

Gender Differences in Post-Purchase Behaviors of Fashion Luxury Goods

Hyun-mee Joung

Northern Illinois University

hmjoung@niu.edu

Jihyun Kim

Kent State University

jkim55@kent.edu

Abstract

The rise of online second-hand luxury goods market such as poshmark.com and therealreal.com raised the questions of consumer behavior regarding the post-purchase usages and disposals of luxury fashion goods. As a part of post-purchase behavior, individuals may hoard and/or collect luxury fashion products; while others resell them as a means of disposal for economic gain or management of their closet. According to gender schema theory, males and females differ significantly in socialization and information processing (Nobel, Griffith, & Adjei, 2006). Gender has been used as a market segmentation tool and studies have noted gender differences in decision-making styles, shopping, and consumption (Nobel et al., 2006). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to compare male and female consumers' post-purchase behavior of luxury brand goods regarding frequency of use after purchases, hoarding, collecting, disposal, and participation in recycling.

Despite recent years' economic stagnation, the luxury market has been steadily growing. The value of the global personal luxury goods market was 217 billion euros in 2013; the U.S. has been the leading market with a value of 64.9 billion euros, accounting for 65% of the total luxury market. This study focused on U.S. affluent consumers who had purchased fashion luxury brands (Gucci, Louis Vuitton, Prada, etc.) and whose annual household income was above \$150,000. A self-administered on-line survey questionnaire was developed and contained hoarding (7 items, $\alpha=.92$), collecting (5 items, $\alpha=.87$), and participation in six recycling options (swap, reuse, use of recycling websites, resale, pass-on, and donation). The questionnaire also asked about fashion product purchases, usage frequencies after the purchase, numbers of disposals in a year, and demographic information. Using a nationwide, representative online survey, a total of 479 responses from 226 males and 250 females were obtained.

Independent-sample T tests revealed that female consumers tend to keep luxury fashion goods for collecting purposes. The luxury industry should provide goods that last long and keep monetary values. Though differences were found between males and females in reuse and participation in recycling websites, overall, luxury goods consumers did not participate in recycling for their unwanted fashion products. The luxury goods industry should promote consumers to participate in recycling. Findings of this study suggest that additional studies should examine luxury goods consumers' attitude toward the environment.

Keywords

Luxury, collecting, hoarding, disposals