

Analysis of key factors influencing Muslim women's intention to purchase clothing in UK

Nargis Ali

Faculty of Business and Law, Liverpool John Moores University
nargis.ali@live.com

1. Introduction

The Muslim market is anticipated to be the next massive market opportunity after India and China (Islam and Chandrasekaran, 2019). Muslims spend around \$230 billion (£174.4 bn) a year on modest clothing while UK market is one of the significant contributors, with a market value of £20.5 billion at present (Brown, 2016). The growing recognition of Muslim women's clothing styles as a benchmark of modest fashion offers numerous opportunities for the apparel and textile industry to fulfil the clothing needs of Muslim consumers worldwide and generate significant returns. Besides, Muslims' expenditure on clothing and footwear is expected to rise to \$311 billion by 2024 (DinarStandard, 2020). Hence, exploring and capturing such an exceptional consumer segment in the context of fashion retail could offer a point of differentiation to the challenging fashion retail-clothing sector (Janmohamed, 2016) of UK, USA, and New Zealand (Sumarliah et al., 2021).

Although Muslims are a significant and fast-expanding market segment, estimated at 1.8bn worldwide and 4.1 million in the UK (Pew Research Center, 2017), little is known about their purchase and consumption behaviour (Alserhan and Alserhan, 2012; Razzaque and Chaudhry, 2013; Kassim and Zain, 2016). Besides, extensive research conducted in Muslim majority countries may not be generalised to other country's context (Hussain and Cunningham, 2021), such as the UK, where representative data on Muslims is scarce (Berghammer and Fliegenschnee, 2014). In addition, existing literature misrepresents Muslim consumers and their consumption behaviour (Boulanouar et al., 2017). Also, extant research is focused on media representation of Muslims (Ahmed and Matthes, 2016) or revolves around the acculturation and identity formation of Muslims such as Jamal and Shukor (2014) and Albrecht et al. (2015). A review by Agarwala et al. (2018) showed that a significant chunk of existing research on Islamic marketing or Muslims investigates the relationship between religiosity and materialism or status consumption. Moreover, the knowledge on religion and its dimensions is at a preliminary stage, calling for more systematic research. However, it is important to analyse the market from a broader perspective because religiosity alone cannot provide greater insights about consumers (Salam et al., 2019; Karoui and Khemkhem, 2019). Therefore, this research attempted to identify and examined the factors influencing Muslim women's intention to purchase clothing in the UK. Research objectives are listed below.

- To investigate the extent to which personality traits, social influences, religiosity dimensions and perceived behavioural control influence the clothing purchase intention of Muslim women living in UK.
- To propose and evaluate a conceptual model to predict Muslim women's clothing purchase intention using the theory of planned behaviour.
- To identify the differences in the clothing purchase intention of UK's Muslim women belonging to various demographic groups such as age, education, employment, and religious sect.

2. Literature Review and Conceptual framework

Purchase intention refers to an individual's desire to buy a product or service that may lead to an actual purchase (Ajzen, 2015). The theory of planned behaviour suggests that purchase intentions are predictable from attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control (Hussain and Cunningham, 2021). However, religion, media, sources of information and personality traits may influence intentions through attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 2011). Prior research by Saeed et al. (2020) concluded that Muslim women's purchase intention is an outcome of social influences, including family, friends, peers, electronic and print media, social media, and e-commerce websites. In addition, religiosity, frugality (Agarwala et al., 2018), the need for

uniqueness (Cham, et.al, 2018) and fashion consciousness (Salam et al., 2019) also shape intentions and behaviours. Given this, a conceptual model based on the theory of planned behaviour is proposed.

3. Method and Methodology

This study adopted a quantitative approach that allows the researcher to test the hypothesis and generalization the results to larger populations (Sanders et al., 2012). A questionnaire was developed using existing scales and tested on a five-point Likert scale through a pilot study. The target population of this study was Muslim women aged 18 and over living in the UK. Using purposive and snowball sampling, a web-based survey was posted on Facebook groups and pages of British Muslims, and they were requested to share the survey with their audience as recommended by Butta (2012). Consequently, 1345 responses were received. However, data screening yielded 1087 usable observations, which were used to test the proposed hypothesis using AMOS software.

4. Key findings

Preliminary analysis indicates that fashion consciousness may not influence clothing purchase intention of Muslim women in UK. However, the need for uniqueness, dimensions of religiosity, subjective norms, media, and perceived behavioural control plays a vital role in shaping Muslim women's clothing purchase intention in UK. The results of ANOVA show that differences in the purchase intention are prominent only between age groups and religious groups.

5. Implications

The study broadens the literature on religion, fashion, ethnic minorities and consumer behaviour, particularly in UK's context, at a time when Islamic marketing and the trend of modest fashion are increasingly growing (Lewis, 2019) and large retailers are trying to attract Muslim consumers. (Solomon, 2019). It is expected that the results of this study will help marketers and designers to develop products and marketing strategies tailored to the need of Muslim women.

6. References

- Agarwala, R., Mishra, P. and Singh, R. (2018). Religiosity and consumer behaviour: a summarizing review. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion*, 16(1), pp. 32-54.
- Ahmed, S., and Matthes, J. (2016). Media representation of Muslims and Islam from 2000 to 2015: A meta-analysis. *International Communication Gazette*, 79(3), pp. 219-244.
- Ajzen, I. (2011). The theory of planned behaviour: Reactions and reflections. *Psychology & Health*, 26(9), pp.1113-27.
- Ajzen, I. (2015). Consumer attitudes and behaviour: the theory of planned behaviour applied to food consumption decisions. *Italian Review of Agricultural Economics*, 70(2), pp. 121-138.
- Albrecht, M., Jacobs, B., Retief, A. and Adamski, K. (2015). The role of important values and predominant identity in the dress practices of female muslim students attending a South African university. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 33(4), pp. 248-264.
- Alserhan, B.A. and Alserhan, Z.A. (2012). Researching Muslim consumers: do they represent the fourth-billion consumer segment?. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 3(2), pp. 121-138.
- Berghammer, C. and Fliegenschnee, K. (2014). Developing a concept of Muslim religiosity: an analysis of everyday lived religion among female migrants in Austria. *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 29(1), pp. 89-104.
- Boulanouar, A., Aitken, R., Boulanouar, Z. and Todd, S. (2017). Imperatives for research designs with Muslim women. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 35(1), pp. 2-17.
- Brickman Bhutta, C. (2012). Not by the book: Facebook as a sampling frame. *Sociological methods & research*, 41(1), pp. 57-88.

- Brown, H. (2016). How can brands and retailers cater for the £367bn Muslim fashion market?. Drapers [online] 07th September 2016 Available at: <https://www.drapersonline.com/retail/how-can-brands-and-retailers-cater-for-the-367bn-muslim-fashion-market/7011438.article> [Accessed: 22nd October 2021].
- Cham, T., Ng, C., Lim, Y. and Cheng, B. (2017). Factors influencing clothing interest and purchase intention: a study of Generation Y consumers in Malaysia. *The International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research*, 28(2), pp. 174-189.
- DinarStandard, 2020. *Global Islamic economy: Muslims to spend 2.9% less on apparel and footwear in 2020 - study*. [online] Salaam Gateway - Global Islamic Economy Gateway. Available at: <<https://salaamgateway.com/story/muslim-expenditure-on-apparel-and-footwear-to-drop-29-to-268-bln-in-2020-study>> [Accessed 13th September 2021].
- Hussain, U. and Cunningham, G.B. (2021). The determinants of Muslim women's pro-sport Hijab purchase intention: a theory of planned behaviour perspective. *European Sport Management Quarterly* [First Published online 24th August 2021]. DOI:[10.1080/16184742.2021.1976242](https://doi.org/10.1080/16184742.2021.1976242) [Accessed: 22nd October 2021]
- Islam, T. and Chandrasekaran, U., 2019. Religiosity, values and consumer behaviour: a study of young Indian Muslim consumers. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 36(7), pp. 948-961.
- Jamal, A. and Abdul Shukor, S. (2014). Antecedents and outcomes of interpersonal influences and the role of acculturation: The case of young British-Muslims. *Journal of Business Research*, 67(3), pp. 237-245.
- Janmohamed, S. (2016). *Generation M: Young Muslims Changing the World*. London and New York: IB Tauris.
- Karoui, S. and Khemakhem, R. (2019). Factors affecting the Islamic purchasing behaviour – a qualitative study. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 10(4), pp. 1104-27.
- Kassim, N.M. and Zain, M.M. (2016). Quality of lifestyle and luxury purchase inclinations from the perspectives of affluent Muslim consumers, *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 7(1), pp. 95-119.
- Lewis, R. (2019). Modest body politics: The commercial and ideological intersect of fat, black, and Muslim in the modest fashion market and media. *Fashion Theory*, 23(2), pp. 243-273.
- Pew Research Center (2017). The changing global religious landscape, [online] available at: www.pewforum.org/2017/04/05/the-changing-global-religious-landscape/ [accessed 26 Feb. 2019].
- Razzaque, M.A. and Chaudhry, S.N. (2013). Religiosity and Muslim consumers' decision-making process in a non-Muslim society. *Journal of Islamic marketing*, 4(2), pp. 198-217.
- Saeed, M., Grine, F. and Shafique, I. (2020). Integrating factors influencing hijab purchase intention among Muslim women. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 12(1), pp. 95-112.
- Salam, M.T., Muhamad, N. and Leong, V.S. (2019). Muslim millennials' attitudes towards fashion advertising. *International Journal of Advertising*, 38(5), pp. 796-819.
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2012). *Research Methods for Business Students*. (6th edition). Harlow: Pearson.
- Solomon, M. (2019). *Consumer behaviour: Buying, Having and Being*. 13th ed. Global: Pearson Education Limited.
- Sumarliah, E., Khan, S.U. and Khan, I.U., 2021. Online hijab purchase intention: the influence of the Coronavirus outbreak. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 12(3), pp. 598-621.