon, M.C. and Coudriet, R. (2013), "Brand social power in luxury retail: manifestations of brand dominance over clients in the store", *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, Vol. 41 Nos 11/12, pp. 869-884.
- Coates, J. (1996), *Women Talk*, Blackwell Publishers, Cambridge, MA.
- DeBono, K.G. (1987), "Investigating the social-adjustive and value-expressive functions of attitudes: implications for persuasion processes", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 52, pp. 279-287.
- Escalas, J.E. and Bettman, J.R. (2005), "Self-construal, reference groups, and brand meaning", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 32 No. 3, pp. 378-389.
- Etzioni, A. (1968), *The Active Society: A Theory of Societal and Political Processes*, Collier-Macmillan, London and New York.
- Euromonitor International (2010), "Key market trends in luxury goods", UAE, Euromonitor International, available at: www.euromonitor.com/luxury-goods-in-the-united-arab-emirates/report (accessed 20 January 2014).
- Foscht, T., Maloles, III, C., Swoboda, B., Morschett, D. and Sinha, I. (2008), "The impact of culture on brand perceptions: a six-nation study", *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, Vol. 17 No. 3, pp. 131-142.
- Gokariksel, B. and McLarney, E. (2010), "Muslim women, consumer capitalism, and the Islamic culture industry", *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, Vol. 6 No. 3, pp. 1-18.
- Grewal, R., Mehta, R. and Kardes, F.R. (2004), "The timing of repeat purchases of consumer durable goods: the role of functional bases of consumer attitudes", *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 41 No. 1, pp. 101-115.
- Grubb, E.L. and Grathwohl, H.L. (1967), "Consumer self-concept, symbolism and market behavior: a theoretical approach", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 31 No. 4, pp. 22-27.
- Hair, J.F., Wolfinbarger, M.F., Ortinau, D.J. and Bush, R.P. (2008), *Essentials of Marketing Research*, McGraw-Hill Irwin, New York, NY.
- Hofstede, G. (1983), "The cultural relativity of organizational practices and theories", *Journal of International Business Studies*, Vol. 14 No. 2, pp. 75-89.
- Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G.J. and Minkov, M. (1991), *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, McGraw-Hill, London, Vol. 2.
- Hofstede, G.H. (1984), *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-related Values*, Sage Publications, Newbury Park, CA.
- Hogg, M.K. and Banister, E.N. (2001), "Dislikes, distastes and the undesired self: conceptualising and exploring the role of the undesired end state in consumer experience", *Journal of Marketing Management*, Vol. 17 Nos 1/2, pp. 73-104.
- Itani, H., Sidani, Y.M. and Baalbaki, I. (2011), "United Arab Emirates female entrepreneurs: motivations and frustrations", *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, Vol. 30 No. 5, pp. 409-424.

- Kalliny, M. and Gentry, L. (2007), "Cultural values reflected in Arab and American television advertising", *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, Vol. 29 No. 1, pp. 15-32.
- Katz, D. (1960), "The functional approach to the study of attitudes", *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 24 No. 2, pp. 163-204.
- Kavoossi, M. (2000), *The Globalization of Business and the Middle East: Opportunities and Constraints*, Greenwood Publishing Group, Westport, CT.
- Keller, K.L. (2003), "Brand synthesis: the multidimensionality of brand knowledge", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 29 No. 4, pp. 595-600.
- Khraim, H.S. (2011), "The influence of brand loyalty on cosmetics buying behavior of UAE female consumers", *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, Vol. 3 No. 2, p. 123.
- Ko, E. and Megehee, C.M. (2012), "Fashion marketing of luxury brands: recent research issues and contributions", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 65 No. 10, pp. 1395-1398.
- Lawrence, B.B. (2000), *Shattering the Myth: Islam Beyond Violence*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ.
- Luna, D. and Gupta, S.F. (2001), "An integrative framework for cross-cultural consumer behavior", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 18 No. 1, pp. 45-69.
- Madichie, N.O. and Blythe, J. (2011), "The 'bold and the beautiful' of the UAE retail environment", *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, Vol. 29 No. 6, pp. 593-601.
- Mady, T., Cherrier, H., Lee, D. and Rahman, K. (2011), "Can sentiment toward advertising explain materialism and vanity in the globalization era? Evidence from Dubai", *Journal of Global Marketing*, Vol. 24 No. 5, pp. 453-472.
- Maududi, S.A.A. (1960), *Towards Understanding Islam*, Al Faisal Printing Company, Kuwait.
- Maxwell, J.A. (2005), *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Milner, L.M. (2005), "Sex-role portrayals in African television advertising: a preliminary examination with implications for the use of Hofstede's research", *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, Vol. 17 Nos 2/3, pp. 73-91.
- Nawal, M. (2009), *The Eleventh Commandment: An Introduction to Religio-Marketing*, VDM Verlag, India.
- Nueno, J.L. and Quelch, J.A. (1998), "The mass marketing of luxury", *Business Horizons*, Vol. 41 No. 6, pp. 61-69.
- Park, H-Y., Rabolt, N.J. and Jeon, K.S. (2008), "Purchasing global luxury brands among young Korean consumers", *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, Vol. 12 No. 2, pp. 244-259.
- Patton, M.Q. (2002), *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Quester, P.G., Karunaratna, A. and Goh, L.K. (2000), "Self-congruity and product evaluation: a cross-cultural study", *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, Vol. 17 No. 6, pp. 525-535.
- Qutb, S. (2001), *In the Shade of the Qur'an*, Islamic Book Service, New Delhi.
- Raven, P. and Welsh, D.H. (2004), "An exploratory study of influences on retail service quality: a focus on Kuwait and Lebanon", *Journal of Services Marketing*, Vol. 18 No. 3, pp. 198-214.
- Read, J.G. and Bartkowski, J.P. (2000), "To veil or not to veil? A case study of identity negotiation among Muslim women in Austin, TX", *Gender and Society*, Vol. 14 No. 3, pp. 395-417.
- Reuters (2012), "Factbox: Gulf Arab countries' population, economy, military", available at: www.reuters.com/article/2012/05/14/us-gulf-union-fact-idUSBRE84D19B20120514 (accessed 19 January 2014).

- Rice, G. (1999), "Islamic ethics and the implications for business", *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 18 No. 4, pp. 345-358.
- Rice, G. and Al-Mossawi, M. (2002), "The implications of Islam for advertising messages: the Middle Eastern context", *Journal of Euromarketing*, Vol. 11 No. 3, pp. 71-97.
- Riquelme, H.E., Rios, R.E. and Al-Sharhan, N. (2011), "Antecedents of ostentatious consumption in Kuwait", *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, Vol. 2 No. 3, pp. 295-308.
- Roald, A.S. (2001), *Women in Islam: The Western Experience*, Routledge, New York, NY.
- Said, E.W. (1998), "The myth of 'the clash of civilizations'", available at: www.mediaed.org/handouts (accessed 16 October 2006).
- Shavitt, S. (1989), "Products, personalities and situations in attitude functions: implications for consumer behavior", *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 16 No. 1, pp. 300-305.
- Snyder, M. and DeBono, K.G. (1985), "Appeals to image and claims about quality: understanding the psychology of advertising", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 49 No. 3, pp. 586-597.
- Sobh, R., Belk, R. and Gressel, J. (2008), "The scented winds of change: conflicting notions of modesty and vanity among young Qatari and Emirati women", in Samu, S., Vaidyanathan, R. and Chakravarti, D. (Eds), *AP – Asia-Pacific Advances in Consumer Research*, Association for Consumer Research, Duluth, MN, Vol. 8, pp. 342-343.
- Sulaiman, M. and Willett, R. (2003), "Using the Hofstede-Gray framework to argue normatively for an extension of Islamic corporate reports", *Malaysian Accounting Review*, Vol. 2 No. 1, pp. 81-105.
- Thrassou, A. and Vrontis, D. (2009), "A new consumer relationship model: the marketing communications application", *Journal of Promotion Management*, Vol. 15 No. 4, pp. 499-521.
- Thrassou, A., Vrontis, D., Chebbi, H. and Yahiaoui, D. (2012), "A preliminary strategic marketing framework for new product development", *Journal of Transnational Management*, Vol. 17 No. 1, pp. 21-44.
- Tuncalp, S. (1988), "The marketing research scene in Saudi Arabia", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 22 No. 5, pp. 15-22.
- Turner, J.C., Hogg, M.A., Oakes, P.J., Reicher, S.D. and Wetherell, M.S. (1987), *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorization Theory*, Blackwell, Oxford.
- Vel, K.P., Captain, A., Al-Abbas, R. and Al Hashemi, B. (2011), "Luxury buying in the United Arab Emirates", *Journal of Business and Behavioural Sciences*, Vol. 23 No. 3, pp. 145-160.
- Vigneron, F. and Johnson, L.W. (2004), "Measuring perceptions of brand luxury", *The Journal of Brand Management*, Vol. 11 No. 6, pp. 484-506.
- Vrontis, D. and Thrassou, A. (2007), "Adaptation vs standardization in international marketing—the country-of-origin effect", *Innovative Marketing*, Vol. 3 No. 4, pp. 7-20.
- Wallström, Å., Steyn, P. and Pitt, L. (2010), "Expressing herself through brands: a comparative study of women in six Asia-Pacific nations", *Journal of Brand Management*, Vol. 18 No. 3, pp. 228-237.
- Wilcox, K., Kim, H.M. and Sen, S. (2009), "Why do consumers buy counterfeit luxury brands?", *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 46 No. 2, pp. 247-259.
- Xue, F. (2008), "The moderating effects of product involvement on situational brand choice", *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, Vol. 25 No. 2, pp. 85-94.
- Zhang, B. and Kim, J.H. (2012), "Luxury fashion consumption in China: factors affecting attitude and purchase intent", *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 20 No. 1, pp. 68-79.

Further reading

- Al-maghrabi, T. and Dennis, C. (2010), "Driving online shopping: spending and behavioral differences among women in Saudi Arabia", *International Journal of Business Science and Applied Management*, Vol. 5 No. 1, pp. 30-47.
- Al-Mazrooei, N., Chomo, G.V. and Omezzine, A. (2003), "Consumer purchase behavior of seafood products in Oman", *Journal of International Food and Agribusiness Marketing*, Vol. 13 No. 4, pp. 5-22.
- Belk, R. and Sobh, R. (2011), "Gender and privacy in Arab Gulf States: implications for consumption and marketing", in Sandikci, Ö. and Rice, G. (Eds), *Handbook of Islamic Marketing*, Edward Elgar Publishing, Chapter 5, Cheltenham, pp. 73-96.
- Cherrier, H., Rahmann, K., Mady, T. and Lee, D. (2009), "The globalization of Arab world: impacts on consumers' level of materialism and vanity", *World*, Vol. 1 No. 1, pp. 82-94.
- Hamilton, J.A. (1987), "Dress as a cultural sub-system: a unifying metatheory for clothing and textiles", *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, Vol. 6 No. 1, p. 1-7.
- Hartmann, W., Nair, H.S. and Narayanan, S. (2011), "Identifying causal marketing mix effects using a regression discontinuity design", *Marketing Science*, Vol. 30 No. 6, pp. 1079-1097.
- Rabolt, N.J. and Forney, J.C. (1989), "Contemporary Saudi Arabian women's dress", *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, Vol. 7 No. 3, pp. 22-32.
- Rugh, A.B. (1986), *Reveal and Conceal: Dress in Contemporary Egypt*, Syracuse University Press, Syracuse, New York, NY.
- Sobh, R. and Belk, R. (2011), "Domains of privacy and hospitality in Arab Gulf homes", *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, Vol. 2 No. 2, pp. 125-137.
- Sprott, D., Czellar, S. and Spangenberg, E. (2009), "The importance of a general measure of brand engagement on market behavior: development and validation of a scale", *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 46 No. 1, pp. 92-104.
- Yamani, M. (1996), *Feminism and Islam: Legal and Literary Perspectives*, Ithaca Press, London.
- Yavas, U., Babakus, E. and Delener, N. (1994), "Family purchasing roles in Saudi Arabia: perspectives from Saudi wives", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 31 No. 1, pp. 75-86.

Corresponding author

Daphne Halkias can be contacted at: daphne_halkias@yahoo.com

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.