



***RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SEX APPEAL, ATTITUDE TOWARDS
ADVERTISEMENT, BRAND AND PURCHASE INTENTION ON LUXURY
FASHION***

NURFAREENA ZAHARI

GSM 2019 5



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FASHION**

By

NURFAREENA ZAHARI

**Thesis submitted to Putra Business School in Fulflment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Science**

January 2019

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved parents, Zahari Bin Radi (A.M.N) and Faridah Binti Ahmad. Thank you to the rest of my family members too. Thank you for being there throughout ups and downs, tears and joys and pains and gains.

This thesis is also dedicated for the unrequited love that makes one person stronger.

“After all, these are not the memoirs of an empress, nor of a queen. These are memoirs of another kind”. – *Memoirs of a Geisha*



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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science

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January 2019

Chairman : Professor Abu Bakar Abd Hamid, PhD
Faculty : Putra Business School

Despite the recent economic downturn, luxury fashion industry remains as one of the most profitable industries worldwide. This is because consumers are having higher purchase intention and willing to consume luxury fashion brands and goods than ever before. The growth of sales in emerging economies has surpassed the mature economies, which make them as the most attractive market for luxury fashion industry. This scenario also includes Malaysia which is one of the most attractive markets in Asian regions.

Although luxury fashion marketers frequently adopt sex appeal as their major selling technique, little research has been conducted in regards to sex appeal in luxury fashion advertising. This is ironic given a large number of luxury fashion houses that adopt sex appeal in their advertising. The degrees of sex appeal such as low, medium and high can affect attitudes, which inadvertently influence purchase intention.

This study will take an initiative to identify the relationship between sex appeal, attitude towards advertisement, brand and purchase intention featuring “Dolce & Gabbana” in Malaysia. Data from a survey of 160 of local postgraduate students at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) were gathered and analysed by using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Regression analysis. The study finds that the degrees of sex appeal have significant effects on both attitude towards the advertisement and the brand but not purchase intention. It was found that the low degree of sex appeal generated the most favourable attitude towards the advertisement and the brand, followed by the medium and the high degree of sex appeal. The medium degree of sex appeal generated only a slightly lower favourable attitude towards the advertisement and the brand than the low degree of sex appeal. Finally, attitude towards

the advertisement and brand have significant positive relationships with purchase intention. The findings of this study provide an overview and clearer vision of the relationship between the degrees of sex appeal, attitude towards advertisement and brand and purchase intention on luxury fashion in Malaysia. Limitations and recommendations for future research are highlighted.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

**HUBUNGAN ANTARA TARIKAN SEKS, SIKAP TERHADAP IKLAN,
JENAMA DAN NIAT UNTUK MEMBELI FESYEN MEWAH**

Oleh

NURFAREENA ZAHARI

Januari 2019

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Meskipun terdapat kemelesetan ekonomi baru-baru ini, industri fesyen mewah kekal sebagai salah satu industri yang paling menguntungkan di seluruh dunia. Ini kerana pengguna mempunyai niat membeli yang lebih tinggi dan bersedia untuk menggunakan jenama dan barang fesyen mewah daripada sebelumnya. Pertumbuhan jualan dalam ekonomi negara membangun telah melangkaui ekonomi negara maju, yang menjadikannya sebagai pasaran paling menarik bagi industri fesyen mewah. Senario ini juga termasuk Malaysia yang merupakan antara salah satu pasaran paling menarik di rantau Asia.

Walaupun pemasar fesyen mewah sering menggunakan tarikan seks sebagai teknik jualan utama mereka, terdapat sedikit penyelidikan yang telah dilakukan berkaitan dengan tarikan seks dalam pengiklanan jenama fesyen mewah. Ini adalah ironi kerana kebanyakan jenama fesyen mewah menggunakan tarikan seks dalam iklan mereka. Tahap tarikan seks seperti rendah, sederhana dan tinggi boleh mempengaruhi sikap, dan seterusnya mempengaruhi niat untuk membeli.

Kajian ini akan mengambil inisiatif untuk mengenal pasti hubungan antara tarikan seks, sikap terhadap iklan dan jenama dan niat untuk membeli dengan memaparkan iklan "Dolce & Gabbana" di Malaysia. Data daripada tinjauan terhadap 160 pelajar pasca siswazah tempatan di Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) telah dikumpulkan dan dianalisis dengan menggunakan Analisis Faktor Pengesahan (CFA), Analisis Varians (ANOVA) dan Analisis Regresi. Kajian mendapati bahawa tahap tarikan seks mempunyai kesan yang ketara terhadap kedua-dua sikap terhadap iklan dan jenama tetapi tidak kepada niat membeli. Kajian juga menunjukkan yang tahap tarikan seks yang rendah menjana sikap yang paling positif terhadap iklan dan jenama, diikuti

dengan tahap tarikan seks yang sederhana dan tinggi. Tahap tarikan seks yang sederhana turut menjana sikap yang positif terhadap iklan dan jenama walaupun kurang dari tahap tarikan seks yang rendah. Pandangan terhadap iklan dan jenama mempunyai hubungan positif yang signifikan dengan niat pembelian. Penemuan kajian ini memberikan gambaran keseluruhan dan visi yang lebih jelas tentang hubungan antara tarikan seks, sikap terhadap iklan dan jenama dan niat pembelian fesyen mewah di Malaysia. Batasan dan cadangan untuk penyelidikan masa depan disertakan.



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Third, I would like to say thank you to my family, especially my parents that supported me along the journey. I love all of you.

Thank you to all the teachers and friends that I met along the way. Your kindness will never be forgotten.

I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 25 January 2019 to conduct the final examination of Nurfareena Zahari on her thesis entitled “Relationships between Sex Appeal, Attitude towards Advertisement, Brand and Purchase Intention on Luxury Fashion” in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U. (A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Master of Science.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGFI	Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
CR	Construct Reliability
ATAD	Attitude towards Advertisement
ATBRAND	Attitude towards Brand
PI	Purchase Intention
GFI	Goodness-of-Fit Index
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error Approximation

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Marketers of luxury fashion houses spend substantial amounts of money, time and energy to develop advertising campaigns that will be successful and lead to sales. This is because luxury fashion market is indeed a huge and a profitable industry. However, despite the prospect of gaining enormous revenues and profits, the luxury fashion market is also highly competitive (Jain, Khan, & Mishra, 2017; Okonkwo, 2016). There are masses of luxury fashion brands like Gucci, Prada, Burberry and Chanel competing with each other to gain a market share (Okonkwo, 2016; Han, Nunes, & Dreze, 2010).

Based on publicly available data, the world's 100 largest luxury goods companies generated sales of US\$212 billion in 2015 (Deloitte, 2018, McKinsey & Company, 2015). The average luxury goods annual sales for a Top 100 company are now US\$2.1 billion (Deloitte, 2018). Luxury fashion industry generates billions of dollars in sales worldwide and the sales keep increasing from year to year, prominently in emerging markets (Deloitte, 2018; Jain, Khan, & Mishra, 2017; Shukla & Purani, 2012). This indicates that even though luxury fashion market is super competitive, costly and complex, it is no doubt is the very profitable industry and worthwhile to study (Jain, Khan, & Mishra, 2017; Okonkwo, 2016).

Based on the data of the worldwide luxury fashion market, the percentage of consumers claiming to have increased their spending in the last 5 years was 70 per cent in China, Russia and the United Arab Emirates (Deloitte, 2018; New Strait Times, 2017). On the other hand, the percentage is decreasing in the more mature markets such as the EU, the US and Japan with 53 per cent (Deloitte, 2018; New Strait Times, 2017). This indicates that the emerging markets such as China, Russia and Malaysia are becoming more attractive and lucrative for luxury fashion marketers. Malaysia is one of the six Southeast Asian countries (in addition to Singapore, Vietnam, Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia) that is "driving Asian growth" of luxury fashion market (Rabimov, 2018; New Strait Times, 2017).

In Malaysia, similar trend towards visible possession of luxury fashion brands and goods could be seen. The rise of upper middle and middle classes in Malaysia contribute to the growth in luxury fashion consumption (Young, 2013). It can be seen that many young professionals are parting their money to splurge on luxury fashion brands and goods in order to boost and reflect their status in society (Young, 2013; De Run et al., 2010).

Besides that, the sharp increase of millionaires in Malaysia has triggered the rise in luxury fashion consumption (Leong, 2017). The number of millionaires in Malaysia with those having a net worth of more than RM 4 million are nearly doubled in the last decade (Leong, 2017). Therefore, it is no doubt that globalisations, growing number of young and well-educated people, the surging numbers of the ultra-rich, upper middle and middle classes and the increase in disposable incomes contribute to the growing sales in luxury fashion industry, especially in emerging economies like Malaysia (Jain, Khan, & Mishra, 2017; Schultz & Jain, 2015; Bian & Forsythe, 2012; Shukla, 2012).

Purchase intention plays a big role as it can promote and trigger luxury fashion consumption among the individuals (Bian & Forsythe, 2012; Hung et al., 2011). Many research have studied the significance of purchase intention in consumer behaviour, which can trigger and lead to actual purchase (Jain, Khan, & Mishra, 2017; Shukla, 2012; Shukla & Purani, 2012). Purchase intention can be affected by a few factors such as attitudes (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2011). Attitudes are able to influence and change people intention to make purchase (Suki, 2014; Fam et al., 2013; Hung et al., 2011). For example, when individuals have a positive attitude, it will positively affect their purchase intention (Suki, 2014; Fam et al., 2013; Smith et al., 2008).

Luxury fashion advertisements are crucial and costly because of the strong competition by each luxury fashion house to be on the top. Advertisements must be attractive, effective and arouse some degree of emotion at the first place to capture consumer interests (Al-Mutawa, 2013; Liu, Cheng, & Li, 2009). Therefore, it is important for luxury fashion houses to utilise attractive and effective advertisements to successfully compete with other competitors and also, adapt to the changing demand of consumers.

Luxury fashion brands like Gucci, Prada, Louis Vuitton, Tom Ford and Dolce & Gabbana use different strategies to advertise their product but they have one common marketing strategy, "everyone wants to feel young and sexy" (Okonkwo, 2016; Al-Mutawa, 2013). It is important to realise that sex sells, trigger emotions and it is a very common tactic in the world of fashion (Okonkwo, 2016; Al-Mutawa, 2013). Sex is a biological need and instinctive desire of humans which makes it very effective and relevant (Reichert & Lambiase, 2014; Gallup, Gordon, & Frederick, 2010; Wood & Eagly, 2002). According to Reichert and Lambiase (2014) and Gallup, Gordon and Frederick (2010), the grabbing value of sex appeal comes from the fact that sex is the second strongest of the human needs, right behind self-preservation.

In luxury fashion advertisements, sex appeal is the most common appeal and tool used by marketers to lure consumers into consuming luxury fashion brands and goods (Krisnan & de Run, 2016; Ismail & Melewar, 2014; Al-Mutawa, 2013). This is because sex appeal advertisements speak out to the crowd, capture people'

attention and stimulate consumers' desire to make purchase (Wirtz, Sparks, & Zimbres, 2017; Al- Mutawa, 2013; Liu, Cheng, & Li, 2009). They also can entice consumers and demonstrate the value and outcomes of possessing the goods advertised (Ismail & Melewar, 2014; Al- Mutawa, 2013; Reichert & Carpenter, 2004). This indicates that the degrees of sex appeal in advertisements should be attractive enough to capture consumers' attention and luxury fashion marketers must put a great priority on the manipulation of the degrees of sex appeal in advertising.

It is important to investigate the relationship between degrees of sex appeal, attitudes and purchase intention because the results of this study will inform us on the effectiveness level of the advertisements. For example, if a medium degree of sex appeal triggers more favourable attitudes and higher purchase intention by consumers than other degrees of sex appeal, it should be adopted in the advertisements. In this manner, marketers also stand a better chance in triggering positive attitudes that lead to higher purchase intention (Wirtz, Sparks, & Zimbres, 2017; Krisnan & de Run, 2016).

1.2 Problem Statement

Malaysia is one of the richest countries in South East Asia with rapid development and economy. One of Malaysia's unique characteristics is its multicultural society with diverse traditions and values, including religion and language (Sarpal et al., 2018; Krisnan & de Run, 2016; Mokhlis, 2009). This diversity has made Malaysia a unique market for luxury fashion houses and industry.

Generally, individuals in Asian countries focus more on luxury possessions like designer labels, jewellery and expensive fragrances as compared to Westerners (Schultz & Jain, 2015; Jin & Kang, 2011). In Western countries, people adopt individualistic culture while in Asian countries; people are collectivist in nature (Jain, Khan, & Mishra, 2017; Schultz & Jain, 2015; Hung et al., 2011). Like most Asian countries, Malaysia is a country with collectivist society where individual actions are guided by others' perception (Krisnan & de Run, 2016; Ismail & Melewar, 2014). Therefore, the purchase intention of Malaysians is guided by their peers and is different from Westerners (Krisnan & de Run, 2016; Suki, 2014).

According to Jain, Khan and Mishra (2017) and Hung et al (2011), purchase intention strongly predicts the actions of an individual. Thereby, intention is significant and often, has direct relationship with the actual purchase (Son, Jin, & George, 2013; Bian & Forsythe, 2012; Shukla, 2012). Furthermore, purchase intention can have a positive impact on a person's action, especially in the context of luxury fashion consumption (Jain, Khan, & Mishra, 2017; Hung et al., 2011; Jin & Kang, 2011).

Fishbein and Ajzen (2011) in their research tried to identify the relationship between attitudes and purchase intention by utilizing Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). To understand the implication of attitudes on purchase intention in luxury fashion consumption, the theory of reasoned action by Fishbein and Ajzen (2011) is particularly useful. Many studies found that attitude has a direct effect on purchase intention, where a positive attitude will lead to a high purchase intention (Suki, 2014; Bian & Forsythe, 2012).

Jin and Kang (2011) concluded that attitude is the most important predictor of Chinese consumers' purchase intentions toward foreign apparel brands. A study conducted by Son, Jin and George (2013) also revealed that attitude has a great impact on Indian consumers' purchase intention with respect to foreign branded goods. Another study by Phau and Teah (2009) in relation to luxury fashion context also suggested that purchase intentions will be high when consumers have favourable attitudes. While the theory of reasoned action model has been applied in the studies conducted in some countries, such as the U. S. (Belleau et al., 2007), China (Zhang & Kim, 2013), and India (Jain, Khan, & Mishra, 2017; Son, Jin, & George, 2013), it has not been widely used to explain the purchase intention of Malaysian consumers in the luxury fashion segment.

Nonetheless, studies on purchase intention have been done within other industries, segments and other countries. However, evidence of this relationship still remains unclear in the realms of luxury fashion segment, especially in emerging and developing countries (Paul & Bhakar, 2018; Huang & Lowry, 2012). Therefore, this study aims to test the relationship between attitudes and purchase intention in Malaysia's luxury fashion segment by utilizing Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA).

Sex appeals can be low, medium, high etc. and luxury fashion houses always utilise certain degrees of sex appeal in their advertisements (Wirtz, Sparks, & Zimbres, 2017; Liu, Cheng, & Li, 2009). Some of the models are portrayed as fully clothed to very revealing clothes. This indicates that marketers always manipulate the degree of sex appeal in their advertisements and it does play a role in luxury fashion advertising (Krisnan & de Run, 2016; Liu, Cheng, & Li, 2009).

Luxury fashion houses usually have standard advertisements that will be advertised across the globe for beauty and personal care product like fragrances. This is because beauty and personal care advertisements may be more easily standardized than more culture-specific items such as food or automobiles (Huang & Lowry, 2012; Nelson & Paek, 2008; Nelson & Paek, 2007). An analysis of advertisements by Nelson and Paek (2007) across seven countries; Brazil, China, France, Korea, Thailand, India and USA in *Cosmopolitan* magazine revealed that fashion, beauty and fragrance advertisements were the most likely to employ completely standardized advertisements.

However, even though most of the luxury fashion advertisements are standardised, many of previous studies discovered that the influence and the effect of degrees of sex appeal were different across culture (Krisnan & de Run, 2016; Sawang, 2010; Nelson & Paek, 2008). Sex appeal is commonly seen in Western culture but sometimes, it could be considered as “taboo” in Asian culture (Huang & Lowry, 2012; Sawang, 2010; Nelson & Paek, 2008). This implies that what is acceptable in one culture could be less acceptable in another because individuals have different values in different cultures (Srinivasan, Srivastava, & Bhanot, 2014). Therefore, there is no agreement of the single degree of sex appeal that is universally works across all nations and that is inextricably influenced by cultural values (Srinivasan, Srivastava, & Bhanot, 2014; Huang & Lowry, 2012, Nelson & Paek, 2008).

Moreover, it has been found that the influence of degrees of sex appeal on attitudes and purchase intention also can be different between countries (Huang & Lowry, 2012; Sawang, 2010). In Malaysia, it is important to realise that consumers have a different culture and values from the Westerners (Ismail & Melewar, 2014; De Run et al., 2010; Waller, Fam, & Erdogan, 2005). Because of the differences in the Malaysian culture, the effects of degrees of sex appeal may vary (Krisnan & de Run, 2016; Ismail & Melewar, 2014). Some studies suggested that the advertisements in Malaysia should portray models in sexually acceptable manner (Yusairah & Al-Aidaros, 2015; Ismail & Melewar, 2014). Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that there are some individuals who are more conservative and there are some individuals who are more receptive towards the use of sex appeal advertising.

When people are not receptive towards the degree of sex appeal shown to them, they will tend to have negative attitudes toward the advertisement and the brand (Ismail & Melewar, 2014; Cui & Yang, 2009). These indicate the importance for the degree of sex appeal in advertising to be perceived as appropriate, so that the advertisements will be widely accepted by most consumers in Malaysia. By having the degrees of sex appeal that are acceptable by most consumers, it can affect attitudes in positive ways, which inadvertently influence the purchase intention. Many studies on sex appeal advertising, especially in Asian context and countries like Malaysia such as by Sarpal et al. (2018), Ismail and Melewar (2014) and Sawang (2010) do not give the indication of the influence of attitudes on purchase intention. Taking these studies as the base for this research in Malaysia, this study attempts to study the relationship between the degrees of sex appeal, attitude towards the advertisement, attitude towards the brand and purchase intention given the lack of studies in Malaysia that incorporate all these concepts together.

This study strives to fill the gap so that marketers could better understand consumers' expectation, identify the optimum degrees of sex appeal and tailor the advertisements according to the consumer responses. The purpose of this study is also to achieve a better understanding of the extent to which attitudes affect purchase intention given different degrees of sex appeal in luxury fashion advertising.

In Malaysia, where individuals' purchase intention and luxury fashion consumption have not been adequately researched, studies addressing the significant relationship between degrees of sex appeal, attitudes and purchase intention are much needed (Krisnan & de Run, 2016; Ismail & Melewar, 2014). Local postgraduate students provide an interesting segment for this study as most of them are earning considerable amount of incomes and they are either current or potential consumers of luxury fashion brands and goods.

Although several studies have been conducted to discover the role of degrees of sex appeal in determining attitudes and purchase intention, several issues are still required attention of researchers. Most of research with regard to purchase intention have been conducted in the Western world and perspective, while the research on purchase intention which consider eastern perspective of individuals have been ignored in research. Hence, it is important to understand that previous research conducted in this domain in the context of Western countries cannot be generalized to a developing country like Malaysia and this demands for the study to be conducted in Malaysian setting.

1.3 Research Questions

- What is the difference between the degrees of sex appeal and attitude towards luxury fashion advertisements?
- What is the difference between the degrees of sex appeal and attitude towards luxury fashion brands?
- What is the difference between the degrees of sex appeal and purchasing intention of luxury fashion goods?
- What is the relationship between attitude towards the advertisements and purchasing intention of luxury fashion goods?
- What is the relationship between attitude towards the brands and purchasing intention of luxury fashion goods?

1.4 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

- To investigate the differences between the degrees of sex appeal, attitude towards luxury fashion advertisements, attitude towards luxury fashion brands and purchase intention of luxury fashion goods.
- To examine the relationship between attitude towards the advertisements and purchase intention of luxury fashion goods.
- To examine the relationship between attitude towards the brands and purchase intention of luxury fashion goods.

1.5 Scope of Study

This study is conducted to determine the relationship between the degrees of sex appeal, attitude towards the advertisement, attitude towards the brand and purchase intention of luxury fashion goods in Malaysia. The product category that is selected for this study is fragrance. This study adopted three advertisements featuring female endorsers with three different degrees of sex appeal; low, medium and high. Three luxury fashion advertisements were selected and utilised for this study. The questionnaires were distributed to postgraduate students at Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang, Malaysia (UPM). Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) is selected because it is ranked 32th in the ranking of UI-Greenmetric World University Ranking 2018, third in Asia, second in Southeast Asia and first in Malaysia. In total, 190 postgraduate students of Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) participated in this study. Postgraduate students fit as the samples because most of them are working, well-educated and earning a considerable amount of income. In general, they also have more exposure and knowledge about luxury fashion brands and goods.

1.6 Significance of Study

1.6.1 Theoretical Contributions

With limited knowledge of the purchase intention of Malaysian as well as its predictors, this study aimed to identify the relationship between degrees of sex appeal, attitudes and purchase intention towards luxury fashion goods in Malaysia. This study provides an overview of Malaysian attitudes towards the advertisement and the brand and builds a researching based for academicians to further the research by relating these attitudes to purchase intention.

As a research tool, the different degrees of sex appeal provide the opportunity to examine attitude towards the advertisement, attitude towards the brand and purchase intention. The better understanding of this causal dynamics of attitude formation and purchase intention will aid marketing researchers in measuring the attitudinal effects of the degrees of sex appeal.

Therefore, in order to bridge this gap, this study is the among the first few empirical studies in Malaysia that looks at sex appeal and luxury fashion advertising (e.g.; Sarpal et al., 2018; Krisnan & de Run, 2016) by identifying the relationship between the degrees of sex appeal, attitude towards the advertisement, attitude towards the brand and purchase intention for luxury fashion goods.

This is fundamental as it leads to one of the contributions of this study, which is to allow the understanding of an effective degree of sex appeal that will enhance both

attitude towards the advertisement and the brand and inadvertently, increase the purchasing intention towards the advertised luxury fashion goods.

1.6.2 Practical Contributions

This study will help marketers in developing more effective advertising strategies. Although the adoption of sex appeal in luxury fashion advertising is common, the industry is still lacks of concrete information of its effectiveness. Therefore, by understanding the attitudinal effects of the degrees of sex appeal on the purchase intention of consumers, a company could develop creative strategies to fulfil the defined objectives as a devise to influence their consumers. If purchase intention, attitudes towards the advertisement and the brand are negative, then remedial actions should be taken to improve the public receptivity of consumers.

As consumers are the top priority for marketers, it is very important to understand their desire to enable marketers to leapfrog over the other competitors in the market. It is very crucial for luxury fashion houses to have a good marketing strategy to successfully compete with other competitors and also adapt to the changing demand of consumers. There is no doubt that consumers nowadays are getting more dynamic than before, especially for luxury fashion consumers (Okonkwo, 2016; Shukla & Purani, 2012; Shukla, 2012).

In addition, this study will offer another practical contribution to luxury fashion marketers. As this study will assist marketers in adopting and implementing the appropriate degree of sex appeal in advertisements, it will benefit the marketers in many ways. There are tremendous benefits that will arise such as a strong brand image and a good reputation. Most importantly, it will lead to stronger attitudes towards the advertisement and the brand and also, higher purchase intention. Marketers will gain more assurance in terms of the effectiveness of adopting a certain degree of sex appeal. It also helps to prevent any drawbacks that might occur from the implementation of an ineffective degree of sex appeal in advertising such as negative perceptions by consumers and a possible loss in sales.

1.7 Operational Definitions

1. Degrees of sex appeal are defined as the amount of skin exposed or sexual lucidity (Reichert, Heckler, & Jackson, 2001). This study only utilised female models because females were three times more likely than males to be sexually portrayed as nude, highly provocative and extremely revealing in advertisements (Huang & Lowry, 2012; Nelson & Paek, 2008). For this study, the degrees of sex appeal will be defined as the nudity level that the models portray in luxury fashion advertisements. In other words, the model with a low degree of sex appeal was dressed more conservatively than those with higher level of sex

appeal in the ads. In this study, low sex appeal, medium sex appeal and high sex appeal will be used as the measurement of the degree of sex appeal.

2. Attitude towards the advertisement or ad attitude is defined as the 'pre-disposition to respond in a favourable or unfavourable manner to a particular advertisement (Lutz, 1985, p.46). For this study, attitude towards the advertisement will be the extent to which consumers have favourable attitude towards luxury fashion advertisements. In this study, appealing ad, attractive ad, interesting ad, and do not like ad will be the measurement.
3. Attitude towards brand or brand attitude is defined as the consumer's overall judgement of a brand (Faircloth, Capella, & Alford, 2001). For this study, attitude towards the brand will be the extent to which consumers have favourable attitude towards luxury fashion brands. In this study, favourable brand, good brand, positive brand and dislike brand will act as the measurement.
4. Purchase Intention: Purchase intention refers to the possibility of consumers to attempt to purchase a product, as well as the behavioural tendency developed after they receive advertising message (Dodds, Monroe, & Grewal, 1991). For this study, it will cover the purchase intention of Malaysian consumers in purchasing luxury fashion fragrances or perfumes. In this study, likely purchase, not purchase, plan to purchase and unlikely purchase will act as the measurement.

1.8 Organisation of the study

Chapter One will start with a brief overview of the topic of interest such as luxury fashion, sex appeal, degrees of sex appeal, attitudes and purchase intention. Next, the background of study, problem statement, the research objectives and questions will be explained. This will be followed by a discussion on why this study is important, in terms of its theoretical and practical implications. Chapter Two will be the literature reviews of previous research, which include consumption of luxury fashion brands and goods, sex appeal, sex appeal advertising, degrees of sex appeal, consumer responses to sex appeal advertising, attitude towards the advertisement, attitude towards the brand, purchase intention, the relationships between the related variables and the underpinning theory. Relevant theories and findings of previous studies will be explained in relation to the development of the hypotheses. Chapter Two will also include a visual representation of the hypotheses with the inclusion of the theoretical framework. Chapter Three will explain all aspects of the methodology, including the research design, detailed information on the method, the sample, data collection and analysis of data. Chapter Four will present the data analysis and results, including details on data cleaning, descriptive statistics, confirmatory factor analysis, analysis of variance and multiple regression analysis. Results of the analyses will be examined to determine whether each of the hypotheses is being supported. The paper will conclude with Chapter Five, which consists of discussion on and comparison of the findings of the current study with the findings of previous research in the literature. The significance of these findings will be discussed in terms of their theoretical and practical contributions. Finally, the limitations of the study and directions for future research will be identified.

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