

## Do You Want to Be “You” or “Everybody Else”: Uniqueness Seeking of Individuals Depending on Independent and Interdependent Self?

Muhammad Asim Aziz<sup>a</sup>, Sajid Pervaiz<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Department of Business Administration, University of Gujrat, Pakistan

---

### ARTICLE INFORMATION

#### ARTICLE HISTORY:

Received: 12<sup>th</sup> December 2017

Reviewed: 14<sup>th</sup> February 2018

Accepted: 24<sup>th</sup> February 2018

#### KEYWORDS:

*Independent Self,  
Interdependent Self,  
Need for Uniqueness,  
Consumer Need for Uniqueness,  
Perceived Uniqueness,  
Luxury Brands*

### ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** This study theorizes and empirically tests the impact of self-construal aspects on need for uniqueness. Specifically, this study focuses on the contribution of independent self and interdependent self in developing consumer perceptions about need for uniqueness.

**Methodology/Design:** This study is cross-sectional in nature. Survey questionnaire is used for data collection from consumers of luxury apparel brands. Four-hundred and eighty-four responses were collected by using convenience sampling technique.

**Findings:** The findings show that independent self and interdependent self are positively related to consumer need for uniqueness. Likewise, independent self and interdependent self are positively related to need for uniqueness.

**Originality/Value:** In spite of extant literature, recent studies demand for more empirical evidences as the present empirical findings are insufficient for a cross cultural comparison. Previous research shows that the consumer need for uniqueness construct was developed and tested mainly in individualistic cultures, such as United States. Thus this research establish empirically evidences about independent self and interdependent self in developing consumer perceptions about self-construal aspects on need for uniqueness in collectivist culture such as Pakistan.

**Implication:** The advertisers can be involved in appealing customers to try their brands by highlighting their uniqueness after priming independent self and interdependent self.

©2018 Published by UWJMS

---

### INTRODUCTION

It is the need of the people to be different from others. Uniqueness fosters self – identity and increases status of people in the society (Codol, 1984; Tesser, 1988). While on the other hand, it is also a need to be similar to others. Similarities with other people develop attachment, emotional security and public influence (Brock, 1965; Byrne, 1971; Schachter, 1959). Instead of accepting extreme similarities or extreme dissimilarities comparative to others, people find the middle ground position for self-distinctiveness (Brewer, 1991, Fromkin, 1968, 1970; Snyder & Fromkin, 1980). People who

have a high need for uniqueness wish to more dissimilar from other individuals (Snyder, 1992; Lynn & Harris, 1997).

Consumer psychologists found that people who have higher uniqueness need have more options to use new products as compared to those who have lower uniqueness need (Amaldoss & Jain, 2005). Snyder and Fromkin, (1977) noted that the potency of this need vary from person to person. People have to face an unenthusiastic emotional effect when they become very similar with other individuals (Lynn & Harris, 1997; Tian, Bearden, & Hunter, 2001). When individuals exceed in creativity and beauty even then they can

experience social distance (Zhou, Vohs & Baumeister, 2009; He, Cong, Liu, & Zhou, 2010). People practice a definite level of both similarity and segregation from other individuals (Lynn & Harris, 1997). If people identify that they are extremely alike with other individuals, their dealings may possibly be motivated by the need to feel dissimilar (Tian et al., 2001).

People find different ways to be dissimilar as compared to other people (Bloch, 1995; Pickett & Brewer, 2001; Ruvio, 2008). Individuals can be distinctive by taking membership in such group which is different from others (Snyder & Fromkin, 1980). There are very fewer people who possess scarce products so by using these products customers can satisfy their need for uniqueness (Brock, 1968; Lynn, 1991; Snyder & Fromkin, 1980). Likewise, by owning customized products individuals may possibly be different from others (Lynn & Harris, 1997). By owning innovative products before other individuals, a customer can satisfy their need for uniqueness (Burns & Krampf, 1992; Fromkin, 1970). Need for uniqueness inspires people to use unique goods and products (Lynn and Snyder, 2002). Individuals desire and use unique products to express their individuality (Ruvio, Shoham & Makovec, 2008).

When individuals recognize themselves very similar to other people then they distinguish their products to protect self-identity (Tian et al., 2001). Independent and interdependent self has been used in different studies of advertising and consumer behavior (Polyorat & Alden, 2005; Ng & Houston, 2006; Chang, 2010). In addition, different researchers have recommended that self-construal is the valuable forecaster for uniqueness seeking of individuals (Kim & Markus, 1999; Chang, 2010).

Mostly, the prior Consumer Need For Uniqueness (CNFU) researches used United States sample (Tian et al., 2001; Tian &

McKenzie, 2001). Previous research shows that the consumer need for uniqueness (CNFU) construct was made and tested mainly in individualistic cultures, such as United States (Ma, Fang, Zhang & Nie, 2017; Fromkin & Snyder, 1980; Tian & McKenzie, 2001). This research validates the consumer need for uniqueness construct in collectivist culture such as Pakistan. Though uniqueness may be wanted by customers across the world, and consumer need for uniqueness was conceptualized as a cross-cultural attribute (Tian et al., 2001). Since, most of the researches explore consumer need for uniqueness by using samples from one country, which is often United States (Cheema & Kaikati, 2010).

There is dire need to research on consumer need for uniqueness in other markets before it can be applied in cross-cultural research. There is very little work done in this area so the researcher chooses this less explored topic. The purpose of present study was to examine the impact of self-construal on the need for uniqueness and consumer need for uniqueness. The results of current research are helpful for marketers to make useful strategies by considering independent self, interdependent self, need for uniqueness, consumer need for uniqueness and perceived uniqueness and make those products which satisfy the consumer need for uniqueness.

Advertisers can apply appeals of uniqueness by highlighting the distinctive characteristics of customers. Marketers can also make strategies to increase the acceptance of these products. It can be useful for different national and multinational companies. These companies can make those products which satisfy the need for uniqueness and these companies can also enhance their market share.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Theory of Uniqueness and Social Identity**

The theory of uniqueness was coined by (Snyder & Fromkin, 1980). This theory states that people get tense when they find themselves extremely dissimilar to others. Uniqueness theory also explains that everybody has a need to be reasonably different from other individuals. Snyder and Fromkin (1977, 1980) noted that the strength of this need varies from individual to individual. Individuals have to face a subdued emotional effect when they become very similar to other people (Lynn & Harris, 1997; Tian et al., 2001).

Social identity theory explains that individuals do not express different opinions due to the fear of social distance and incorporate with their group (Tajfel & Turner, 2004). We wish to be distinctive individual and we also want to behave like other people. It has been learned that extreme individuality leads toward social rejection and isolation (Brewer & Pickett, 1999; Kim & Markus, 1999; Cheema & Kaikati, 2010).

Individuals respond in both ways; one is emotional and other is behavioral to get a reasonable distinctiveness relative to others. The wish for uniqueness has been constrained by the need of social incorporation to avoid from social isolation (Snyder, 1992; Lynn & Snyder, 2002; Franke & Schreier, 2008). People wish for distinctiveness in different ways and at the same time try to lessen social penalties which can be confronted with being different. The use of distinctive goods is a method to satisfy the need for distinctiveness (Tian & Mckensie, 2001). Individuals try to grow their self-worth and lessen the harmful effects through unique behaviors when people realize that they are very similar to others (Snyder & Fromkin, 1977).

### **Independent Self and Interdependent Self**

Independent self and interdependent self are two significant variables. Individuals with independent-self have internal abilities and they express themselves as the unique individual (Singelis, 1994). But, People who have interdependent self-wish to become part of the community (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Consumer goods which are available only for fewer people are a great source of self-uniqueness (Snyder & Fromkin, 1980).

“Self-construal is the relationship of self with others and, particularly, to what extent they perceive themselves separated or associated with other people” (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 226). Singelis (1994) stated independent (INDE) self as an enclosed, firm self which is disconnected from the social context and these people have inner capabilities, judgments, and stances. Moreover, they wish to be distinctive and express themselves as unique individuals. People with a very independent-self include their own traits, aptitude, characteristics, and thoughts and attract in actions which distinguish them from other individuals (Singelis, 1994). On the other side in interdependent self, people depend on other individuals, and they highlight on belongings and fit in with their community (Singelis, 1994; Triandis, 1989). Individuals who have a prevailing interdependent-self interpret their identity with their relationships with other people (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

The self-construal concept was used to verify the difference of cultures between customers in some researches (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Aaker & Lee, 2001; Polyorat & Alden, 2005; Ng & Houston, 2006). Independent self has been found in the western countries while interdependent self is found in the eastern countries (Singelis, 1994). Though these thoughts were mostly used to compare the difference of cultures later on

numerous studies expanded this idea to the behavior of consumers and advertisement researches (Ng & Houston, 2006; Polyorat & Alden, 2005; Sung & Choi, 2011). It has been showed by consumer research that self-concept can affect the way in which people react to the information of a product (Aaker & Maheswaran, 1997) and emphasize on the distinctive feature which differentiates them from other people (Aaker & Lee, 2001). Snyder and Fromkin (1977) stated that various individuals possibly have high inspiration for individuality than other people.

### **Self-Constual concept and Need for Uniqueness**

On the same side, the results of Chan et al. (2012) research look at the means in which customers try to satisfy their adaptation and separation inspirations without provoking intense social responses. Distinctiveness and association intentions can be fulfilled simultaneously by using dissimilar choice aspects and there is no need to sacrifice any motive even people with affiliation motive also seek uniqueness (Chan et al., 2012).

A determined human inspiration subsists to be unique, which indicates peoples' tendency to use uniqueness for self-projection (Vignoleset al., 2000, p. 346). For example, when a person sets himself for a party or a formal gathering, he / she may choose to use such a unique dress which may not have in possession of any other person at that party so that that very person may look distinct from his / her friends and other participants. (Snyder and Fromkin, 1980). Need for uniqueness (NFU) is defined as "an approach of looking distinct among others" (Snyder and Fromkin, 1977, p. 519). Previous studies have revealed that the need for uniqueness (NFU) is caused by status consumption and that it persuades purchase intentions (Chan et al., 2015; Park, Rabolt, & Jeon, 2008).

Therefore, we derive following hypotheses:

**H1:** *Independent (INDE) self has a significant impact on the need for uniqueness (NFU).*

**H2:** *Interdependent (INTER) self has a significant effect on the need for uniqueness (NFU).*

**H3:** *Independent (INDE) self has a significant impact on consumer need for uniqueness (CNFU).*

**H4:** *Interdependent (INTER) self has a significant effect on consumer need for uniqueness (CNFU).*

Lynn and Harris (1997) explain the effects of individuality in the need for uniqueness (NFU), they also explore relationships between the need for uniqueness and wish for consumers for scarce products, innovativeness of consumers and the wish for customize products. When individuals realize that they have high similarity with other individuals then they distinguish customer products to protect self-identification (Tian et al., 2001). Need for uniqueness (NFU) is an important variable which predicts the behavior of consumers for unique selections (Workman & Kidd, 2000); this may possibly be the feature of an individual to search for those products which will differentiate oneself from other individuals (Tian, Bearden, & Hunter, 2001).

Uniqueness need is a wish for being dissimilar from others and protecting distinctiveness in the community (Fromkin, 1972). Consumer need for uniqueness (CNFU) refers to peoples' tendency to remain unique and different from others in order to maintain his/her own identity. In doing this, they need to use unique goods so that they may develop their own image in the eyes of others. (Escalas & Bettman, 2003; Tian & McKenzie, 2001, p. 172; Tian et al., 2001, p. 52).

Individual who contain scarce products are small in number. A consumer can fulfill their uniqueness need by using rare goods (Brock, 1968; Lynn, 1991; Snyder & Fromkin, 1980). Using of customize products is another way that individual can distinguish themselves from other people. Evidence of using customized products as a source of distinctiveness presented by Lynn and Harris (1970). They found that people who score high on the SNFU (The self-attributed need for uniqueness) scale had a more want for customize products than those who had lower SANU.

Several designs and goods are very common. People can express their uniqueness by adopting less popular products.

Therefore, we derive following hypotheses:

**H5:** *Need for uniqueness (NFU) has a significant effect on consumer need for uniqueness (CNFU).*

#### ***Need for uniqueness and Perceived Uniqueness***

Optimal Distinctiveness Theory (ODT) argues that social identification has been determined by two primary needs of individuals one is the need of similarity and the other is a distinctive need (Brewer, 1991; Brewer & Pickertt, 1999). It is noted that disequilibrium between these needs leads to social distance (Lynn & Snyder, 2002).

Researchers of consumer behavior followed the optimal distinctive theory for the investigation of innovative product adoption process (Timmor & Katz-Navon, 2008); it is also adopted for the unique product preferences (He et al., 2010). Consumer's need for similarity and differentness

exist in the same consumer. When many consumers have adopted the product then the consumer who has low need of differentness and high need for similarity will have more chances for the adoption of such product. On the other side, a consumer who has a high need of differentness and low need of similarity will have fewer chances for the adoption of such product (Timmor & Katz-Navon, 2008).

Perceived uniqueness (PU) is stated as in the same category to what extent product is considered as different by the consumer (Tian et al., 2001). Perceived uniqueness (PU) is the relationship between the products and with other products and use of perceived uniqueness conception to check the impact on customizes products. Perceived uniqueness (PU) contributes to the utility which is experienced by a consumer. Moreover, customers who have a higher uniqueness need give value to the perceived uniqueness (PU) of the customize product as compared to those who have a low need for uniqueness (Franke & Schreier, 2008).

However, commodity theory argued that apparent shortage must increase the attractiveness of goods (Brock, 1968; Lynn, 1991). For example, owning scarce products creates value as those products can help the people by defining themselves as distinct from other people (Snyder & Fromkin, 1980). Therefore, we derive following hypotheses:

**H6:** *Consumer need for uniqueness (CNFU) has a positive effect on perceived uniqueness (PU).*

## Theoretical Framework

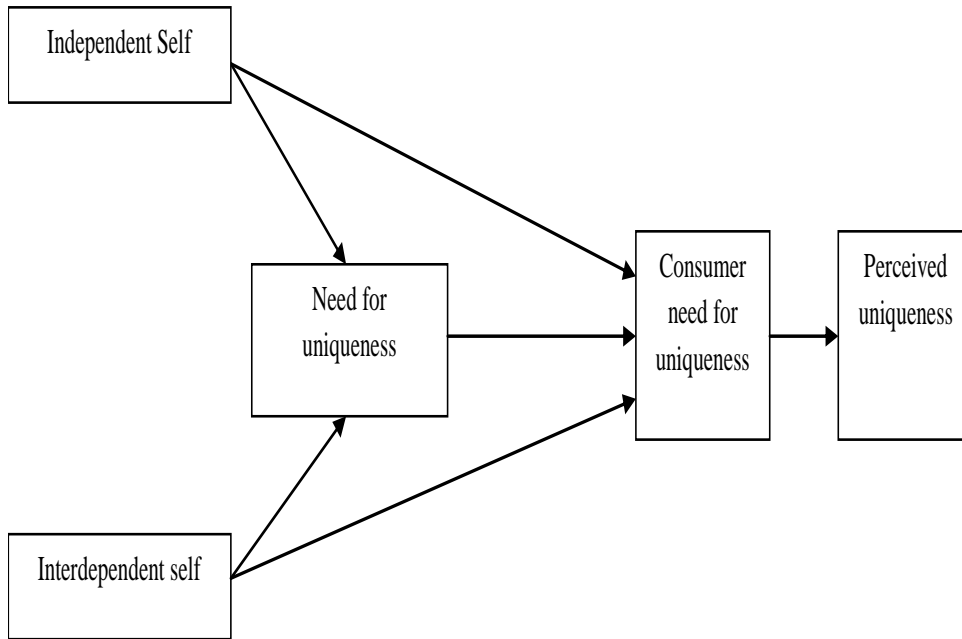


Figure: 1. Proposed Theoretical Model

## METHODOLOGY

The population of the present study was Pakistani consumers who use luxury apparel brands. These consumers were chosen for this research through Convenience sampling method. Questionnaire were disseminated online using social media. A total of four-hundred and eighty-four responses were received. Self-construal scale was adopted from Singelis (1994). It contains 12 items for interdependent (INTER) self and 11 items for independent (INDE) self. Need for uniqueness measurement scale consists of four items taken from the self-attributed need for uniqueness scale (Lynn & Harris, 1997). Consumer need for uniqueness measurement contains 8 items scale which was taken by the desire for unique consumer products (DUCP) scale (Lynn and Harris, 1997). Perceived uniqueness: It was

measured by 3-item scale borrowed from a research carried out by Franke and Schreier (2008). Five-point Likert scale was used to record the responses.

## Measures

Self-construal scale was adopted from Singelis (1994). It contains 12 items for interdependent (INTER) self and 11 items for independent (INDE) self. Need for uniqueness measurement scale consists of four items taken from the self-attributed need for uniqueness scale (Lynn & Harris, 1997). Consumer need for uniqueness measurement contains 8 items scale which was taken by the desire for unique consumer products (DUCP) scale (Lynn & Harris, 1997). Perceived uniqueness: It was measured by 3-item scale borrowed from a research carried out by Franke

and Schreier (2008). Respondents gave to respond to each item on a five-point Likert scale.

**DATA ANALYSIS**

A sample of 484 respondents has 36.6 percent male and 63.4 percent female respondents. A large number of respondents (39.5%) were belonging to 25-30 age groups. The majority of participants had M. Phil/PhD degree (51.2%) while (29.1%) percent had Master degree and (19.6%) were the graduate. In income category, most of the respondents (43.8%) had more than 80,000 thousand monthly income.

**Descriptive Statistics**

Descriptive statistics is used to analyze data in a meaningful way; it helps in visualizing data and thus provides the basis for basic analysis of data (Trochim, 2006). The results demonstrated that mean for study variables range between 3.06 and

3.74 while standard deviation (SD) ranges between .50 and .95 (see Table 1). Moreover, Skewness and Kurtosis values are also in acceptable range and showing normality of data.

**Common Variance Bias**

When data for explanatory and dependent variable has been collected by using self-reported questionnaire from one respondent at one time, then common variance method (CMV) might be the point of attention (Chang, Van & Eden, 2010). Common method effect was tested by using Harman’s single-factor. Results are shown in Table 2. As shown by the results that the first factor had indicated 17.798% of total variance which is less than 49% recommended by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee and Podsakoff (2003). Results indicated that model is free from common method biases.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics**

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
INDE	1.00	5.00	3.611	0.503	- 0.55	0.93
INTER	1.00	5.00	3.741	0.527	- 0.46	0.61
CNFU	1.00	5.00	3.213	0.683	- 0.35	0.41
PU	1.00	5.00	3.269	0.888	- 0.41	- 0.08
NFU	1.00	5.00	3.064	0.949	- 0.03	- 0.75

**Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)**

CFA was conducted. First step was to test measurement model for goodness of fit. Results suggest all fit indices are in acceptable range. Such as CMIN/DF = 1.426, GFI = 0.911, AGFI = 0.889, CFI = 0.963 and NFI = 0.887 representing that the model is

88.7% fit, RMR = 0.031 and RMSEA = 0.037. Results support the evidence of convergent validity. Results are shown in Table 3. Independent (INDE) self-factor loads are lies in the range of 0.58 to 0.82, AVE is 0.53, CR is 0.91, and Cronbach’s alpha is 0.87.

Interdependent (INTER) self factor loads are ranges from 0.72 to 0.84, AVE is 0.51, CR is 0.891 and Cronbach's alpha = 0.89. Likewise, need for uniqueness (NFU) factor loads are 0.60 to 0.79, AVE = 0.50, CR = 0.89 and Cronbach's alpha = 0.88. factor loadings for Consumer need

for uniqueness (CNFU) ranged from 0.47 to 0.88, AVE is 0.66, CR is 0.89 and Cronbach's alpha = 0.88. Factor loadings ranges of Perceived uniqueness (PU) ranged from 0.77 to 0.83, AVE = 0.64, CR = 0.84 and Cronbach's alpha = 0.84, fulfilling the criteria for convergent validity.

**Table 2. Results of CMV analysis (Total Variance Explained)**

Component	Initial Eigen values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6.76	17.79	17.79	6.76	17.78	17.79	3.67	9.62	9.62

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

**Table 3. Verification of measurement model for convergent/ discriminant validity and composite reliability**

Factor	Estimate (Reflective measure)	No of Items	CR	AVE	Cronbach Alpha
INDE	(.58-.82)	10	.91	.53	.87
INTER	(.72-.84)	10	.91	.51	.89
NFU	(.60-.79)	8	.89	.50	.88
CNFU	(.47-.88)	4	.89	.66	.88
PU	(.77-.83)	3	.84	.64	.84

CMIN = 462.162, CMIN/df = 1.426, p < 0.00; df = 324, GFI = .911, AGFI = .889, NFI = .887, CFI = .963, RMSEA = 0.037, RMR = .031

**Hypotheses Testing**

It was predicted that Independent (INDE) self has a significantly positive relationship with the need for uniqueness (NFU). Results are shown in

Table 4. Results suggest that Independent self has a significant positive impact on the need for uniqueness ( $\beta = 0.493$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), hence supporting hypothesis 1. Similarly, it was proposed that Interdependent (INTER) self has a

significantly positive relationship with the need for uniqueness (NFU).

As expected, results supported the proposition that Interdependent self has a significant positive impact on need for uniqueness (NFU). Likewise, it was anticipated that Independent (INDE) self has a significant positive relationship with consumer need for uniqueness (CNFU), it was supported by the results ( $\beta = 0.439$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Similarly, it was supposed that Interdependent (INTER) self has a significant positive influence on consumer need for uniqueness (CNFU) which was verified by the results ( $\beta = 0.413$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). It was proposed that need for uniqueness (NFU) has a significantly positive impact on consumer need for uniqueness (CNFU).

Results showed that NFU has significantly positive influence on CNFU ( $\beta = 0.373$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). It was proposed that consumer need for uniqueness (CNFU) has a significantly positive impact on perceived uniqueness (PU). The results demonstrated that consumer need for uniqueness positively influences perceived uniqueness ( $\beta = 0.272$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

The structural model was created to test hypotheses. The fit indices yield satisfactory results. CMIN/DF = 1.369, GFI = 0.914, AGFI = 0.894, CFI = 0.969 and NFI = 0.892, RMSEA = 0.034 and RMR = 0.031.

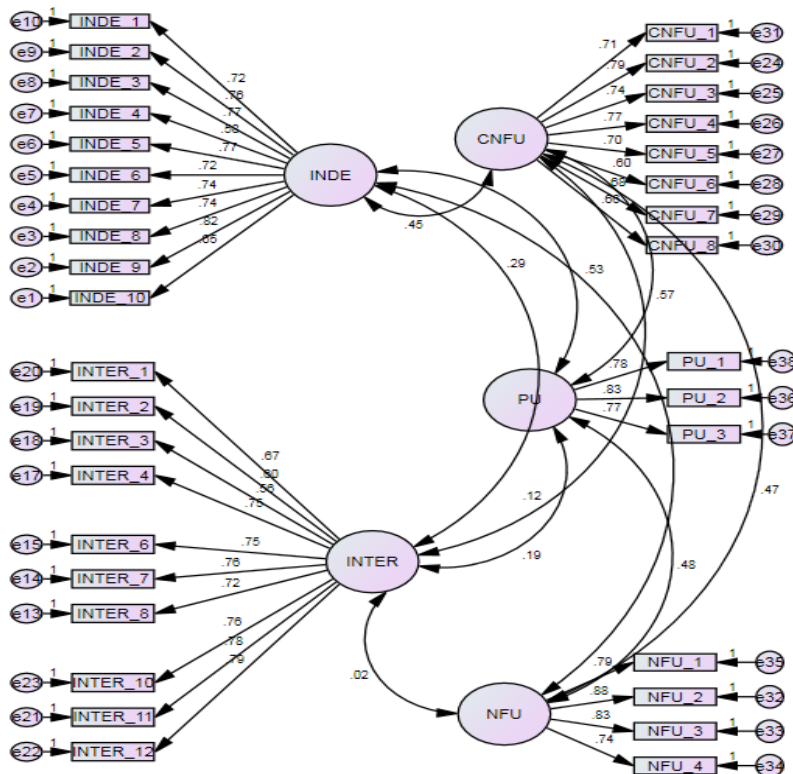


Figure 2: Measurement Model

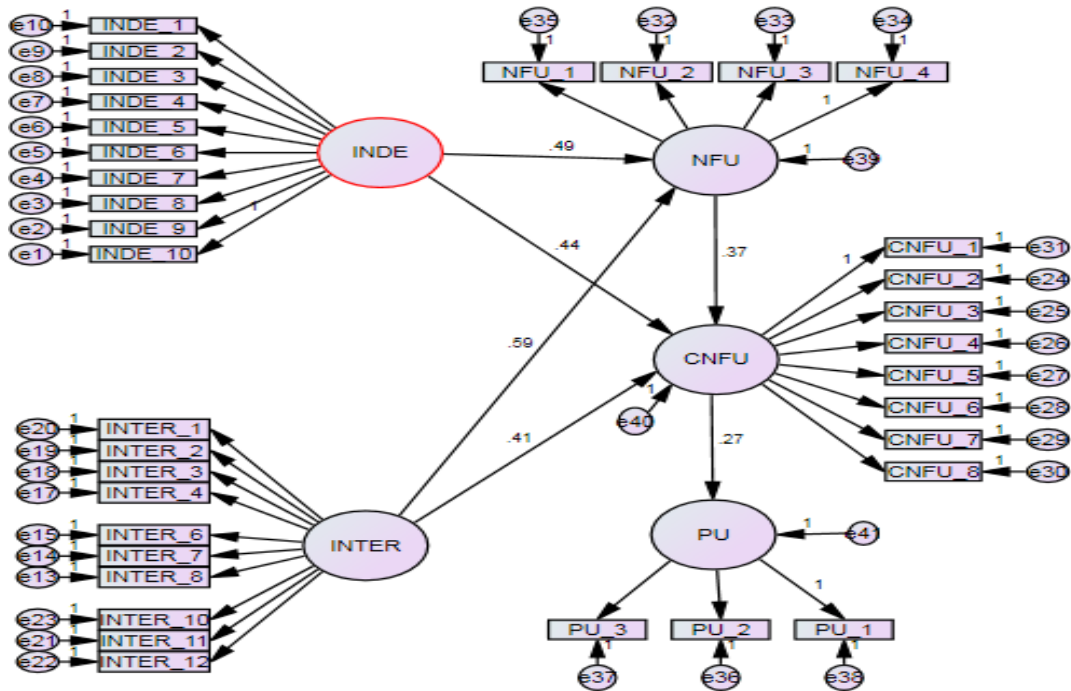


Figure 3: Structural Model with Hypothesized Causal Relationships

Table 4. Testing of Structural Model

Structural Path	Estimate	C.R.	P
NFU ← INDE	.49	7.97	***
NFU ← INTER	.58	3.16	.002
CNFU ← INDE	.44	6.69	***
CNFU ← INTER	.41	7.32	***
CNFU ← NFU	.37	5.87	***
PU ← CNFU	.27	3.81	***

Note: CMIN = 420.257, CMIN /df = 1.369,  $p \leq 0.00$ ; df = 307, GFI = .914, AGFI = .894, NFI = .892, CFI = .969, RMSEA = 0.034, RMR = .031

## **DISCUSSION**

Major aim to this study was to measure how consumers need for uniqueness lead towards their selection of unique goods to maintain their uniqueness. Particularly, the present research explored the role of self-construal on consumer need for uniqueness and need for uniqueness. The findings show that independent (INDE) self and interdependent (INTER) self are positively related to consumer need for uniqueness. Likewise, independent (INDE) self and interdependent (INTER) self are positively related to need for uniqueness. Therefore, we conclude that consumers high on need for uniqueness will choose unique brands which will further strengthen their perception of uniqueness. The advertisers may be involved in appealing customers to try their brands by highlighting their uniqueness after priming independent (INDE) self and interdependent (INTER) self. Furthermore, it was found that need for uniqueness (NFU) has a significant positive effect on consumer need for uniqueness (CNFU). Similarly, the results demonstrated that consumer need for uniqueness (CNFU) has a positive effect on perceived uniqueness (PU). Particularly, the present study has advanced existing knowledge by investigating self-construal with reference need for uniqueness, perceived uniqueness and CNFU. This research also presents very useful contribution to consumer need for uniqueness by giving specific results. This research clarifies contributions of independent (INDE) self, interdependent (INTER) self, need for uniqueness (NFU), consumer need for uniqueness (CNFU) and perceived uniqueness (PU) in proposed research model.

This study provides insights for academics as well as managerial practitioners. While companies are busy in getting the competitive edge over others, they can achieve it if they simply work on uniqueness seeking behavior of customers. Whereas in the academic field this

study also provides a new thought and this research can also be further extended in future.

The results of this research not only enlarge what is identified about CNFU but also give significant insights about uniqueness seeking customers. Producers of luxury apparel brands should focus on the uniqueness of their brand so that people having stronger need for uniqueness will get attracted to such brands to increase their utility as well as public image. Managers of luxury apparel brands consider its customers' needs and make efforts to make those products which communicate their uniqueness. CNFU is an important factor in the luxury apparel industry. The outcomes of the current study demonstrate that customers have the desire for being unique and distinctive. Luxury apparel products allow individuals to distinguish themselves from other people (Lynn & Snyder, 2002; Snyder, 1992). Results also suggest that apparel brands are important sources of satisfaction of need for uniqueness. Customers are interested to boost their image by using apparel brands. Companies should make luxury apparel brands which contain unique features. On the whole, the results support arguments which are given in this research. The results of current research are helpful for the marketers of luxury apparel brands to make useful strategies by considering these concepts: Independent (INDE) self, interdependent (INTER) self, need for uniqueness (NFU), perceived uniqueness (PU) and consumer need for uniqueness (CNFU). Advertisers can apply appeals of uniqueness by highlighting the unique features of luxury apparel brands. The results of current research are helpful for the marketers of luxury apparel brands to make useful strategies by considering these concepts: independent (INDE) self, interdependent (INTER) self, need for uniqueness (NFU), consumer need for uniqueness (CNFU) and perceived uniqueness (PU) Advertisers can apply appeals of status by highlighting the status features of luxury apparel

brands. Consequently, it develops our academic understanding about independent (INDE) self, interdependent (INTER) self, need for uniqueness (NFU), consumer need for uniqueness (CNFU) and perceived uniqueness (PU). The results of this research not only enlarge what is identified about independent (INDE) self, interdependent (INTER) self, need for uniqueness (NFU), consumer need for uniqueness (CNFU) and perceived uniqueness (PU) but also give significant insights about uniqueness seeking customers. When the researchers theoretically understand the psychology of customers, it helps the theme and implementation of promotion and advertising campaigns. It can help managers of apparel brands.

### Limitations and Recommendations

This research has valuable findings but it also has some limitations which can affect its generalizability. This study has not used different product categories. The research was carried out by applying only one industry so its

### REFERENCES

- Aaker, J. L., & Lee, A. Y. (2001). "I" seek pleasures and "we" avoid pains: The role of self-regulatory goals in information processing and persuasion. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 28(1), 33-49.
- Aaker, J. L., & Maheswaran, D. (1997). The effect of cultural orientation on persuasion. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 24(3), 315-328.
- Amaldoss, W., & Jain, S. (2005). Pricing of conspicuous goods: A competitive analysis of social effects. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 42(1), 30-42.
- Arnold, M. J., & Reynolds, K. E. (2003). Hedonic shopping motivations. *Journal of Retailing*, 79(2), 77-95.
- Bloch, P. H. (1995). Seeking the ideal form: Product design and consumer response. *The Journal of Marketing*, 16-29.

generalizability may possibly be imperfect. Additional research should be done by using different product categories such as experience oriented, serviceable, figurative, and publicly noticeable products. It is suggested to use self-related variables such as self-presentation, self-monitoring and self-regulating in future studies.

The research was conducted in cross sectional time frame but it could also be performed in longitudinal setup. The research was conducted for generalizability but it could also be conducted with more focused scope i.e. moves towards more specific with single apparel brand. A more specific approach will give a clearer picture. Likewise, study frame and category can also be altered for exploring further in the field. For generalizability, this study could be varied in other countries; this model can be tested in other countries in order to check cross cultural variation and also to get more accurate results.

- Brewer, M. B. (1991). The social self: On being the same and different at the same time. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 17(5), 475-482.
- Brewer, M. B., & Pickett, C. L. (1999). Distinctiveness motives as a source of the social self. *The Psychology of the Social Self*, 14, 71-87.
- Brock, T. C. (1965). Communicator-recipient similarity and decision change. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1(6), 650-688.
- Brock, T. C. (1968). Implications of commodity theory for value change. In *Psychological foundations of attitudes*, 243-275.
- Burns, D. J., & Krampf, R. F. (1992). Explaining innovative behaviour: Uniqueness-seeking and sensation-seeking. *International Journal of Advertising*, 11(3), 227-237.

- Burns, R. B. (1979). *The self-Concept in theory, measurement, development, and behaviour*. Addison-Wesley Longman Ltd.
- Buunk, B. P., Ybema, J. F., Gibbons, F. X., & Ipenburg, M. (2001). The affective consequences of social comparison as related to professional burnout and social comparison orientation. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 31(4), 337-351.
- Byrne, D. E. (1971). *The Attraction Paradigm* (Vol. 11). Academic Pr.
- Chan, C., Berger, J., & Van Boven, L. (2012). Identifiable but not identical: Combining social identity and uniqueness motives in choice. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 39(3), 561-573.
- Chan, W. Y., To, C. K., & Chu, W. C. (2015). Materialistic consumers who seek unique products: How does their need for status and their affective response facilitate the repurchase intention of luxury goods?. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 27(4), 1-10.
- Chang, C. (2010). Making unique choices or being like others: How priming self-concepts influences advertising effectiveness. *Psychology & Marketing*, 27(4), 399-415.
- Chang, S. J., Van W. A., & Eden, L. (2010). From the editors: Common method variance. *International Business Research*, 41(2), 178-184.
- Cheema, A., & Kaikati, A. M. (2010). The effect of need for uniqueness on word of mouth. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 47(3), 553-563.
- Codol, J. P. (1984). 16. Social differentiation and non-differentiation I. The Social Dimension: Volume 1: European Developments in Social Psychology, 1, 314. Retrieved from [https://books.google.com.pk/books?hl=en&lr=&id=iIIIeD5SCKUC&oi=fnd&pg=PA314&dq=Codol,+J.+P.+\(1984\).+16.+Social+diff+erentiation+and+non-differentiation1.+The+Social+Dimension:+V+olume+1:+European+Developments+in+Social+Psychology,+1,+314.&ots=VG1AB4kOUM&sig=MqTdcZsJZ-xCZmpGMjLsf9afGDk#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.com.pk/books?hl=en&lr=&id=iIIIeD5SCKUC&oi=fnd&pg=PA314&dq=Codol,+J.+P.+(1984).+16.+Social+diff+erentiation+and+non-differentiation1.+The+Social+Dimension:+V+olume+1:+European+Developments+in+Social+Psychology,+1,+314.&ots=VG1AB4kOUM&sig=MqTdcZsJZ-xCZmpGMjLsf9afGDk#v=onepage&q&f=false)
- Escalas, J. E., & Bettman, J. R. (2005). Self-construal, reference groups, and brand meaning. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 32(3), 378-389.
- Franke, N., & Schreier, M. (2008). Product uniqueness as a driver of customer utility in mass customization. *Marketing Letters*, 19(2), 93-107.
- Fromkin, H. L. (1970). Effects of experimentally aroused feelings of undistinctiveness upon valuation of scarce and novel experiences. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 16(3), 521.
- Fromkin, H. L. (1972). Feelings of interpersonal undistinctiveness: An unpleasant affective state. *Journal of Experimental Research in Personality*, 6(3), 178-185.
- Fromkin, H. L., & Snyder, C. R. (1980). The search for uniqueness and valuation of scarcity. In *Social exchange*, 3, 57-75.
- He, L., Cong, F., Liu, Y., & Zhou, X. (2010). The pursuit of optimal distinctiveness and consumer preferences. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 51(5), 411-417.
- Tian, K. T., Bearden, W. O., & Hunter, G. L. (2001). Consumers' need for uniqueness: Scale development and validation. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 28(1), 50-66.
- Keyes, C. L. M., Lopez, S. J., & Snyder, C. R. (2002). Handbook of positive psychology. Retrieved from <https://www.slideshare.net/koccintosbor9/snyder-c-r-lopez-s-j-eds-handbook-of-positive-psychology>
- Kim, H., & Markus, H. R. (1999). Deviance or uniqueness, harmony or conformity? A cultural analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 77(4), 785.
- Lynn, M. (1991). Scarcity effects on value: A quantitative review of the commodity theory

- literature. *Psychology & Marketing*, 8(1), 43-57.
- Lynn, M., & Harris, J. (1997). Individual differences in the pursuit of self- uniqueness through consumption. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 27(21), 1861-1883.
- Lynn, M., & Snyder, C. R. (2002). Uniqueness seeking. In C. R. Snyder & S. J. Lopez (Eds.), *Handbook of positive psychology* (pp. 395-410). New York, NY, US: Oxford University Press. Retrieved from <http://psycnet.apa.org/record/2002-02382-028>
- Ma, L., Fang, Q., Zhang, J., & Nie, M. (2017). Money priming affects consumers' need for uniqueness. *Social Behavior and Personality: an International Journal*, 45(1), 105-114.
- Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological Review*, 98(2), 224.
- Ng, S., & Houston, M. J. (2006). Exemplars or beliefs? The impact of self-view on the nature and relative influence of brand associations. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 32(4), 519-529.
- Park, H. J., Rabolt, N. J., & SookJeon, K. (2008). Purchasing global luxury brands among young Korean consumers. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*, 12(2), 244-259.
- Pickett, C. L., & Brewer, M. B. (2001). Assimilation and differentiation needs as motivational determinants of perceived in-group and out-group homogeneity. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 37(4), 341-348.
- Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J. Y., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common method biases in behavioral research: a critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88(5), 879.
- Polyorat, K., Alden, D. L., & Alden, D. L. (2005). Self-construal and need-for-cognition effects on brand attitudes and purchase intentions in response to comparative advertising in Thailand and the United States. *Journal of Advertising*, 34(1), 37-48.
- Ruvio, A. (2008). Unique like everybody else? The dual role of consumers' need for uniqueness. *Psychology & Marketing*, 25(5), 444-464.
- Ruvio, A., Shoham, A., & Makovec Brenčič, M. (2008). Consumers' need for uniqueness: short-form scale development and cross-cultural validation. *International Marketing Review*, 25(1), 33-53.
- Singelis, T. M. (1994). The measurement of independent and interdependent self-construals. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 20(5), 580-591.
- Snyder, C. R. (1992). Product scarcity by need for uniqueness interaction: a consumer catch-22 carousel? *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 13(1), 9-24.
- Snyder, C. R., & Fromkin, H. L. (1977). Abnormality as a positive characteristic: The development and validation of a scale measuring need for uniqueness. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 86(5), 518.
- Snyder, C. R., & Fromkin, H. L. (2012). *Uniqueness: The human pursuit of difference*. Springer Science & Business Media. Retrieved from [https://books.google.com.pk/books?hl=en&lr=&id=6819BwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA2&dq=Snyder,+C.+R.,+%26+Fromkin,+H.+L.+\(2012\).+Uniqueness:+The+human+pursuit+of+difference.+Springer+Science+%26+Business+Media.&ots=lknCg03iEu&sig=9o3MVTVANbj2kiZs2gES3hE4k4M#v=onepage&q=Snyder%2C%20C.%20R.%2C%20%26%20Fromkin%2C%20H.%20L.%20\(2012\).%20Uniqueness%3A%20The%20human%20pursuit%20of%20difference.%20Springer%20Science%20%26%20Business%20Media.&f=false](https://books.google.com.pk/books?hl=en&lr=&id=6819BwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA2&dq=Snyder,+C.+R.,+%26+Fromkin,+H.+L.+(2012).+Uniqueness:+The+human+pursuit+of+difference.+Springer+Science+%26+Business+Media.&ots=lknCg03iEu&sig=9o3MVTVANbj2kiZs2gES3hE4k4M#v=onepage&q=Snyder%2C%20C.%20R.%2C%20%26%20Fromkin%2C%20H.%20L.%20(2012).%20Uniqueness%3A%20The%20human%20pursuit%20of%20difference.%20Springer%20Science%20%26%20Business%20Media.&f=false)

- Sung, Y., & Choi, S. M. (2011). Increasing power and preventing pain. *Journal of Advertising*, 40(1), 71-86.
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (2004). The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior. In J. T. Jost & J. Sidanius (Eds.), *Key readings in social psychology. Political psychology: Key readings* (pp. 276-293). New York, NY, US: Psychology Press. Retrieved from <http://psycnet.apa.org/record/2004-13697-016>
- Tesser, A. (1988). Toward a self-evaluation maintenance model of social behavior. In *Advances in experimental social psychology*. 21, 181-227. Academic Press.
- Tian, G., Hauser, S., Koutika, L. S., Ishida, F., & Chianu, J. N. (2001). Pueraria cover crop fallow systems: benefits and applicability. *Sustaining soil fertility in West Africa*, (sustainingsoilf), 137-155.
- Tian, K. T., & McKenzie, K. (2001). The long-term predictive validity of the consumers' need for uniqueness scale. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 10(3), 171-193.
- Tian, K. T., Bearden, W. O., & Hunter, G. L. (2001). Consumers' need for uniqueness: Scale development and validation. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 28(1), 50-66.
- Timmor, Y., & Katz-Navon, T. (2008). Being the same and different: A model explaining new product adoption. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 7(3), 249-262.
- Triandis, H. C. (1989). The self and social behavior in differing cultural contexts. *Psychological Review*, 96(3), 506.
- Trochim, W. M. (2006). Qualitative measures. *Research Measures Knowledge Base*, 361, 2-16
- Vignoles, V. L., Chryssochoou, X., & Breakwell, G. M. (2000). The distinctiveness principle: Identity, meaning, and the bounds of cultural relativity. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 4(4), 337-354.
- Workman, J. E., & Kidd, L. K. (2000). Use of the need for uniqueness scale to characterize

fashion consumer groups. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 18(4), 227-236.

- Zhou, X., Vohs, K. D., & Baumeister, R. F. (2009). The symbolic power of money: Reminders of money alter social distress and physical pain. *Psychological Science*, 20(6), 700-706.

## Appendix A

### Independent self-construal (INDE)

My personal identity independent of others is very important to me.

I enjoy being unique and different from others in many respects.

Having a lively imagination is important to me.

Being able to take care of myself is a primary concern for me.

I value being in good health above everything.

I am comfortable with being singled out for praise or rewards.

Speaking up during a class is not a problem to me.

I prefer to be direct and forthright when dealing with people I've just met.

I am the same person at home that I am at school.

I act the same way no matter who I am with.

I'd rather say "No" directly, than risk being misunderstood.

### Interdependent self-construal (INTER)

It is important to me to respect decisions made by the group.

It is important for me to maintain harmony within my group.

I will sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of the group I am in.

I respect people who are modest (humble) about themselves.

I have respect for the authority figures with whom I interact.

I will stay in a group if they need me, even when I'm not happy with the group.

My happiness depends on the happiness of those around me.

I would offer my seat in a bus to my professor.  
I should take into consideration my parents' advice when making education/career plans.  
I often have the feeling that my relationships with others are more important than my own accomplishments.  
If my brother or sister fails, I feel responsible.  
Even when I strongly disagree with group members, I avoid an argument.

**Consumer need for uniqueness (CNFU)**

I would prefer to have things custom-made than to have them ready-made.  
I am more likely to buy a product if it is scarce (limited).  
I enjoy shopping at stores that carry stock which is different and unusual.  
I rarely pass up the opportunity to order custom features on the products I buy.  
I like to try new products and services before others do.  
I tend to be a fashion leader rather than a fashion follower.  
I enjoy having things that others do not.  
I am very attracted to rare objects.

**Perceived uniqueness (PU)**

This apparel brand is one of a kind.  
I perceive this apparel brand as highly unique.  
My apparel brand is really special.

**Need for uniqueness (NFU)**

I have a need for uniqueness.  
Being distinctive is important to me.  
I prefer being different from other people.  
I intentionally do things to make myself different from those around me.