

A Trading up and down: Toward a hybrid purchase style

*Manel El Hakim EP. Masmoudi **Nibrass Hajtaib El Aoud

ABSTRACT

This research aims to study a new trend in consumer behavior that could be concretized in adopting both of the “trading up” and “trading down” behaviors. A qualitative study using semi-structured ethnographic interviews highlights a new purchase style, which we called them the “hybrid purchase style”. This exploratory work provides a first insight about the theoretical and the conceptual framework that could in turn provide perspectives for understanding and eventually modeling this new purchasing style. It describes a set of motivations, opinions, and behaviors favoring the purchase of high-end and low-end products. Three main orientations were detected through this investigation: social, emotional and rational orientations.

Introduction

Historically, market's overall structure was dominated by the mass-market all over the world (Geerts et al., 2008). This situation has persisted since World War II until the early twenty-first century (Silverstein and Fiske, 2003). However, several researchers are actually introducing a new trend of markets' polarization: markets bifurcate and the middle turns into desert (specify Silverstein and Butman, 2006). This means that the mid-range products are giving way for products of low and high end (Geerts et al., 2008). Some researchers such as Silverstein and Fiske (2003) and Geerts et al. (2008) recommend that this reorganization is mainly due to the change in the middle-class consumers and their new preferences and habits. Indeed, these people are more and more buying, both luxury and low-end products. Thus, they avoid “boring middle” which offers neither a good quality nor an unbeatable price (Silverstein and Fiske, 2003). In other words, today's consumers are increasing the possibility to save money by buying cheap products in order to purchase other products that better represent their images, their personalities and their self-concepts.

We approach a new phenomenon in consumer behavior: that is the emergence of “hybrid consumer”. By this designation, Gronroos Ehrnrooth (2013) refers to a new type of consumers that cannot belong to any market segments according to traditional marketing literature. Indeed, the consumer does not follow any behaving rule. He can consume products and services designed for any target in any situation (Ehrnrooth and Gronroos, 2013).

* Docteur à l'FSEG Sfax Membre de l'LRM (laboratoire de recherche en marketing : Sfax, Tunisie)
Téléphone : 24 31 64 50 E-mail : manwellam@yahoo.com

* Professeur, I.H.E.C. (Université de Sfax-Tunisie), Membre de l'LRM (Université de Sfax, Tunisie)
Téléphone : 97458442 Email : nibrass65@yahoo.fr

Silverstein and Fiske (2003; 2005), Silverstein and Butman (2006), Geerts et al. (2008) and Ehrnrooth and Grönroos (2013) are the first who have studied this new behavior. These researchers argue that this new purchasing orientations may have a major influence either on the theoretical or managerial level as it breaks with all segmentation strategies and conventional consumption stereotypes.

Despite the considerable rise in the new challenges for all economic agents, this new phenomenon remains an under researched field of study (Geerts et al., 2008). Indeed, all researches have been carried out only in Western countries (mostly in America and some surveys in Europe). Therefore, it will be more appropriate to measure the extent of this behavior in other contexts such as countries of North Africa (Geerts et al., 2008).

Likewise, given its novelty, the operational definition of this concept is still far from being well identified.

Following recent findings, many questions could be asked about this new concept: Is it an unconscious behavior or the result of a rational and calculated reasoning process? Does it depend on products categories or situational factors? Could it be defined as a personality trait, a real purchase behavior or a purchasing style combining emotional, attitudinal and behavioral aspects?

Taking into account these comments and these questions, this work aims to present a first conceptualization effort that will culminate in an operational definition of this consumer behavior hybridity and its main facets.

Hybridity in purchasing behavior: an emerging trend

Hybridity: a main facet of postmodernism

In a postmodern context, we constantly observe a confrontation between regression and progress values that creates an operated consolidation adopted by individuals. By projecting this overlap on consumption, we could notice that this tension between values gives rise to an experiential view comes equilibrating a functional view (Addis and Holbrook, 2001; Badot and Cova, 2003). In other words, consumers buy products or services less for their functional attributes and concentrate on emotional experiences (Pine and Gilmore 1999; Schmitt, 1999; Badot and Cova, 2003). This explains the emergence of some concepts such as hedonic consumption, re-enchanted consumption, symbols production, experiential marketing evenmental marketing, recreational values, distraction (Chantelat et al., 2002; Filser, 2002 Badot and Cova, 2003; Hetzel, 2011).

Today, a spiral of paradoxes is procreating not only responsible conducts, but also more irresponsibility in the consumer behavior. This framework requires hybrid individuals as they become:

- Not only more critical, less influenced by the media and advertising, smarter, more rational, but also more superficial, easily influenced, experience and hedonism seekers (Shugan, 2006);
- More concerned with not only the well-being and the enjoyment of the moment and relaxation, but also with health, future and safety consciousness (Roche et al., 2010).

It should be noted that the adoption of such framework (postmodern or hypermodern) requires the admission of these juxtapositions of opposites. Indeed, nowadays, the individual can have both a tendency to rationalize his behavior and favor his interest, as well as an inclination to satisfy his emotional needs and excitement. This finding reminds us the two concepts of “Trading up” and “Trading down”. Indeed, one individual could aim to rationalize his purchases or his behaviors to be smarter and more ingenious. This may lead him to adopt some behaviors such as low-end purchases, in sale or economic items, or attends hard-discount and flea stores. This same individual cannot ignore his need for entertainment or extraordinary experiences. Thus, he can find his needs in the up-market’s offering (luxury goods, luxury hotels, organized tours ...).

Hybridity: a consumer strategy to face crisis situations

A context of crisis that records an intense effect on the psychology of the contemporary consumer could be added to these conflicting pressures. The effect, which could be summarized in the decline in confidence, increased pessimism and risk perception, is added to unemployment, financial restriction and reduced purchasing power. Together, they represent major factors in explaining buyers’ reactions. They are becoming forced to adopt new behaviors that align with the new circumstances procreated by such events. This was confirmed by most researchers who have tried to decipher the consumer reactions to the global crisis (eg Urbonavicius and Piktumiene, 2010; Pushan and Padmanabhan, 2010; Pandelica and Pandelica, 2011; Gbagbo, 2011). They also showed that these behavioral changes are continuing until today, that is to say, after the disappearance of the storm (Hebel et al., 2009). By scanning these different strategies, we can detect that they are closely related to the “trading down” and sometimes to the “trading up”. In fact, some coping strategies are opting to live the day to day and to resist to negative effects, while the others refer to concepts such as “non-consumption”, frugality or low price hunting. In this sense, Pras (2009) stressed this relationship between new paradoxical behaviors such as rational and emotional purchases and the two axes of hybrid purchasing behavior. For example, he invoked that not only the hard discount which has boomed (15% market share in France at the end of 2008 according to a study TNS World panel (Pras, 2009), but also, some luxury leisure sectors resist the crisis such as tourism and the attendance of museums and movies.

Hybridity and luxury democratization

On another note, we can add that many experts introduce the era of the luxury’s disappearance (Ati Kent, 2004, p.6). In fact, this industry was not spared from the incidents of September 11, 2001, the crisis of 2003 and that of 2008 (Kapferer, 2012). The luxury sector is expected to be much more sensitive to these fluctuations than other sectors (Ati Kent, 2004). However, contrary to expectations, the financial results of major luxury groups at the end of 2009 are encouraging and show a huge improvement compared to the previous year (Enos, 2010, Prévost, 2011). This same trend was recorded for the years 2010 and 2011.

The evolution of luxury is not limited to this quantitative aspect, but it covers the conception of this notion.

In fact, postmodernism has accentuated the confusion encountered by the luxury concept by adding to its definition the notion of luxury democratization which is becoming increasingly common in marketing practices (Bauer et al., 2011, p.5). This new concept, also called “the trivialization of luxury, *masstige*, or the luxury for the mass” describes a new phenomenon related to marketing strategies (positioning, communication, ...) (Truong et al., 2009, Bauer et al., 2011). Indeed, the intensification of competition, the concentration of the market and the occasional demand generate a problem of immediate profitability among actors in the luxury sector. As a result, luxury houses are obliged to expand their offers in order to add a larger client base (Danziger, 2005, Vernier and Ghewy, 2006, Bellaïche et al., 2010, Ginman et al., 2010, Yeoman, 2011). Thus, they adopt a new logic in which the mass market could be targeted rather than the old logic in which a limited number of people are targeted (Ginman et al., 2010, Bauer et al., 2011).

This logic gave birth to a new category of luxury brands which replaces the traditional one (Silverstein et al., 2004, Atwal and Williams 2009, Bauer et al., 2011).

The interest in this new trend of “luxury democratization” has increased considerably in recent years. This was intensified by the increase in demand for luxury by mass consumers and the share of income used for this type of purchase (Silverstein et al., 2004, Danziger, 2005, Ginman et al., 2010, Bauer et al., 2011).

Mass consumers seek their happiness in the experiential side of consumption. They are much more motivated to live extraordinary experiences and to experience the well-being (Yeoman, 2011, Coffart, 2011). As a result, they are beginning to devote enormous budgets for luxurious hotels and restaurants (Faurholt Csaba, 2008) as well as for luxury goods. In this sense, Coffart (2011, p.42-43) considers that purchases, and especially luxury products, perform this role by making them feel nice emotions and have a better life.

From another side, consumers take a good step back from the consumption of luxury goods that are priced, from their point of view, abusive or unfair (Viot et al., 2006). This is the case of the old luxury that sometimes offer products with prices that hardly reflect their added values. The feeling of guilt, fueled by wars and famines, is gaining momentum, in recent times, resulting in some revenge against major brands and luxury houses. Therefore, consuming products in the accessible luxury reduces the risk of feeling guilty.

Similarly, the multiplication of social networks and sources of information allows the consumer to better compare the different alternatives and to better choose what exactly meets his needs. This teaches the buyer to have a critical attitude, to be expert and not to be attached to a single brand (Hammer, 2011). More than ever, faced with a critical and mature consumer, luxury brands do not escape the challenge of excessive prices and their strategy of differentiation in its entirety.

Once again, it could be confirmed that the consumers' hybridity is a contemporary trend since it appears in parallel with what so called luxury democratization. In fact, to live luxury experience with limited earnings, middle class consumers trade down in some categories to save money. This later

will be used in other occasions when they decide to trade up market. These last points refer to the factors that contributed to the development of the trading up and trading down tendencies. The following diagram illustrates this observation:

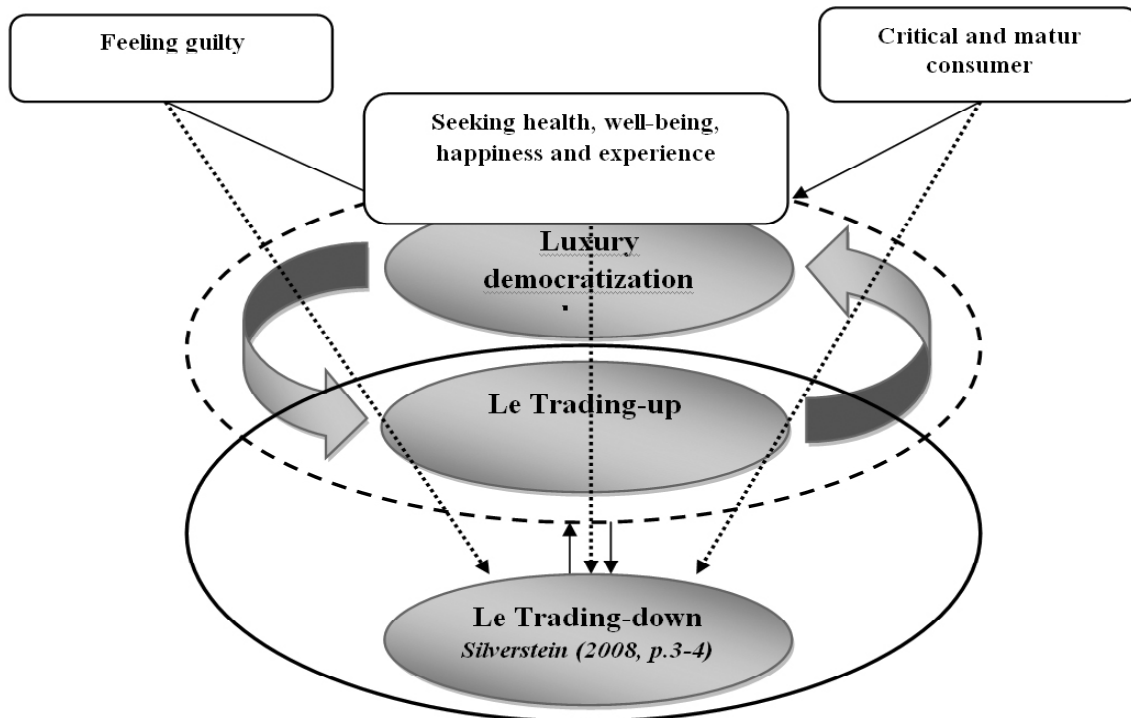


Figure 1 : The triad of “Luxury Democratization”, “Trading up” and “Trading down”

Despite its importance, this emergent trend of hybrid consumer behavior is still under research and is not formally introduced to marketing discipline.

Theoretical and conceptual framing of hybridity in buying behavior

Given that the first objective of this research is the introduction and the formal development of the hybridity concept in consumer marketing, two steps could be proposed. We would like first, to delimit its borders by introducing it as it was presented in the consumer behavior works. Then we will suggest a theoretical framework specific to hybrid consumption that is still lacking today in the consumer behavior literature.

Hybridity in consumer behavior

This part appears to be both the most difficult and the most concise; given the newness of this concept and therefore the obvious lack of research. The most outstanding works are restricted to that of Guntermann (2005), Silverstein and Fisk (2003) as well as that of Ehrnrooth and Gronroos (2013).

Contrary to what most scholars suppose (Geerts and al., 2008; Ehnrooth and Gronroos, 2013), this new type of consumer is not an invention of American researchers, but it essentially began with German researchers. It particularly began with a new habit among German consumers that is becoming increasingly phenomenal: namely “have a Porsche and shop at Aldi” (Guntermann, 2005). The connotation “hybrid” essentially returns to Schmalen (1994) and Schmalen and Lang (1998). They refer to a double faceted purchase behavior, which depends on involvement level towards the product and towards the purchase itself. Both facets are a comfort orientation and an economic orientation. Subsequently, a number of studies have emerged in the United States, Belgium and Finland.

In 2003, a notable series of publications, especially those of Boston Consulting Group, has adopted the following expression: “The new consumer”. This last designation characterizes a middle-class consumer that occasionally buys luxury products, while in other situations buys discounted or cheap products. Several researchers, such as Silverstein and Fiske (2003), Silverstein and Butman (2006), Silverstein (2006), Roche et al. (2008) and Liao et al. (2010) show that “trading up” tendency is necessarily accompanied by another related to “trading down”. According to these researchers, today’s consumer is more informed, intelligent and rational than before. Then, despite the restriction of his financial resources, he seeks to find solutions to satisfy his hedonic desires. In addition, “trading down” strategy is no longer reflecting poverty. It becomes a courtesy and intelligence indicator. Thus, following these developments, it could be assumed that this new consumer trade down in some non-important categories is for purpose of saving money. Such a strategy can enable him to go up market later, acquire accessible luxury products and thus meet the new needs of enchantment.

Gronroos Ehnrooth (2013) recall that previous studies found that the trading up strategy may be attached to products and services that enable hybrid consumers to communicate their personalities and values, while the trading down could be limited to products and services that are not directly linked to personality or values (Ehnrooth and Gronroos, 2013). However, these authors found that consumers mix both low and high prices items in the same product category (Gronroos Ehnrooth, 2013). Thus, despite the existence of some specific categories for each movement up and down, they suggest that this type of behavior goes beyond such boundaries and can occur at any product category. They add that this type of consumer can purchase products and brands designed for any type of target (Ehnrooth and Gronroos, 2013). This reinforces Gabriel and Lang’s opinion (2006) which suggests that today’s consumers are increasingly unpredictable, inconsistent and unmanageable reflecting a contemporary Western consumption which could be characterized by fragmentation and volatility (Ehnrooth and Gronroos, 2013). Behind these facets remains a postmodern consumer who reflects several paradoxical identities at once.

Theoretical framework for hybridity in consumer behavior

Considering consumption’s economic approach with its rationalization and disenchantment criteria, and the social-cognitive theories with their particularity of enchantment, we can notice the presence of two different consumers from two different eras. However, the definition of the hybrid consumer concept suggests that most of these approaches could be judged to be relevant to its theoretical

position. This evidence is growing by its inclusion in a postmodern theoretical framework. Indeed, the hybrid behavior aligns strongly with the notion of “paradoxes’ juxtaposition” and “conflicting positions between regression-progress values”. By projecting this overlap on consumption, it is noticeable that these paradoxical logics give rise to an experiential view that comes equilibrating a functional view (Addis and Holbrook, 2001, Badot and Cova, 2003). In such context, hedonic and entertainment offering explodes, however, they are facing a hypermodern society characterized by increased anxiety, restriction and frugal behaviors.

Thus, it should be noted that the adoption of a postmodern framework could simply be considered as adequate. However, despite its relevance, this theoretical framework is insufficient because the unique nature of its theories. Indeed, the most known theories are experiential theory (Hetzl, 1993) (Özçaglar Toulouse and Cova, 2010), the “consumer culture, theory: CTC” (Özçaglar Toulouse and Cova, 2010) and the re-enchanting consumption theory (Badot and Cova, 2003). It is worth noting that these theories do not take into consideration the “rational” side in consumption. It is for this reason that we will adopt the approach used by George Ritzer in his book “Enchanting a Disenchanted World” in 2004. Indeed, in order to provide a theoretical basis for the new cathedrals of consumption, it has uses several theories from different schools and different backgrounds have been used. To justify his point of view, he mentioned that “... To create the theoretical framework of this book, I borrowed the ideas of exploitation, control, rationalization, phantasmagoria, and disenchantment of modern social theory and the concept of re-enchantment from the postmodern social theory “(Ritzer, 2004, p.70, Chapter III).

Considering the absence of a theory that brings together two opposite views characterizing this main facet of contemporary consumption, we will elect two theoretical platforms of discussion. A first item level will be borrowed from the neo classical economic theories and theories of decision making, while elements of the second level are rooted in principles of postmodern theories.

In conclusion, we can say that in reality, this research may not be registered neither in modern theoretical framework nor in postmodern one. Indeed, this new consumer behavior is theoretically well positioned and its design is consistent and logical, it seemed sensible to adopt theoretical concepts from different repositories.

Comparing consumers’ hybridity to similar concepts in consumer behavior

■ Variety seeking

This term refers to a characteristic of personality that designates the level at which a consumer has an intrinsic tendency to engage in a variety-seeking behavior in the choice of a product, and that the latter represents a means of regulation of its actual level of stimulation (Van Trijp, 1995, p.7). It refers to a change in a brand that may remain at the cognitive level (a tendency to seek variety), as it can be translated into actual behavior (variety behavior). In both cases, this brand variation can be realized by moving horizontally (buying another brand / product from a similar range), up (buying a product / brand of a higher range), or down (buy a product / brand from a lower range). Hence, the first point of divergence between the variety seeking concept and that of hybridity begins to be clarified. Indeed, the latter excludes the first possibility and gives an indication to an inter-range movement only.

■ Le smart shopping

The smart shopping is the investment of a considerable amount of time and effort in searching and using information on promotions in order to achieve price savings.

The similarity between “smart shoppers” and hybrid consumers can come from the downscaling adopted by these two types of consumers. However, these two patterns of consumption differ in terms of their motivations. Indeed, “smart shopping” represents an ongoing search for promotions and bargains. The smart shopper ensures that he does not miss “opportunities to realize savings”, no matter what his real need or financial constraints. Thus, he seeks the short-term pleasure through getting a discount on prices. This is not the case for a hybrid consumer. In fact, this latter seeks responding to motivations both hedonic and utilitarian. It is mainly the intention to go upmarket that arouses the intention to reduce spending (according to the design of Silverstein et al., 2003, 2006, 2007).

An exploratory investigation: nature and main facets of consumer behavior hybridity

The limited number of studies that have addressed this behavior fail to deliver a rigorous research framework with a consistent definition. That is why we chose to start with realizing some semi-directives interviews. We estimated that the thematic analysis would help us to draw an empirical definition and to propose principal consumers' orientations in such behavior.

Methodology

As we have already mentioned, until now, researches on this new topic in consumer behavior have been made only in American or European contexts. We have considered it appropriate to explore different aspects of this subject in a different context such as Tunisia. The relevance of this country comes not only from the fact that it is a developing country, but also from being a culturally open and having an educated population, which often accepts acculturation.

In the 22 semi-structured individual interviews, we have tried to satisfy both of diversification and saturation classical principles. However, we have also following the recommendations proposed by Giannelloni and Vernet (2012) that suggest starting by asking individuals who are a priori most concerned with the central issue. In fact, we have adopted the snowball method for selecting participants to the interviews. Despite the fact that it can generate some limitations, this method allowed us a better immersion and more proximity to consumers' habits and practices. Similarly, we have adopted an ethnographic approach which allows a thorough understanding of the way people live and consume (Kotler et al, 2012; Giannelloni and Vernet, 2012). After reading the corpus, we have prepared a codebook that will be used for the analytical phase with the use of QDA Miner logiciel. This preparation will enable us to perform the appropriate statistical tests (co-occurrence tests). As in the quantitative analysis, reliability of qualitative analyzes could also be apprehended. This step seems to be necessary because the coding is simply a human work, which generates differences in interpretations. We asked two colleagues from the marketing research laboratory in Sfax to accomplish the same work on three cases that have been selected randomly. The table (table 1) presented below shows different areas of agreements and disagreements:

Table 1 : Analysis' results of coding reliability

CODE	AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	PERCENT	SCOTT'S PI
Mental calculation	1	6	2	77,80%	0,357
Perceived quality variability	1	6	2	77,80%	0,357
cognitive categorization	1	6	0	100,00%	1
Adaptive hybridity	2	3	0	100,00%	1
Global hybridity	0	7	2	77,80%	-0,125
Specific hybridity	0	9	0	100,00%	
Voluntary hybridity	0	9	0	100,00%	
Control manifestation	1	6	2	77,80%	0,357
Seeking experiences	2	1	2	60,00%	0,167
Culpability	2	3	2	71,40%	0,417
Pleasure and satisfaction	2	3	0	100,00%	1
Hybrid purchase style	1	6	0	100,00%	1
TOTAL	13	65	12	86,70%	0,6

After discussion and correction, a Scott's Pi index (1971) equal to 0.86 announces that our coding work has an acceptable level of reliability and consistency between coders. Finally, the co-occurrence analysis enabled us to identify the real form and nature of this consumer hybridity as well as different orientations that guide him in such behavior.

Definition and conceptual position

By having a conceptualization objective of hybridity in purchasing behavior, we face several problems and questions like: could this hybridity be considered as a predisposition to hybrid purchase or as an effective purchasing behavior? How can we choose between these two positions if the existence of both of them was verified in the same consumer?

Aligning with our objectives, we decided to take into account all possibilities that could be addressed by the interviewees and key elements that could help in the foundation of our concept. Indeed, a first consideration brings us to the suggestion that hybridity could be designed as a concept of general order. That is to say, hybridity in purchasing manifests after processing a certain cognitive categorization of all product categories (56%). Some consumers trade up in some product categories (sustainable and / or ostentatious) seeking to procure high-quality, premium and prestigious products. However, they prefer to go down in some categories of so-called basic, "Fast Moving", low level of risk, and private or hidden consumption products. However, interviews clearly show the existence of a hybridity

within the same product category. That is to say, consumers can mix and match purchases from two different levels for the same product (82%) (e.g. clothing products and accessories which may be the object of an inter-range consumer movement).

To provide a precise definition, we thought that it would be appropriate also to verify the nature of this concept. Discussions that we have made during interviews clearly show the existence of actual behavior concretized by going up and down markets (13%). In other words, the hybrid consumer combines purchases at very different and sometimes conflicting quality and price levels of products. However, we also want to precise that the actual behavior was not the only concept that reflects consumers' hybridity. Indeed, we found that most of participants speak about a predisposition to consume in a hybrid manner. That is to say, sometimes they speak about a positive attitude, or they express positive feelings toward such behavior or such shopping experience. Similarly, in 8% of cases, the predisposition to hybridity remains at a cognitive or emotional level, and do not concretized into a real behavior. Actually, the combination of these two levels of abstraction in the same individual is described in most cases (65.2%), as a hybrid purchase style. Thus, it is no longer appropriate to state that a consumer may at the same time, have a predisposition to hybridity, experience positive feelings about it and behave effectively in a hybrid manner. Consumers are adopting then a hybrid purchase style that includes both a cognitive, affective and behavioral aspects.

Without going into this dissociation, that has shown its limitations, we will take a stand and choose to define this hybridity as a contemporary shopping style. In this sense, we consider that the consumer has, in general, a specific and stable hybrid purchase style that could be understood through a set of essential motivations (Dao, 2005). This style refers to a set of preferences, attitudes and behaviors describing three main orientations, which are social, emotional and rational orientations.

Key orientation of consumer behavior hybridity

The results of these interviews reveal the existence of three main orientations. The first takes a social aspect in which a hybrid consumer adopts such a purchase style just to meet his needs for belonging, distinction and prestige. On one hand, the need to communicate higher status or better image seems to be a true quest to some individuals. Indeed, it is a real "victory" when they manage to highlight a wealth or a superior position according to the limited earnings they have. This implies that they go into a continuous spiral of categorization that will inspire, subsequently, their inter-categorical hybridity. More precisely, hybrid consumers trade up when it comes to public or visible product categories. Thus, they are able to pay higher prices to guarantee social value highlighted by premium and luxury products. At the same time, they trade down in private or hidden products categories. This allows them to save money without losing in terms of image and social position. Similarly, we have identified a second type of motivation, which could be behind the social facet of hybrid style. It could be manifested in consumers' need for differentiation and uniqueness (17.4%). We incorporated this in the social aspect because it defines, too, the relationship between one's behavior and other members of society. This consumer goes looking for an image that sets him apart from all that is ordinary. So, he not only can find his refuge in the unique appearance created by luxury and high end

products, but also in , trading down and buying some second hand products could be considered for him, a treasure hunting, which in turn can suit his need to be unique. Finally, to have or not a conspicuous consumption, it happens to anyone to adopt a purchasing behavior just by being influenced by a group of friends or by family members. Guided by a need for integration and belonging, some consumers have shown that these groups have a strong influence whether informational or normative (39.1%).

The second orientation describes the emotional aspect in which a hybrid consumer adopts such a purchasing style because he is guided by his experience, excitement and pleasure seeking. Changing for a different products' range or price and quality levels could be seen as a necessary experience: if change fears some consumers, it nonetheless excites others. Indeed, they consider that the fact of not being limited to a single range allows them to be free, independent and to live several types of experiences.

Finally, the third orientation describes the rational aspect in which a hybrid consumer adopts such a purchasing style because he tends to control his desires and behaviors. That is why he never behaves without rational calculations and mental categorization. In fact, most interviewees assume that this hybridity is simply a result of a control of their own desires and buying processes (47.8%). We have also noticed the need for caution, prudence and wisdom above their decisions and behavior (52.2%). In other words, undeniable calculator intelligence predominates before any purchase. The conceptual card presented below shows the grouping of these three orientations and the calculated distance between them.

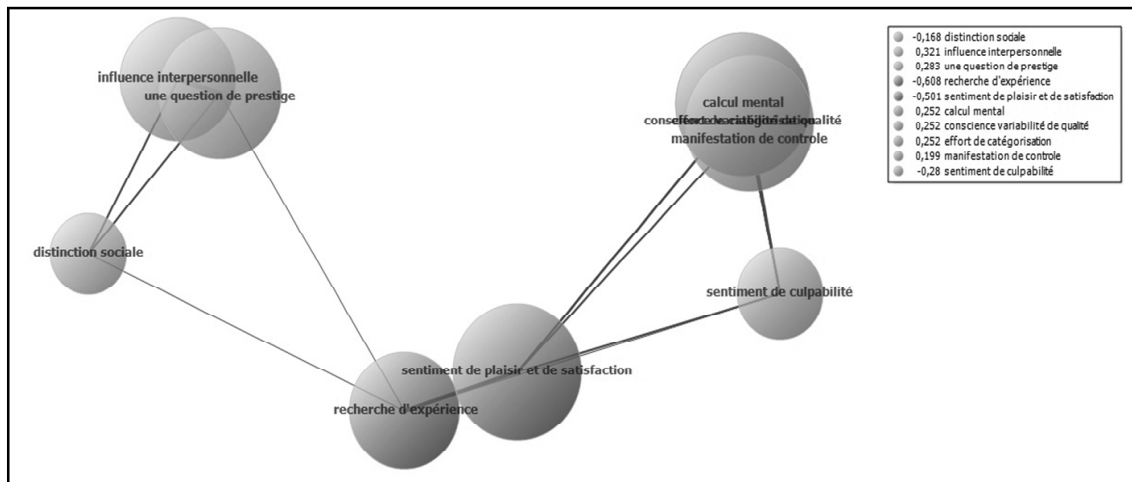


Figure 2 : Conceptual card of hybrid shopping orientations

Conclusion

Critical analysis of a new wave of research and ethnographic interviews bring out a new shopping style qualified as “hybrid purchasing style”. This latter reflects a proactive approach, thoughtful and critical consumption that occurs in bipolarized behavior concretized in trading up and trading down

markets. Indeed, several contextual factors continue to exert pressures that increase tensions between hedonic and rational values. This first empirical investigation provides a first thought of nature as well as the main orientations of the concept. It could be considered a starting point for modeling a rather complex behavior in order to understand its key antecedents. For example, the socially oriented hybrid purchasing style reports strong relationship with conspicuous consumption, while rational direction could be connected to a need for control or spending control. Finally, the emotional aspect could refer to openness to experiences.

By becoming unpredictable and unstable, the new consumer requires revolutionary responses in their marketing strategies. It would be better that luxury brands tend to seek getting back the trust of their consumers. This would be by proposing sometimes products that are able to satisfy the emergent desire for economic and reasonable buying. This new strategy could be also considered as the new gold pearl that takes into account a desire expressed by the new middle class to luxury goods.

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