PREDICTORS OF PURCHASING INTENTION OF LUXURY GOODS AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN SELANGOR

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Abstract

Luxury goods can be anything that is desirable and more than a necessity and ordinary and these luxury goods tend to make life more pleasant for the buyer. Over the past few years, brand consciousness among the Malaysian society, especially the younger generation has been in the raising trend. The purpose of this paper was to examine the relationship between attitude, perceived brand, perceived quality, and perceived price with purchasing intention of luxury goods among university students in Selangor as well as to determine the most influential predictor of the purchasing intention. Multi-cluster sampling method was used to select a total of 300 respondents from Universiti Putra Malaysia and Multimedia University. The data were collected through a set of self-administrated questionnaire. The findings of Pearson correlation analysis demonstrated attitude (r=0.433, p=0.000), perceived brand (r=0.626, p=0.000), perceived quality (r=0.586, p=0.000) and perceived price (r=0.455, p=0.000) had significant positive relationship with purchasing intention. The multiple regression analysis showed that the most influential variable that predicts respondent's purchasing intention was perceived quality (β = 0.428, $p \leq 0.001$). This paper concluded that perceived brand, perceived quality and perceived price were significant predictors for purchasing intention of luxury goods, where perceived quality was the strongest predictor. The findings of the study have several implications that would be beneficial to the consumers in investigating the factors that will lead consumers to spend on luxury goods. Furthermore, the luxury goods producers can also plan on new business strategies that focus on quality of the goods since the result of the study showed that university students' perception of quality of goods will trigger their purchasing intention of luxury goods the most. This paper can also serve as a guideline for future researchers and government to develop policies in order to expand the luxury markets in Malaysia.

Keywords: Purchasing intention; Attitude; Brand; Quality; Price; Luxury goods

Introduction

In this modern society, the global market for luxury goods has grown rapidly over the past two decades. The market has been undergoing myriad form of development that had caused the "democratization of luxury good" to occur. It means that the number of shoppers for the luxury goods or goods that resemble luxury goods are increasing from time to time (Okonkwo, 2007). Khor (2010) argues that mode behaviourers had changed their buying behavior from acquiring needed goods toward buying not necessary things which they believe will boost up their self-esteem and make their life more pleasant.

Nowadays, purchase of luxury goods has become a widespread and common purchasing behaviourr. The motives for acquiring luxury goods were historically seen as "buying to impress the other" and this statement serves as a great strategic principle for the marketing management of luxury brands (Tsai, 2005). Luxury can be anything that is desirable and more than a necessity and ordinary and these luxury products tend to make life more pleasant for the buyer (Heine, 2012). Dubois, Laurent

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and Czellar (2001) defined luxury as products that have more than a necessary and ordinary characteristic, also include their relatively high quality, price level, rarity, aesthetics, and extraordinariness.

Over the past few years, brand consciousness among the Malaysian society, especially the younger generations have been in the raising trend. These generations who desire for the luxury goods and brand are from college and university students, as well as young working adults and the range of age between 20 to 29 years old are contributing approximately 20% of the entire Malaysia population (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2017). Young consumers such as university students across Asia-pacific such as Malaysia, have an appetite for luxury goods to their lifestyle and spending power. The increasing proportion of Malaysia's university student spending power were expected to have contributed to the rise of demand for luxuries among young premium consumers in Malaysia from $0.6 billion in 2006 to an estimate of $1.5 billion in 2016 (Yuwa, 2007). The population of university students had contributed about 20% of the Malaysia total population which cannot be overlooked. It is very common nowadays to see a student wearing Adidas shoes and holding his Apple Inc. brand mobile phone. Thus, it can be concluded that the booming and the emergence of Malaysian society on luxury goods consumptions due to the availability of product alternatives and the strong influence of online media nowadays, which can lead the university students to have greater exposure towards luxury goods as compared to the past.

Furthermore, in Malaysia, the demand for luxury goods is an increasing trend and luxury goods indicated a significant place to benefit our country GDP performance with about 5% contribution in GDP growth in year 2013 (Euromonitor, 2014). Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Philippines are among the countries in the stage of raising in standard of living (Chadha & Husband, 2006) and the growth of upper and middle-class has largely contributed to the consumption of luxury goods. Several international luxury houses such as Louis Vuitton and Kering (previously known as Pinault-Printemps-Redoute, PPR) had dominated the luxury goods industry in Malaysia. As according to UK-based Research Centre Wealth Insight (2014), Malaysia is forecasted to have 20 billionaires and 30,054 millionaires by the year 2018. The number of high net worth individuals is increasing from time to time. Thus, this phenomenon can add value to the luxury goods market.

The purposes of this study were; to examine the influence of factors such as attitude, perceived brand, perceived price, and perceived quality toward purchasing intention of luxury goods, and to determine the most significant factor that can influence the purchasing intention. The consumer purchasing intention in the age group of university students can be the key indicator in ensuring those luxury brands can be better position themselves in the market place and also be useful in building up and stabling these luxury brands. Thus, this research can be a good reason to determine the factors that will influence the generation Y on the purchasing intention toward luxury goods.

As reported by the Department of Statistic Malaysia, Malaysia annual inflation rate had risen to 3.5% in February from 3.4% in January 2014 and it is predicted to rise to 5% in 2015 due to the onset of GST (Anna & Antonio, 2014). The term inflation is defined as the increase in average price of goods sustain for a stipulate period, or in

other word, the rise of goods' price. It is believed the rise of price can influence a consumer's purchasing intention towards the goods and especially luxury goods as it is more expensive in relative and absolute terms. Price can be a factor to be concerned with in affecting intention to purchase luxury goods (Wiedmann, Hennigs, & Siebels, 2007). Many researchers found that when referring to luxury goods, the price of a particular product may have the positive role in determining the perception of high quality regarding the particular product (Erickson & Johansson, 1985; Lichtenstein, Peter, & Black, 1988; Tellis & Gaeth, 1990). The consumers often use price as the key indicator for judging prestige quality of the product (Groth & McDaniel, 1993). Groth and McDaniel further mentioned setting a high price to reflect high quality or high status can even make certain products or services to become more desirable by the buyer.

Besides, the perception of quality toward luxury goods is significant as the higher the excellent quality, the higher the willingness to own it. Perceive quality is placed as the first notion to influence luxury and the two terms or these words are almost synonymous (Dubois et al., 2001). Quality act as the main factor influencing the purchase intention in the early research (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999) and the main reason of purchasing luxury goods is due to the superior quality that reflected the brand name (Gentry et al., 2001). Thus, the highest quality of certain products had ensured the willingness and intention of the university students to purchase even if the products require a higher price compared to substitutes goods.

Attitude reflects the behaviour as an assessment of the degree to which a consumer likes or favours in performing the behaviour (Finlay, Trafimow, & Villarreal, 2002). Bian (2010) found that among the young consumers, positive attitude will affect their purchase intention of luxury brands. Hence, it is believed that the university students with positive behavior are likely to improve the intention on purchase luxury goods.

Literature Review

Purchasing intention of luxury goods
In the 21st century, the market of luxury goods is in a mature, stabilize and modest growth. The purchasing of luxury goods is growing more popular and faster. The sharing of information via the internet and the ability to get contact with the various luxury brands in overseas travel liberalization had accelerated the masses of the luxuries. This phenomenon can be found in every age of the consumer, but is noticeable, particularly in young consumers including university students.

Luxury goods can be divided into three categories which are; personal luxury products, home luxury products, and experiential luxury (Danziger, 2004a; 2004b). According to Danziger (2004a), home luxury products are branded or expensive furniture, kitchen appliances, outdoor garden act and antiques. While personal luxury products give the consumers a feeling of perceived high standard of living and sense of pleasure such as cloths, handbags, perfumes, automobiles, cars, jewellery, watches and fashion accessories (Gao, Norton, & Zhang, 2009). Experiential luxury is an experience of luxury which occurred from the consumers' mind that create pleasure by performing certain activities such as going to pub, travel, expensive restaurants

and dining. The perception on luxury has no specific measurement because everyone might have their own different concept of understanding toward luxury goods (Beverland, 2004). According to Munuz (2002), luxury goods do not necessarily need to be expensive, but it must fulfil the standard of luxury which must be high-performance, high quality as well as emotionally satisfying. As long as the luxury goods can fulfil the consumers' specific wants with high performance, then the goods can be considered as the luxury goods.

On the other hand, through the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), the intention of purchasing on goods or services can be determined by consumption behaviour and consumption attitude of the individual (Ajzen, 1991). Ajzen also mentioned that when an individual is tending to form an intention to engage in certain behaviour and the intention of behaviour will transform into an action through an appropriate opportunity, time and attempt. In other words, when consumers have stronger intention to engage in the behaviour, the consumers would more likely to perform the behaviour. Besides that, "intention" can be defined as the person's motivation to perform a certain behaviour and is about "what we think we will buy" (Samin, Goodarz, Muhammad, Firoozeh, Mahsa, & Sanaz, 2012). Purchase intention can also be defined when the decision to perform or to act or physiological act that reflect the consumers' behaviour according to the characteristics of products (Samin *et al.*, 2012). Purchase intention also represents the possibility for consumers to make purchase decisions or to buy the products (Long & Ching, 2010). In other words, purchase intension discussed what the consumer would like to buy in the future. As according to Fishbein's Theory of Reasoned Action (1975), consumer's purchasing intention can serve as the mediator between their attitude and their purchase behaviour. Gruber (1971) found that intention can provide a link between consumers' responses towards goods and their acquisition of the goods. So, purchasing intention can be used as an alternative to measure purchasing behaviour.

There are several factors that drive consumers to purchase luxuries. According to Danziger (2004a) and Stacy (2005), consumers with higher education and more knowledgeable will tend to purchase luxury goods. Normally, the consumers who are more concerned about their social class, image, status or symbol would like to purchase luxury goods (Nia & Judith, 2000; Prendergast & Claire, 2003). Consumers who are more knowledgeable in term of luxury brands will have the higher intention to own the luxury goods. Besides own perceptive factor, the intention of purchase luxury goods can be influenced by family and friends (Danziger, 2004b). Sometimes consumers purchase luxury goods because they want to reward their hard work, enhance their quality of life, enhance confidence level, get memorable experiences, make themselves to be more unique and special (Danziger, 2004a) as well as to express their status symbol and fulfil the highest psychological needs (Nia & Judith, 2000).

Furthermore, according to Solomon (2004), there are two factors which are external and internal that influence purchase luxuries. In terms of external factors, as majority of university students are living in groups, group influence becomes a core factor towards purchasing intention. Normally, a consumer will covet other people's behaviour and wish to be part of them when the particular people are able to purchase a better and luxurious thing (Solomon, 2004). Moreover, a consumer will mostly, and

has a greater chance, to listen to or follow their leader's opinion and group's reference and thus get for recommendations as well as obtain any information regarding on certain products. In such cases, group influence might act as an intermediate to determine the purchase intention.

Nowadays, members of Generation Y will often purchase some products which are somehow similar to their peers and they know that their peers will accept them and ensure they are part of the group (Solomon, 2004). Besides that, another external factor, which is environment characteristics, can also influence the buying decision. Time and peer pressure, mood, ease or difficulty of obtaining information, budget constraint can also be several environmental factors that influence the purchasing intention (O'Cass & Julian, 2003). Other than that, the usage situation, the way the consumer feels at that time, social surrounding, temporal factor, situational self-image and time are also some environmental characteristics that influence purchase intention (Solomon, 2004). Lastly, the last external factor, marketing mix or generally known as "4Ps"- product, price, promotion and place (Kotler & Armstrong, 2004) which certify the consumers' purchase decision. The feature and quality of the product itself, the correct pricing, correct accessibility of place and right method of promotion can enhance the awareness of consumers (Vignali, 2001).

In terms of internal, the consumers' learning stage and memory would influence their purchase behaviour. As mentioned by Solomon (2004), consumers would encode the information of goods in their mind and this information might influence their next purchase behaviour. For example, a consumer who purchased a product which has lower quality might be driven to purchase a better one in the future. Besides that, the difference in income level as a social class which reflect the wealth and status hierarchy of a person will also influence purchase intention. Different standards of living affect buying behaviour, the higher possesion towards luxuries will indicate a better standard of living and thus lead to stronger purchase intention on luxuries. The third factor is motivation, which refers to a process that will ensure a consumer to do something for the purpose to achieve highest satisfaction. The degree of motivation will be affected by the consumer's needs and wants as well as the variety of situations (Reid, 2002). The fourth factor is perception which relates to a consumer's viewpoint and sense of identification (Hackley & Kitchen, 1998).

Typically, perception links with the feeling of a consumer who wishes to own a thing (Solomon, 2004). Personality, another internal factor which influences a consumer purchasing intention based on their personal perception, emotional outlook and cognitive (Dole & Schroeder, 2001; Lau & Shaffer, 1999). Personality which reflects the different modes of living will affect the purchasing pattern of a consumer in regard of his or her lifestyle. Personality is something learned rather than inborn and interplays between inborn process and surrounding environment influence (Lau & Shaffer, 1999). Attitude, last but not least, is a core antecedent of purchase intention through TPB (Ajzen, 1991) and this internal factor always make up one's mind to purchase luxuries. Therefore, a change in attitude can also lead to abandonment in behaviour to purchase (Ajzen, 1991).

Hence, it showed that purchasing intentions principally were dependent on "others" (externalized luxury) and "individual" (internalized luxury) which were opposite motivations but in fact they can potentially co-exist with one single consumer.

Therefore, this research study mainly focused on the key internal factor – attitude, and several perceived factors of consumer on purchase luxuries goods which are brand, quality and price.

Consumer's perception towards luxury goods

Perception refers a process on how a consumer select, organize as well as interpret the physical sensory elements such as sound, sight and smell (Ayupp, Lee, & Tudin, 2013). Perception is linked with the consumer's feeling toward the product they want to evaluate (Solomon, 2004). There are four latent of luxury value dimensions perceptions that have been extended in a combination of economic, social capital and cultural (Wiedmann *et al.,* 2007) which are financial, functional, individual and social dimensions.

In this study, three dimensions had been used; Firstly, "social dimension of luxury perception" addresses the perceived utility that consumers acquired by consuming a product or receiving a service recognized such as conspicuousness and prestige value within their own social group and thus affect their evaluation and adoption as well as propensity to purchase or consume luxury brands (Wiedmann *et al.*, 2007; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). Secondly, "functional dimension of luxury value perception" addresses the core benefit and basic utilities that drive the consumer based luxury value such as quality, usability, reliability and durability (Wiedmann *et al.*, 2007). Thirdly "financial dimension of luxury value perception" addresses directly the monetary aspect-price and it refers to the value of product which involved expression of dollars and cents, as well as things sacrificed to obtain a product (Wiedmann *et al.*, 2007).

These three key dimensions of luxury value perception encompass brand, quality and price are not identical with each other serve as the basis for segmentation of luxury goods (Wiedmann *et al.*, 2007). In fact, different people own a different perception and do not always agree as to which goods are luxuries and which are not. People's perceptions of luxury are strongly related with the economic concept such as price elasticity and quality. A better perception in term of quality, price, and brand towards the luxuries may lead to a higher intention to purchase the luxury goods.

Relationship between attitude, brand, quality and price with purchasing intention of luxury goods

Attitude reflects the behavior as an assessment of the degree to which a consumer likes or favors in performing the behavior (Finlay *et al.*, 2002). Bian (2010) found that among the young consumers, positive attitude will affect their purchase intention of luxury brands. Hence, is it believed that the university students with positive attitude are likely to improve the intention on purchase luxury goods.

Through an attitude dimension, a study had been conducted among Australian consumers and found that the consumers' overall satisfaction towards luxury goods would drive the consumers to repeatedly purchase those particular goods over time (Liu, Li, Mizerski, & Soh, 2012). This showed that the more favorable a consumer's attitude, the more likely the consumer was to purchase. Moreover, there is another previous study stated that consumer's attitude towards the goods will increase the

consumers' purchase intention of the luxuries (Shen, Dickson, Lennon, Montalto, & Zhang, 2003). Therefore, this study hypothesized that:

H_a1: There is a significant relationship between attitude and purchasing intention of luxury goods among university students in Selangor.

Luxury brand is defined as any products or services that going beyond the functionality and emphasizes regarding status and image of a consumer gained (Nueno & Quelch, 1998). The brand luxury index (BLI) had included five values which are hedonic, quality, extended self, uniqueness and conspicuousness as the indicator of luxury brand perception (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). On the other hand, there are three perspectives that are based on consumers' experiences on the value associated with a perceived brand based on BLI (Berthon, Pitt, Parent, & Berthon, 2009). Firstly, it focuses on the functional value of the brands which discusses the actual goods and services of luxuries. In this perspective, quality can be a core signal regarding how well the luxury products can perform (Berthon *et al.*, 2009). While in the second perspective, the consumers' experiential value towards luxury brands as it is something rare, unique and precious. The consumers' hedonic and uniqueness seeking motivations will drive them to buy an expensive luxury branded product (Berthon *et al.,* 2009). The third perspective had discussed the most important element of perceived brand characteristics which emphasis luxury brand symbolic value (Hung, Annie, Norman, Hackley, Tiwsakul, & Chou, 2011). Symbolic value refers to conspicuousness, wealth and expensiveness and how the possession of luxury brands could provide a luxury signal to the users as well as the others around (O'Cass, 2004). Hence, it is expected that these three perspectives could impact the consumers' motivation and intention to purchase luxury products (Keller, 2003). When a consumer values the luxury product based on any of these perspectives, then the probability of purchasing intention of the consumer will be higher.

Moreover, the brand is also essential as the brand name is always the first thing to consider for prestige shopping (Deeter-Schmelz, Moore, & Goebel, 2000). Lu and Pras (2011) in their study proved that among the consumers in China, when a consumer had already accustomed and recognized a particular brand of product that they always purchase, the existing knowledge toward the existing brand would ensure the consumer has a higher chance to purchase again the products of the brand next time. Thus, it showed that a positive brand perception of the luxury goods may lead a person to have the intention to purchase the same brand again in the future since the confident level on the brand already existed in the beginning. The hypothesis related to perceived brand is as follows:

H_a2: There is a significant relationship between perceived brand and purchasing intention of luxury goods among university students in Selangor.

Quality was one of the elements on BLI and also a core indicator segment of perceived brand (Christodoulides, Michaelidou, & Li, 2009). Consumers always confuse price, brand and quality (Deeter-Schmelz *et al.*, 2000) and often use brand as a quality indicator (Husic & Cicic, 2009). In fact, brand refers to the evaluation and

adoption of symbolism as mentioned previously. While quality refers to the signals of what the product does, the capability and how well it can perform (Berthon *et al.*, 2009). Although price, brand and quality can be related with each other, but they are not dependent with each other. A good branded luxury goods may not have the highest quality while a high good's price may not necessarily be high quality. People are still able to buy high quality luxuries with a lower premium price. Gentry *et al.* (2001) in their study found that one reason why consumers rather spend higher price to buy luxurious goods is because of the superior quality that lead highest satisfaction.

In field of luxury products, perceived quality often refers to non-mass production and consumers would definitely prefer to buy hand-made luxury brand products that offer excellent product quality and performance as compared to non-luxury (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004; O'Cass & Frost, 2002). Higher quality is an important fundamental character of a luxury product in term of "sine qua non" (a Norwegian term which means an essential absolutely condition) and the consumption often lead the consumers to receive higher value of luxury (Garfein, 1989; Groth & McDaniel, 1993; Roux, 1995). Although these studies found that consumers will purchase the luxury goods with a higher price because of its high quality, but this may only due to the consumers' own perception since there is no study that can prove that a higher price of luxurious goods have a higher quality. But in fact, when it is about the luxuries, for sure people will buy the higher quality ones, so when they perceived that the higher quality of luxuries will be higher in price, then they will have the intention to purchase a higher price of luxury goods. So, it can be concluded that a higher perceived quality towards a luxury good may lead to the higher intention of the consumer to purchase it and this study hypothesized that:

H$_a$3: There is a significant relationship between perceived quality and purchasing intention of luxury goods among university students in Selangor.

Price has a complex structure and it plays an important role in affecting consumers' purchasing intention. According to Dodds, Monroe and Grewal (1991), purchase intention tend to be reduced when the actual price of products is higher than the acceptable perceived price range but, if the price is lower than the acceptable price range, the consumers will have lack of confidence towards the products' quality (Peter, 1999). If the purchasing intention of luxury goods among university students is being examined, it will show that there is positive relationship between perceived price and purchase intention of luxury goods and the relationship is getting stronger day by day. For example, a young consumer will go to a higher priced luxury handbag rather than choosing a cheap one because the branded handbag is not just a bag for them to put things but also a good to show status and wealth. Price has played an important role in purchasing decision because it acts as the only cost that consumer can best determine among several costs that they need to give up in order to get the goods. There was a study which studied on consumers' selection of an outlet at which to make a purchase and price was consistently stated as a major influencing factor (Shopping Monitor, 2010). Previous studies asserted that price can have more than one role in making purchasing decision. Price perception can be defined as the

consumer's perceptual representation or subjective perception of the real price of the product (Junghwa & Byoungho, 2013).

Furthermore, price perception can also be known as the process of price valuation and interpretation of products or services by the consumers (Bopeng & Jung-Hwan, 2013). Perceived price among the consumers might happen over a course of time, the price information is obtained either visually or auditorily and interpret it in order to develop new approches to it. Price perception can either positively or negatively affect the purchasing intentions of consumers, this is because it is considered as a multidimensional base. Generally, demand means the quantity of a product that consumer will be willing to purchase at a particular price while as according to a rule of thumb, the higher the prices of a certain product, the lower the demand for it will be. This statement can only be applied to ordinary goods, but not luxury goods. When the prices of necessities rise, the quantity purchased will decline but it doesn't happen to luxury markets. In terms of luxuries, Groth and McDaniel (1993), found that perceived price is more to prestige pricing, which means setting a rather high price to suggest high quality and status will make consumers more likely to buy. Some of the consumers are willing to pay higher prices because they perceived that a higher price results in high product quality and eventually enhances purchase intention. Thus, it showed that when the price of the luxury goods is high, people will perceive that the good's quality is good, and it may lead to a higher purchasing intention of the luxury goods. Thus,

H_a4: There is a significant relationship between perceived price and purchasing intention of luxury goods among university students in Selangor.

Methodology
This study is an empirical research design and employs quantitative research approach to determine the background and characteristics of a chosen population. Besides that, this study is based on correlational research design to determine the relationship between independent variables and dependent variable. This study examined the attitude, perceived brand, perceived quality, perceived price and purchasing intention of luxury goods among university students in Selangor.

This study is designed to be conducted at Selangor. Selangor is a state located on the west coast of Peninsular Malaysia and it is one of the well-developed state out of 13 states in the country. Selangor capital is in Shah Alam and it owns the country's main entry point which is Port Klang, the largest port in Malaysia. Other than that, Selangor is chosen as the location for this study is because most of the higher education institutions are concentrated in this state, thus making Selangor become the largest higher education sector in Malaysia. From a total of twenty-three private universities (IPTS) in Selangor, one IPTS is randomly chosen as cluster in this study, which is Multimedia University Cyberjaya (MMU) while from the of total four public universities (IPTA) in Selangor, one IPTA is randomly chosen, which is Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM).

The sampling method used in this study is multi-cluster sampling method. Multi-cluster sampling is a type of probability sampling technique where the population is divided into groups or cluster. Each cluster will be a small scale representation of the

total population. The multi-cluster sampling method is chosen because it can help to simplify the population and help researchers with limited funds and time to sample from the populations. Moreover, this method does not have the restriction on how researchers divide the population into groups and it is a method of convenience.

A random sampling technique is then used on any relevant clusters to choose which clusters to be included in this study and the same technique is applied to the elements from each of the selected clusters since it is multi-stage cluster sampling. First of all, all the clusters in the population are listed, and then the chosen cluster will be selected by a simple random sampling (SRS). The elements in the selected clusters of the first-stage are then sampled in the second-stage by using the same method. One cluster will represent one university and 150 respondents are randomly selected. From total twenty-three private universities (IPTS) in Selangor, one IPTS was randomly chosen as cluster in this study, which was Multimedia University Cyberjaya (MMU) while from total four public universities (IPTA) in Selangor, one IPTA was randomly chosen, which was Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM). According to Curry (1984), for the population size more than 10,000 respondents, the sampling percent shall be 1%. The population size of undergraduate students in UPM was approximately 15,000 (Nizam, 2017) and hence a total of 150 respondents is needed. Since this study also includes IPTS (MMU), the same sample size of 150 was also adopted for MMU. Thus, a sample of total 300 respondents was involved in this study. A total 150 respondents were selected randomly from each university, with 75 males and 75 females of respondents.

The measurement items for attitudes were assessed via the scale by Dubois and Laurent (1994) which consists of 11 items. The original scale reliability by Dubois and Laurent (1994) was 0.80 and based on the pre-test, the reliability of the new adapted instrument was 0.975. Meanwhile, the scales by Berthon *et al*. (2009) and Vigneron and Johnson (2004) which consists of three dimensions such as functional, experiential, and symbolic value with a total of 12 items were used to measure perceived brand. The scale reliability for functional, experiential, and symbolic value dimensions are 0.867, 0.875, and 0.787 respectively. However, in this study, this variable was measured as an overall and based on the pre-test, the reliability was 0.979. Perceived price was assessed by modifying the items from Lichtenstein, Netemeyer and Burton (1990) and Lichtenstein, Ridgway and Netemeyer (1993) and it consists of six items with the reliability of 0.947, compared to the original alpha of 0.88, as obtained by Lichtenstein *et al*. (1990); Lichtensteinn *et al*. (1993). Based on the pre-test, the reliability of the new adapted instrument is 0.947. Finally, the measurement of purchasing intention of luxury goods was adapted the scale by Shukla (2010). It consists of five items and this scale has high reliability, with the Cronbach's alpha of 0.87 while the pre-test reliability is 0.953. All of the variables were measured by using a 5-point Likert-scale, which ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. The instrument of this study, i.e., the questionnaire was designed in English. The questionnaire requires respondent to fill in their general personal characteristics questions such as age, gender, education level and race before answering the questions on attitude and purchasing intention of luxury goods. The data collections were done by paper-and-pen with drop and pick method to collect the self-administered questionnaires.

Descriptive analysis was used to identify and describe the distributional characteristics of the variables in the study as well as to describe the respondents' background. Then bivariate analysis was used to determine the relationships between pairs of variables in a data set, so the Pearson correlation analysis is used to reflect the degree to which the variables were related. Finally, multiple regression analysis was used to test the unique predictor of purchasing intention of luxury goods among university's student.

Findings and Discussions

Respondents' personal background
The demographic variables of this study include age, gender, race, university and education. A total of 300 respondents had participated in the study. The age range of the respondents is within 18 to 29 years old and the mean of age of respondents fell in the range of 22 to 25 years old (22.21) with the contribution of 60.7 percent. There were only 1.3 percent of respondents accounted for the age range of 26 to 29 years old. The sample consisted of an equal number of male and female that was 150 respondents for each gender. In terms of races, Chinese respondents accounted for 50.7 percent and followed by Malay respondents with 26.3 percent and India with 17.0 percent. There were only 6.0 percent of the respondents were from other races which is Nigerian. In terms of university, the sample consisted of an equal number of respondents which is 150 from each university, which are Universiti Putra Malaysia and Multimedia University. Regarding the education level, most of the respondents were from degree holder (71.0 %) and followed by diploma holder (20.3 %). Both Master and PhD holders were accounted for only 8.0 percent and 0.7 percent respectively in this study.

Frequency distribution for main variables of the study
The frequency and percentages of respondents' responses for each of the items in a 5-point Likert scale of all of the variables were discussed (Table 1). For a meaningful discussion, Scale 1 and Scale 2 which represented "strongly disagree" and "disagree" were being categorized as "disagree". Furthermore, scale 3 which represented "neutral" will remain the same and being categorized as "neutral" while Scale 4 and Scale 5 which indicated "agree" and "strongly agree" were being categorized as "agree".

Table 1: Frequency Distribution for Main Variables of the Study (N=300)

No.	Items	Disagree n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Agree n (%)
	Attitude			
1.	In my opinion, luxury goods are good and worth.	31 (10.3)	119 (39.7)	150 (50.0)
2.	In my opinion, luxury goods are	27 (9.0)	133 (44.3)	140 (46.7)

fashioned.

3.	Truly luxury goods cannot be mass produced.	32 (10.7)	124 (41.3)	144 (48.0)
4.	I feel good, conformable and easy in a luxury shop.	38 (12.7)	130 (43.3)	132 (44.0)
5.	People who buy luxury goods demonstrate their class status.	39 (13.0)	116 (38.7)	145 (48.3)
6.	Real luxury goods are unobtrusive and noticeable.	28 (9.3)	119 (39.7)	153 (51.0)
7.	Luxury goods make life more beautiful.	44 (14.7)	118 (39.3)	138 (46.0)
8.	I buy luxury goods primarily for my pleasure.	38 (12.7)	141 (47.0)	121 (40.3)
9.	When I wear a luxury item, I feel like decorative myself.	48 (16.0)	130 (43.3)	122 (40.7)
10.	I could talk about luxury goods for hours.	48 (16.0)	145 (48.3)	107 (35.7)
11.	I think that a luxury good must be somehow own its unique quality.	18 (6.0)	108 (36.0)	174 (58.0)

Perceived Brand

12.	Luxury goods are handmade (crafted) rather than machinery	28 (9.3)	68 (22.7)	204 (68.0)
13.	Luxury goods have the best quality	17 (5.7)	58 (19.3)	225 (75.0)
14.	Luxury goods are sophisticated	16 (5.3)	60 (20.0)	224 (74.7)
15.	Luxury goods are superior	16 (5.3)	55 (18.3)	229 (76.4)
16.	Luxury goods are precious and valuable	19 (6.4)	37 (12.3)	244 (81.3)
17.	Luxury goods are rare in quality	20 (6.7)	58 (19.3)	222 (74.0)
18.	Luxury goods are unique and non-widespread	17 (5.7)	40 (13.3)	243 (81.0)
19.	Luxury goods are attracting	7 (2.3)	90 (30.0)	203 (67.7)
20.	Luxury goods are amazing and stunning	22 (7.3)	54 (18.0)	224 (74.7)
21.	Luxury goods is conspicuous and eye-catching	16 (5.3)	61 (20.3)	223 (74.4)
22.	Luxury goods is expensive	20 (6.7)	38 (12.7)	242 (80.6)
23.	Luxury goods are for the wealthy	15 (5.0)	61 (20.3)	224 (74.7)

	Perceived Quality			
24.	Luxury goods own something new and special that cannot be found in other goods	55 (18.3)	75 (25.0)	170 (56.7)
25.	Luxury goods are very user friendly.	50 (16.7)	108 (36.0)	142 (47.3)
26.	Luxury goods improve my social status.	32 (10.6)	102 (34.0)	166 (55.4)
27.	Luxury goods are worth and have good quality product.	37 (12.3)	88 (29.3)	175 (58.4)
28.	Luxury goods make me feel impressed with myself.	34 (11.4)	100 (33.3)	166 (55.3)
29.	Luxury goods always do its basic job very consistently.	24 (8.0)	120 (40.0)	156 (52.0)
	Perceived Price			
30.	Buying a high priced branded luxury goods makes me feel good about myself.	70 (23.3)	96 (32.0)	134 (44.7)
31.	I think others make judgments about me by the kinds of goods and brands I buy.	78 (26.0)	80 (26.7)	142 (47.3)
32.	My friends will think I am cheap if I consistently buy the lowest priced version of a luxury goods.	71 (23.7)	107 (35.7)	122 (40.6)
33.	Even for a relatively inexpensive product, I think that buying a costly brand luxury goods are impressive and noticeable.	73 (24.3)	90 (30.0)	137 (45.7)
34.	Buying an expensive brand of a goods makes me feel classy.	62 (20.7)	99 (33.0)	139 (46.3)
35.	It says something to people when I buy the high price version of a luxury goods.	81 (27.0)	100 (33.3)	119 (39.7)
	Purchasing Intention			
36.	I purchase luxury goods to show who I am.	61 (20.3)	88 (29.4)	151 (50.3)
37.	I would buy a luxury goods as it's truly show the symbolic status.	42 (14.0)	117 (39.0)	141 (47.0)
38.	I think that owning luxury goods can indicate a symbol of wealth.	33 (11.0)	95 (31.7)	172 (57.3)
39.	I would rather pay more for a luxury goods if it has worth quality and branded image.	34 (11.3)	85 (28.3)	181 (60.4)

40.	I definitely will buy luxury goods because it makes me feel more acceptable in my work circle.	43 (14.3)	84 (28.0)	173 (57.7)

Based on the table, it shows that most of the respondents were tended to agree that attitude is important in determining the purchasing intention of luxury goods since most of the "agree" percentage of each item is high. It can be seen that there were 58.0 percent of respondents admitted that a luxury good has its own unique quality with only 6.0 percent of respondents didn't think so. Besides, there were 51.0 percent of respondents agree with the item "Real luxury goods are unobtrusive and noticeable" and 50.0 percent of respondents think that luxury goods are good and worthy. In fact, there were 35.7 percent of respondents who can talk about luxury goods for an hour. In short, it can be shown that most of the respondents have a positive attitude towards luxury goods as they think that luxury goods are worthy, good, unobtrusive, noticeable and unique.

The study also found that majority of respondents had a positive perceived brand as most of them agreed with the items asked. There were 81.0 percent of respondents perceived that luxury goods are unique and non-widespread while 80.6 percent think that luxury goods is expensive. The highest percentage in term of agree is 81.3 where respondents admitted that luxury goods are precious and valuable. There were more than 60 percent of respondents that agreed with every item in perceived brand and there were only 2.3 percent of respondents think that luxury goods are attracting. Furthermore, only a few of the respondents who disagreed with the items "luxury goods are superior", "luxury goods are sophisticated", "luxury goods are unique and non-widespread" and "luxury goods are for the wealthy".

About 58.4 percent of the respondents think that luxury goods are worthy and have good quality product and luxury goods own something new and special that cannot be found in other goods. Furthermore, there were about 55.3 percent of respondents perceived that luxury goods make them feel impressed with themselves and the goods may help to improve the social status. As according to Gentry *et al.* (2001), luxury goods can help to lead a higher customer satisfaction due to its superior quality and customers are willing to buy it, although they have to spend higher price in order to get it.

Meanwhile, in terms of perceived brand, it was found that there were 47.3 percent of respondents agreed that people will make judgement on them based on the kinds of goods and brand that they purchase. So, some of the consumers were willing to pay a higher price in order to get a better brand and goods. Besides, there were 45.0 percent of respondents perceived that buying a high priced branded luxury goods make them feel good about themselves. As according to Groth and McDaniel (1993), by setting a rather high price for a certain luxury can suggest a high quality and status which will make consumers more likely to buy it. On the other hand, there were only 27.0 percent of respondents disagree that "It says something to people when I buy the high price version of a luxury goods" meanwhile about 40 percent of respondents agreed with this item.

Finally, for the purchasing intention, there were about 57.0 percent of respondents perceived that owning luxury goods can indicate their symbol of wealth

and luxury goods can make them feel more acceptable in their job field. According to O'Cass and Julian (2003), environment factors such as time and peer pressure, social surrounding and situational self-image can influence the purchasing intention of consumers.

The Relationship between Attitude, Perceived Brand, Perceived Quality, Perceived Price and Purchasing Intention

The relationships had been examined by using Pearson correlation analysis and the results are summarized in Table 2 below.

Table 2: The Result of Pearson Correlation Analysis between Attitude, Perceived Brand, Perceived Quality, Perceived Price and Purchasing Intention

Variable	Behavioral Intention	
	R	P
Attitude	0.433***	0.000
Perceived Brand	0.626***	0.000
Perceived Quality	0.586***	0.000
Perceived Price	0.455***	0.000

Note: * Level of significant is at p<0.001**

H_a1: There is a significant relationship between attitude and purchasing intention of luxury goods among university students in Selangor

Based on the table above, it showed that attitude had significant of p-value which was smaller than 0.05 and it also had positive r-value (r=0.433). Thus, it indicated that there was a positive significant relationship between attitude and purchasing intention, H_a1 was supported. The findings of this study showed that the more favourable consumers' attitude toward luxury goods, the stronger the intention of he or she will make to perform the purchasing (Ajzen, 1991).

H_a2: There is a significant relationship between perceived brand and purchasing intention of luxury goods among university students in Selangor

The findings of the study revealed that perceived brand of university students in Selangor was significantly correlated with purchasing intention of luxury goods (r = 0.626, p = 0.000). This result also denoted a positive relationship between perceived brand and purchasing intention, which means that respondents who have high perceived brand is reported to have high purchasing intention of luxury goods. Therefore, H_a2 was supported. As according to Keller (1993), consumers' brand perception towards luxuries will determine how they perceived about the luxury brand and response towards different stimuli regarding the brand. Besides, consumers with

a more favourable level of perceived brand perceived that brands can represent their prestige and social status, so, they will be more likely to own the intention to purchase expensive and high-status brand luxury goods (Goode, 2001).

H$_a$3: There is a significant relationship between perceived quality and purchasing intention of luxury goods among university students in Selangor.

Based on Table 2, the findings of the study revealed that that perceived quality was significantly correlated with purchasing intention of luxury goods (r = 0.586, p = 0.000). Positive r-value indicated that higher perception of university students toward quality will cause a higher in purchasing intention of luxury goods. Therefore, H$_a$3 was supported. Previous studies had shown that consumer's perceived quality had a significant direct effect on purchasing intention (Chatrattikorn & Buavaraporn, 2004). As according to Parasuraman (1988), perceived quality represents a strong brand which may help to add value to consumers' purchasing evaluation, thus it will directly lead to their decision making about the quality of the luxury goods and form the intention to purchase it. Furthermore, Monroe and Krishnan (1985) had submitted that perceived quality will directly influence purchasing intention, the more the perceived quality, the higher the purchasing intention of luxury goods will be.

H$_a$4: There is a significant relationship between perceived price and purchasing intention of luxury goods among university students in Selangor.

Based on the finding, it showed that perceived price had significant of p-value (0.000) which was smaller than 0.05 and it also had positive r-value (0.455). It showed that there was a significant relationship between perceived price and purchasing intention. Positive r-value indicated that university students with high perception of price reported to have higher purchasing intention of luxury goods. Therefore, H$_a$4 was supported. This result is consistent with previous study which also found that the higher the perceived price, the higher the purchasing intention of luxury goods, perceived price is significantly affected to purchasing intention (Hsinkuang, Ren Yeh, & Yi Ching, 2000)

The result of research findings had proven the variables such as attitude, perceived brand, quality and price were significantly influenced by purchasing intention. Since purchasing intention serve as the pre-requisite for purchase behavior, so, it is very important to investigate on the factors that will influence purchasing intention. Thus, this study proved that brand is the major concern necessary to capture the purchase intention of consumers toward luxuries. The brand itself may help the consumers differentiate the product's unique image that makes the particular product differ from the other. Sometime, the consumers can easily visualize the outlook of certain goods just by knowing the brand name or brand logo. Moreover, the value and functionality of the product brand that shaped the consumers in belief in the brand value that would ensure the consumers remains attached to the brand

irrespective of change in other features such as price. The perceived brand was the motivation for the consumers to purchase the items in the future.

Basically, attitude, perceived brand, perceived quality and perceived price were significantly related with purchasing intention while perceived quality appeared to be the main factor that significantly affect the purchasing intention of luxury goods. Purchasing intention is very important because it acts as an effective tool to use in predicting purchasing process. It means the self-promise that has a proposal to buy the products later on and make repetition purchases of the specific product (Halim & Hamed, 2005). Before consumers purchase the luxuries, they will collect the information regarding on the desired luxury goods, such as in term of quality, brand, price and form own perception towards the goods, then they will start thinking to make purchase decision which turns into behaviour when he/she make one purchase attempt of the specific goods.

Quality is the competitive advantage of the luxury goods on the opponent goods. It includes the manufactured design and structure of the goods and it can satisfy the users' needs which may include different features and would enhance the performance of the goods (Dunk, 2002). Since quality is the key factor to measure consumers' purchasing intention, so it should be improved from time to time in order to increase the goods' performance and satisfy the consumers' needs. According to Tsiotuso (2006), consumers perceived quality is the evaluation about the goods' perception related to the pre-eminence or excellence that persuaded by the personal feelings and that differentiates the product from others which may cause purchase intention thus create consumers' satisfaction. Therefore, it is very important for companies to follow the consumers' driven quality standard and provide good quality of luxury goods for consumers in order to retain the purchasing intention and consumer satisfaction level.

The Most Influential Predictor of Purchasing Intention
Multiple regression analysis was used to find the most influential predictor of purchasing intention among university students in Selangor. Table 3 indicated the results of regression analysis of university students' purchasing intention in Selangor. All the significant predictors were tested in bivariate analysis before they entered into regression model.

Table 3: The Result of Multiple Regression Analysis for Unique Predictor(s) of Purchasing Intention

Variables	Purchasing Intention			Sig. t
	B	**SE.B**	**Beta, β**	
Attitude	0.025	0.028	0.040	0.366
Perceived Brand	0.148	0.025	0.281***	0.000
Perceived Quality	0.369	0.039	0.428***	0.000
Perceived Price	0.243	0.033	0.321***	0.000
Adjusted R²				
F		0.585		

Model Significance	106.250
	0.000

Note: ***Level of significant is at p<0.001**

As depicted in Table 3, the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 58.5% (F= 106.250, p ≤ 0.001). The value of the variance indicated that 58.5% of the variance for purchasing intention can be explained by attitude, perceived brand, perceived quality and perceived price. However, another 41.5% of the variation can be explained by other potential factors. There were total three predictors for purchasing intention, which were perceived brand, perceived quality, and perceived price. The results showed that perceived quality (β = 0.428, p ≤ 0.001) appeared to be the strongest predictor for purchasing intention, then followed by perceived price (β = 0.321, p ≤ 0.001) and lastly perceived brand (β = 0.281, p ≤ 0.001). Results revealed that respondents who have a high perception on perceived quality are reported to have a higher purchasing intention of luxury goods. However, as can be seen from the result, attitude was found not the be significant when the interaction effects with other predictors were counted. This is in fact can be supported by the results of Pearson correlation analysis, which showed that attitude was having the least r-value as compared to the other predictors. Perhaps, it also showed that the other three predictors were more important to the respondents in their consideration of buying the luxury goods.

Conclusion and Implications

This study was designed to gain a greater understanding on purchasing intention of luxury goods among university students in Selangor. This study had provided an exploratory examination of the relationship between attitude, perceived brand, perceived quality, perceived price and purchasing intention of luxury goods.

In the first place, the study showed that there was a significant relationship between attitude, perceived brand, perceived quality, perceived price and purchasing intention. Since luxury goods were highly fragmented in Malaysia and it will highly contribute to domestic economy, thus it is important to investigate the factors that will lead consumers to spend on luxury goods.

On the other hand, this study can benefit the top management of companies to realize consumers' consideration on purchasing luxury goods. This study had found that perceived quality factor was valued by most of the respondents. Thus, the company's top management can plan on new business strategies that focus on quality of the goods since the result of the study showed that university students' perception of quality will trigger their purchasing intention of luxury goods the most. Also, the penetration in the luxury market competition is very challenging and this study would help the marketers to focus and strengthen on the most critical feature of the product in order to increase the sale and maximize their profits. Furthermore, in terms of perceived quality, the male gender showed higher significant value than female and this had shown that male respondents had a higher concern on perceived quality than female, thus, the marketer can focus more on the male market and concern with the quality of male's goods.

In addition, this study can also serve as a guideline for future researchers. Since the available researches done in terms of purchasing intention for luxury goods were less in Malaysia, so, this study may become the references for future researchers to have a better understanding and linkage on the factors that will affect purchasing intention of luxury goods among university students. Besides, future researchers may also investigate deeper on the significant predictors that affect purchasing intention.

Lastly, the results from this study also offered implications to the government as they can develop policies which stress on the significant predictors of this study to expand the luxury markets in Malaysia, which at the same time may attract more international brand investors to invest in Malaysia. Thus, it can help to boost the demand of luxury goods and drive the luxury market to greater heights in the years to come which may indirectly enhance Malaysia's economic performance.

Limitations and Recommendations

Every single research study has its own limitation (Denscombe, 2002). There were several limitations in this study due to its exploratory nature which can be considered as the weaknesses of this study. First of all, there were only 300 students out of the total of 338,456 students of IPTA and IPTS in Malaysia get involved in this study. This was due to the time and money limitations which make it hard to conduct the study in every university. In order to get a more consistent and highly reliable result, a larger sample size from every state of Malaysia should be taken. The sample size of 500 is recommended as it will provide more appropriate result (Roscoe, 1975). A larger sample size can increase the representativeness of the study and enhance the contribution to luxury markets since a larger amount of respondents from every state will ease the companies to identify their marketing strategy accordingly. Moreover, a larger sample size can also provide a more generalized result in order to find out a more significant relationship from the data.

Furthermore, there were also respondent's biases in the study. This can be shown when some of the respondents are lazy and simply filled in the questionnaire, which might indirectly cause the results to be inaccurate. For example, many respondents tend to choose the neutral option when answering the question, this might show that they didn't understand or didn't put effort in responding to the question. This is not a good phenomenon in terms of generating a representative result with too many neutral responses. Therefore, in order to overcome this limitation, the options for the Likert scale questions should amend to be in even instead of odd numbers so that the respondents would be able to provide a more certain response instead of neutral response which basically not useful in generating representative results.

On the other hand, the data collection is mainly through the quantitative or closed-ended survey questionnaires distributions. This had limited the research to explore new underlying opinions that could be obtained through the interview with respondents. For instance, the data collection may lead to lack of validity as the respondents might still choose an answer even though all the options answer given were not related, respondents will still read and interpret the questions differently and answer based on their own understanding (Sekaran, 2003). Hence, there is no

guarantee regarding how truthful the respondents are when answering the questions, but due to the time and cost constraint, this method couldn't be achieved in this study. So, if there is no time and budget constraint in future research, the future researchers could choose to have open-ended or qualitative face-to-face interview in data collection. The interview approach may ensure the respondents provide deeper and detail answer based on their knowledge, experiences and behaviors as well as ensure pre-judgments as the respondents is given opportunities to explain the answer they provided (Sekaran, 2003).

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