"An empirical study on face need effects on advertising of luxury"

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An empirical study of face need effects on advertising of luxury

Abstract

Research works on the relationship between Chinese face and consumption has recently been increasing. However, most of the existing researches prefer to deduce theory, fewer studies are to validate theory empirically. By collecting scenario items concerning face, this study developed face scales by EFA and CFA test. Four dimensions of face concept have been found: moral-oriented face need, ability-oriented face need, economic-status-oriented face need, and social-relationship-oriented face need. In this paper, "LIAN NEED" stands for moral-oriented face need. "MIAN NEED" stands for the rest three dimensions. Moreover, experimental research is conducted to compare buying conation differences under 3 scenarios of advertising of luxury. It is found that advertising of luxury with positive moral information will boost consumer's buying conation. Finally, by using ANOVA test, it is also found that the relationship between "MIAN NEED" and buying conation is much more complicated than that of "LIAN NEED".

Keywords: face need, advertising, luxury, buying conation.

Introduction

With the development of China's economy, China has become one of the major markets of luxury. According to the Bain company's 2010 Luxury Market Survey Report, Chinese consumers' luxury consumption totaled up to RMB156 billion (US$22.3 billion) in 2009. However, compared with Western consumers, the luxury consumption of Chinese shown a unique feature – high-end luxuries were much more favored by Chinese consumers. Western materialism theory failed to explain why Chinese consumers flocked to luxury goods when they lived with low income (Wong and Ahuvia, 1998). And many researches shown that the face concept under the Chinese cultural value system may be the main motivation that drove Chinese to pursue luxuries (Zhou and Nakamoto, 2000; Zhou and Belk, 2004; Lu et al., 2006; Cao, 2006; Chen 2007; Yuan et al., 2009; Lu, 2009).

Face is a very extensive, practical and specific concept in Chinese society, and it's deeply rooted in every aspect of the social life in China. Face is a very elaborate social norm. Lin Yutang mentioned that there are three goddesses ruling China. They are Face, Destiny and Favor. Among three, Face is the most powerful. In his eyes, why democracy, nomocracy and the safety traffic don't exist in China is due to Face. The invariability of face highly exceeds that of Catholic's dogma, and the authority of face highly exceeds that of American Federal Constitution (Lin, 1935).

However, what's the definition of face? Lu Xun (1934) once mentioned that what on earth face is? It's better not to think about it. Once you did, you felt confused. It seemed that there were several kinds of face. Each kinds of social status, has a corresponding face. Lin Yutang (1935) believed that face is something abstract and subtle, which couldn't be defined and translated.

Then what on earth is face? How about its connotation? What are the dimensions under the concept of face? How does face influence consumer's attitude toward advertising of luxury? There are not enough researches about these aspects. Therefore, our study will do an exploratory research focusing on the questions mentioned above.

1. Literature review

Since ancient times, "face is the spiritual creed of Chinese people" (Lu Xun, 1934). "Chinese face" has become the interest of Chinese and overseas scholars who have been studying the Chinese culture. Most of the existing researches about the face are from the perspective of sociology and psychology, and unfolded in two perspectives: "What face is – the connotation of face" and "How face will – the mechanism of face".

1.1. What face is. As to "What face is", although there isn't a widely accepted definition, most of the sociologists and psychologists are inclined to believe that face belongs to the motivation of behavior.

Researches from sociological perspective considered face as a kind of social construct, which emphasized the effect from groups or others. Scholars claimed that face is an individual reputation, status, social position or social influence given by groups (Hu, 1944; Huang, 1987; Zhu, 1987). Researches from psychological perspective announced that face is a kind of psychological construct, and is the exposure of part of self-image or good self-image in public (Goffman, 1955; Chen, 1982). When one's face being threatened, he demands to contend for face, prevent losing face and

save face, and such demands form a very strong social motive (He, 1976; Zhou, 1992; Bao, 2009; Jin et al., 2010). Face is the basic desire and demand of people in social communication, and the public image that one asks from others. The image stems from requirement of no oppression and requirement of being esteemed (Lim and Bower, 1991). Face is a social construct as well as a psychological construct, with the characteristic of conditional and persistent, referring to the social dignity or public image which is claimed by individual and also recognized by others (Zhou, 1994). Face is a kind of social positive value, which is worthy to be gained by someone during his social intercourse (Goffman, 1967).

In 1944, "face" was firstly divided into two dimensions by Dr. Hu, which was "LIAN" and "MIAN". The two interrelated and disparate concepts provide a direction for studying the connotation of Chinese People's face. Dr. Hu proposed that "MIAN" is a kind of prestige stemming from the visible achievements or flaunting; "LIAN" is a kind of respect given to someone who has a moral reputation in a group. Despite that both represent the respect which the group gives to individual, the criteria of each differs (Hu, 1944). Along with this view, some other Chinese scholars developed the concept of "LIAN" and "MIAN". Cheng Zhongying, a Taiwan scholar, insisted that in Confucian culture, "LIAN" is related to "Five Relations" (the traditional cardinal human relations: that between the ruler and the ruled; between parents and children; between siblings; between husband and wife; and between friends), and it represents the most basic human dignity which is the last but not least thing that can be lost or damaged. However, "MIAN" is much more diversified than "LIAN" (Cheng, 1986). In fact, the difference between "LIAN" and "MIAN" only exists in northern region of China in which local people speak mandarin Chinese, whereas people in south area who speak Cantonese or Hakka dialect only use "MIAN", without the word of "LIAN" (King, 1988).

Scholars standing for multidimensional view of face considered that face concept included both the connotation of moral level and social achievements levels, and have not only sociality characteristic, but also cognitive and motive characteristics (Zhou, 1992). Even in the connotation of "LIAN", which is the last but not least thing to a person, also includes the following phenomena which belong to the connotation of "shame", such as illegal activities, bad conduct, moral problems (such as wrongful sexual relationships), error behavior, and privacy-exposure, etc. (Zhu, 1987; Zuo et al., 1997).

However, most of the existing literature used qualitative analysis. And there are only a few researches using grounded-theory method to enrich the connotation of "LIAN" and "MIAN" or conducting empirical research. This literature can only be found by Chen Zhizhao, Zhu Ruiling, Zuo Bin, and Shi Zhuomin. Chen confirmed Hu's idea that face can be divided into two dimensions of "LIAN" and "MIAN" (Chen, 1982), but Chen didn't define concrete meaning of "LIAN" and "MIAN". Another researches, Zhu observed that the discrepancy between the two concepts can be found only in amount, the internal factor structures are almost similar (Zhu, 1987). Zuo's empirical research is based on something losing "LIAN" and "MIAN" collected from interviews, and adopting questionnaire method to classify them (Zuo, 1997), but he didn't distinguish the connotation and mechanism between "LOSE LIAN" and "LOSE MIAN".

1.2. How face will. In the study of "How face will", "face" was often regarded as an integrated concept. Most researches focused on the results of behavior affected by face. In this perspective, the existing literatures were mostly unfolded in two aspects.

Some researchers centered on relationship by differentiating three concepts – face, favor and power (status), and their interrelationship as well as their effects on social behavior of Chinese people (Huang, 1987; Child et al., 1995; Leung and Yeung, 1995; Leung et al., 1995; Wong, 1998; Wong and Chan, 1999; Leung et al., 2005; Bao, 2008). These scholars suggested that favor is the framework for relationship, while "keeping face" is a precipitating factor to build and develop relationship among Chinese people (Huang, 1987). And the relationship is one of the most significant social capitals, to some extent, determining the direction of social resources, and affecting the individual's social conduct and organizational behavior (Bao, 2008).

Another school of researchers concentrated on studying the behavior caused by face. Such as "gift-giving behavior" of Chinese people (Yau et al., 1999; Wang et al., 2007; Liu and Murphy, 2007; Yan, 2000; Gu, 2001; Wang, 2005), "conspicuous consumption" (Deng et al., 2005; Lu et al., 2006; Jiang et al., 2007), and "luxury product consumption" (Wong and Ahuvia, 1998; Zhou and Nakamoto, 2000; Li and Su, 2007; Yuan et al., 2009). Their researches consistently considered face as an important feature of Chinese culture. As a result, Chinese people's luxury consumption and housing consumption are highly affected by face (Jiang, 2008).

In the study of "face consumption behavior", Su et al. believed that face consumption is a motivating process, in which via product consumption, individuals try to promote, defend and preserve one's face, and to show respect to others' face. Face consumption are

obligatory, distinctive and others-orientated (Li and Su, 2007). And the face awareness positively affects the brand awareness and the orientation that price equals quality, while it negatively affects the price awareness (Bao, 2003). In order to show their social status, reputation and self-image, people with high face awareness will focus on exterior properties (i.e., brand) rather than interior properties (i.e., function) (Belk, 1988).

By studying the two dimensions of face, "LIAN" and "MIAN" and their effects on the consumer behavior, Zhuomin Shi et al. (2011) believed that the perception differences between "LIAN" and "MIAN" results in the effect differences on the "Reference Group Influence on Product and Brand Purchase Decisions" (William, 1982). These effect differences can be found not only in difference between the public supplies/private supplies and necessities/non-necessities, but also in the consumers attitude to the products country of origin (Shi et al., 2010).

Based on the literature review of "face" study, as we can see, first, the connotation of the face is mostly researched by the Taiwan scholars. Fewer scholars in mainland China used grounded-theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) method to dig into the connotation and dimension of the Chinese local concept-face, and there is a lack of a generally recognized conclusion. Second, the existing literature of "face", taking it as an integrated concept, focus on the influence of "face" rather than dividing the concept into "LIAN" and "MIAN", and exploring the connotation and measurement of them. Therefore, our research used qualitative and quantitative research methods to interview Chinese people, collect face items, develop questionnaires and then empirically study the connotation and dimension of face need, and further explore the face need effects on consumer's attitude toward advertising of luxury. We hope this study can bring some new findings to enrich researches on face consumption.

2. Research design and methodology

2.1. Study 1: Item collection. During this period, we conducted a survey study by using self-report questionnaire to collect the answers to the two questions: (1) Do you think "LIAN" is different from "MIAN"? If yes, please use a sentence to respectively describe each concept; (2) Please describe the following behavior, "Having MIAN" "Losing MIAN" "Having LIAN" and "Losing LIAN", and for each behavior please write down three events. Our respondents are all come from a large leading university in Guangdong province of China, including 46 college students and 43 MBA students.

In order to differentiate the subjects' transient response and memory response regarding "LIAN" and "MIAN", we used PPT to show the questions, let the researcher read out the questions and asked subjects to answer the questions in sequence within the preset time. The subjects were given 3 seconds to answer the first part of Q1, and then, 2 minutes to answer the latter part of Q1. For Q2, in order to let the subjects have enough time to try to recall their memory on some incidents about "LIAN" and "MIAN", they were given 8 minutes to answer each situation. In order to improve the quality of the investigation, this task was finished during the class as a part of the mid-term exam, and the subjects were told that there was not right and wrong answers, but the blank and the modified would result in score deducting. In this phase there were 552 pieces of description collected (Shi et al., 2010).

2.2. Study 2: Exploration of the dimension of face need. In the second study, we continued our study on the basis of study 1, using exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to find out the dimensions of face need, then measured the degree of individual face need.

The questionnaire of Study 2 was made up of two parts, first part was the face need scale which included 62 negative face events from Study 1. Subjects were required to score the shameful degree of "Losing MIAN" or "Losing LIAN" for each 62 negative scenario items using five-point scale. And the second part was the demographic information about the subjects. Study 2 chose negative face events without adding positively face event as the scale item. Because on one hand, superabundant questions would lead to subjects' noncooperation, and on the other hand, a person who has strong face need is supposed to have stronger feelings than others on positive (negative) face events, whereas a person who has weak face need is supposed not to care too much about whether getting face or losing face (Chen, 1982; Shi et al., 2010). At the same time, the connotation of "LIAN" and "MIAN" can be more easily distinguished in negative face events than in positive face events (Chen, 1982; Shi et al., 2010).

In Study 2, we collected 120 e-mail questionnaires through network and 80 questionnaires in a university library of Fujian province during February, 2010. Finally, we collected 172 questionnaires, in which the recovery rate was 86%, and valid number of samples was 149 which was up to 86.6%.

2.3. Study 3: The face need effects on consumer's attitude toward advertising of luxury. In order to explore the face need effects on consumer's attitude toward advertising of luxury, Study 3 used experiment material (extravagant watch) to design three scenarios of advertising of luxury.

Scenario 1: advertising of luxury using the feature of extravagance as selling point. Scenario 2: based on the Scenario 1, adding the positive moral information about the brand participating in public welfare.

Scenario 3: based on the Scenario 1, adding the negative moral information about the brand. The purpose of Study 3 is to examine the reliability and validity of the face need scale from Study 2, and explore the face need effects on consumer's attitude toward advertising of luxury.

2.3.1. Model and hypotheses. Buying luxury is one of the most popular way for people to obtain face (Wong and Ahuvia, 1998; Zhou and Nakamoto, 2000). According to the definition of Hu, face can be divided into "LIAN" and "MIAN". And the model is shown in Figure 1.
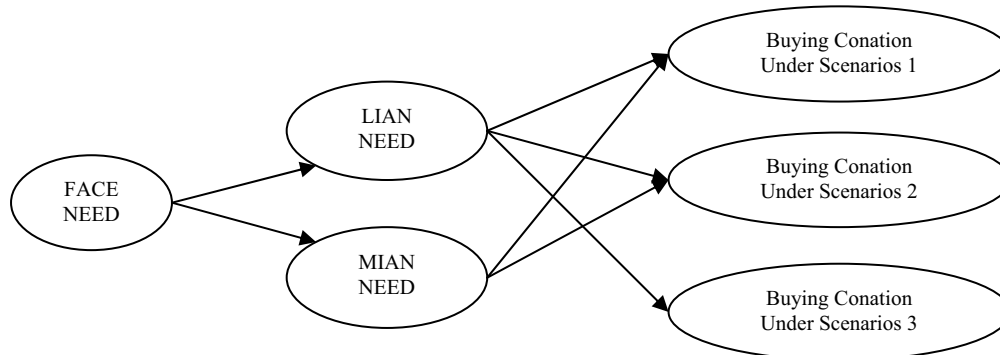

Fig. 1. Visual model: face need effects on advertising of luxury

All the motivation to defend face and obtain face will affect the buying conation (Jin et al., 2010). Thus, we can present the following hypotheses:

H1: "FACE NEED" has a significant positive effect on the buying conation of the luxury.

H2: "MIAN NEED" has a significant positive effect on the buying conation of the luxury.

2.3.2. Data collection. Study 3 used a sample survey method, we distributed 360 questionnaires in a university in Fujian province in March 2010, and we took back 358, the recovery rate was up to 99.4%. After deleting the questionnaires which were in-

complete or invalid, the valid number was 313, and the recovery rate was up to 87.4%.

3. Data analysis

3.1. Item collection. In this phase 552 face items were collected. Subsequently, utilizing the focus interview and Delphi method, items with similar semanteme were incorporated while the glossolalia items were deleted. According to the frequency of every item, we finally sort out 54 positive items representing the meaning of having face in terms of "HAVE LIAN" and "HAVE MIAN" (Table 1), 62 negative items representing the meaning of shame in terms of "LOSE LIAN" and "LOSE MIAN" (Table 2).

Table 1. Positive items on "LIAN" and "MIAN"

1. Drive Benz	2. Be highly respected	3. Have relatives who are high-ranking officers
4. Have beautiful girlfriend	5. Kids study in a prestigious university	6. Possess the LV bag(s)
7. Very wealthy	8. Possess things that others can't get	9. Be awarded the medal
10. Receive distinguished service when going to visit someone	11. People do things for your sake	12. Graduated from a prestigious university
13. Have a successful career	14. Throw money extravagantly when gambling	15. Wear designer clothes from top to toe
16. Relatives be complimented	17. Be complimented	18. Return home in glory
19. Viewpoints be highly valued by friends	20. Live in a big house or magnificent villa	21. Enjoy what the top luxury brings
22. Can afford what others can't	23. Sales performance ranks the top	24. Hold a lavish wedding
25. Have outstanding academic records	26. Win prize in a competition	27. Have glorious family background
28. Have high prestige among friends	29. Stand out in the basketball game	30. Be a member of the Committee of CPPCC
31. Know one's distance	32. Be praised	33. Have ability to help others
34. Keep one's word	35. Be polite	36. Succeed in a government examination
37. Be well-known	38. Be appreciated by a bigwig	39. Return from overseas and work for a famous foreign company
40. Be right while others are wrong	41. Know what others don't know	42. Be trusted by bigwig
43. Receive an official promotion	44. Kids be praised by many people	45. Publicly awarded by the teacher
46. Have a good self-image	47. Have a high personal attractiveness	48. Only choose the expensive one not the right one when buying product
49. Have dinner in high class restaurant	50. Give a big tip to attendant	51. Consume in a high class place
52. Have privilege to use public money to consume	53. Always keeping smile to the shopping guide	54. Be praised for self-taste

Table 2. Negative items on "LIAN" and "MIAN"

1. Work for a small company	2. Misspeak in public	3. Have a low income
4. Poor foreign language speaking in public	5. Have a bad living condition	6. Have a big tumble in public
7. Go to work always by bus not by car	8. Career life not as successful as peers	9. Fail in the College Entrance Examination
10. Kid fail in the College Entrance Examination	11. Be refused by the leaders when inviting them to dinner	12. Have relative with vile behavior
13. Behave rudely in public	14. Be accused of an immoralist	15. Bad manners
16. Bad habits be discovered	17. Quarrel with others in public	18. Bad performance in work
19. Have no sense of shame	20. Be treated as a slave	21. Be criticized in public
22. Be refused when asking for help	23. Have no enough money when treating someone to dinner	24. The son can't find a job
25. Bad academic records	26. Wear shabby clothes	27. Be found out living on relief
28. Use an out-of-style mobile phone	29. Come to a fag end	30. Dress improperly on some occasion
31. Make a fool of oneself in public	32. Be looked down upon	33. Drive CHERY AUTO QQ (brand name of a Chinese car)
34. Be unemployed	35. Misremember somebody's name	36. Be short and fat in stature
37. Fail to accomplish what have promised (for superior)	38. Spitting and littering	39. Be found out wearing fake brand-famous clothes
40. Be sneered by spouse in front of friends	41. Be offended by the subordinates	42. Cannot find a girlfriend or boyfriend
43. Be caught when cheating on exams	44. Cannot manage affairs that others can	45. Lie be discovered promptly
46. Lose the game	47. Be found out of a crime	48. Be found out of forgetting zip up
49. Have an unhappy family	50. Dress revealingly	51. Do humble things, e.g., Prostitution
52. Speak loudly in public	53. Bully the weak	54. Be humiliated by others
55. Be neglected in social occasion	56. Fail to accomplish what have promised (for inferior)	57. Sneeze suddenly in front of strangers
58. Be accused of no filial piety	59. Mistake be pointed out in public	60. Rank a distant when joining the game on behalf the team
61. Be ignorant of something	62. Boyfriend or girlfriend is bad-looking	

As we can see from Table 1, positive items on "LIAN" and "MIAN" can be divided into five dimensions: "conform to the social custom" (items 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, etc), "ability and achievement" (items 1, 4, 5, 7, 9, 26, etc.), "social status" (items 2, 10, 19, 27, 28, 30, etc.), "interpersonal relationship" (items 3, 11, 16, 50, 53, etc.), "possess scarce resource" (items 6, 8, 15, 20, 22, 52, etc.). And from Table 2, negative items on "LIAN" and "MIAN" can be divided into four dimensions: "contravene the morality" (items 14, 16, 19, 38, 43, 45, 47, 51, 53, 58, etc.), "incapability" (items 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 18, 29, 60, etc.), "low in social status" (items 20, 21, 32, 54, 55, etc.), "bad interpersonal relationship" (items 11. 37, 41, etc.), "making mistakes in words and deeds" (items 2, 6, 30, 48, 52, etc.). As we can see from the above, the connotation of face is abounded. However, in order to define the connotation of face, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) are used as follows.

3.2. Exploration of the dimension of face need.
3.2.1. CITC analysis and Cronbach's α reliability test. There were 62 items used in the questionnaire of the Study 2, all came from the answers of the open questionnaire, which included plenty of invalid items. Therefore, this study used CITC (the correlation coefficients between each item score and the total score) and Cronbach's α to modify the scale. According to the general criteria of the CITC analysis, when the CITC coefficients

of the item(s) was lower than 0.3, or when deleting the item(s) could enhance the overall reliability of the scale, then the item(s) should be deleted. There were 6 items in the original scale, such as, "Misremember somebody's name", "Fail to accomplish what have promised", etc. which should be deleted. After modifying, the Cronbach's α of the scale increased from 0.926 to 0.930, which confirmed that the modified scale has a better internal consistency.

3.2.2. Exploratory factor analysis. Using SPSS16.0 to test the data, it's found that the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure (KMO measure) is 0.785, and Bartlett globular test showed that there was significant difference (P < 0.001). Thus, we used factor analysis to analyze the data. Then the principle component analysis was applied to find out the factor(s) from remaining items, and Varimax was used to rotate the factors. Finally, a total of 16 items were found, of which the characteristic roots was higher than 1, and cumulative explained reached 68.2%.

In the process of factor analysis, items should be deleted if loading was lower than 0.5. Thus, we referred to the factor loading matrix from SPSS calculation to further modify the remaining 54 items in the scale. After deleting the items of which factor loading lower than 0.5, and those which were highly related to others simultaneously, there were 17 items left (α = 0.852). Finally, factor analysis was performed on the modified

scale (KMO = 0.819, Chi-square = 1.493E3, degree of freedom = 136, p < 0.01). Based on the criterion that characteristic roots is higher than 1, we

got four factors, which could explain 55.912% variance. The factor loading of each factor was higher than 0.5, as was shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Exploratory factor analysis results

| Factors	Items	Factor loading	Cro's	Feature	Explained
F1 moral-oriented face need	13. Behave rudely in public	0.729	0.809	4.599	27.055%
	14. Be accused of a immoralist	0.74			
	15. Bad manners	0.854			
	16. Bad habits be discovered	0.632			
	17. Quarrel with others in public	0.63			
	19. Have no sense of shame	0.609			
F2 ability-oriented face need	8. Career life not as successful as peers	0.568	0.745	2.353	13.840%
	9. Fail in the College Entrance Examination	0.825			
	10. Kid fail in the College Entrance Examination	0.729			
	25. Bad academic records	0.664			
F3 economic-status-oriented face need	1. Work for a small company	0.746	0.705	1.355	7.971%
	3. Have a low income	0.791			
	5. Have a bad living condition	0.661			
	7. Go to work always by bus not by car	0.541			
F4 social-relationship-oriented face need	21. Be criticized in public	0.548	0.618	1.198	7.046%
	22. Be refused when asking for help	0.759			
	23. Have no enough money when treating someone to dinner	0.785			

We found out that most items of the first factor were concerned with the individual moral character, so the first factor was named "moral-oriented face need". Most items of the second factor were related to the individual ability, so the second one was "ability-oriented face need". The third one was about the individual economic status, so it's "economic-status-oriented face need". And the last one was about the interaction with others, so it's called "social-relationship-oriented face need". Then using Cronbach's α as test criterion, the reliability of the four factors scale was examined. The Cronbach's α of the four factors scale were: 0.809, 0.745, 0.705 and 0.618, demonstrating acceptable levels of the reliability.

According to Hu, "face" was divided into two dimensions, which were "LIAN" and "MIAN". "MIAN" is a

kind of prestige stemming from the visible achievements or flaunting; "LIAN" is a kind of respect given to someone who has a moral reputation in a group. Therefore, "moral-oriented face need" was named "LIAN NEED", while "ability-oriented face need", "economic-status-oriented face need" and "social-relationship-oriented face need" were integrated into one, which is "MIAN NEED".

3.3. The face need effects on consumer's attitude toward advertising of luxury. *3.3.1. Confirmatory factor analysis.* Because the face need scale used was developed autonomously, so the validity analysis used CFA (Confirmatory factor analysis). After CFA using LISREL 8.0 to analyze the data, the factor loading of each variable was shown in Figure 2. The results were standardization parameters.
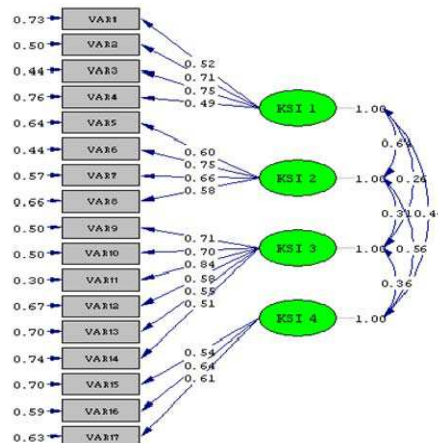
Notes: Chi-square = 242.99, df = 113, P-value = 0.00000, RMSEA = 0.061.

Fig. 2. CFA LISREL estimates

Generally, to evaluate the goodness of fit, we would believe it a good model if the RMSEA is lower than 0.08 (the lower the better), while the NNFI and CFI are higher than 0.9 (the higher the better). Therefore, our model was a good model and the variables indeed belong to the originally designated factor. The indices of CFA (Table 4) shown that our scale displayed a reasonable level of validity.

Table 4. the indices of CFA

Fit indices	X^2	df	X^2/ df	NNFI	CFI	RMSEA
CFA	254.32	113	2.251	0.94	0.95	0.061

3.3.2. Face need effects on consumer's attitude toward advertising of luxury.

1. The buying conation comparison under three Scenarios.

In Study 3 we designed three scenarios of advertising of luxury. Scenario 1: advertising of luxury using the feature of extravagance as selling point. Scenario 2: based on the scenario 1, adding the positive moral information about the luxury brand participating in public welfare. Scenario 3: based on the scenario 1, adding the negative moral information about the luxury brand.

We compared the buying conation in scenario 1 with that of scenario 2 and scenario 3 respectively. Using data analysis, the results of paired design t-test was shown in Figure 3.

From Figure 3 we can see, after adding the positive moral information about the brand into the advertising of luxury, the buying conation of subjects increased from 3.1470 to 3.5991. However, after adding the negative moral information about the brand into the advertising of luxury, the buying conation of subjects decreased from 3.1470 to 1.9582.
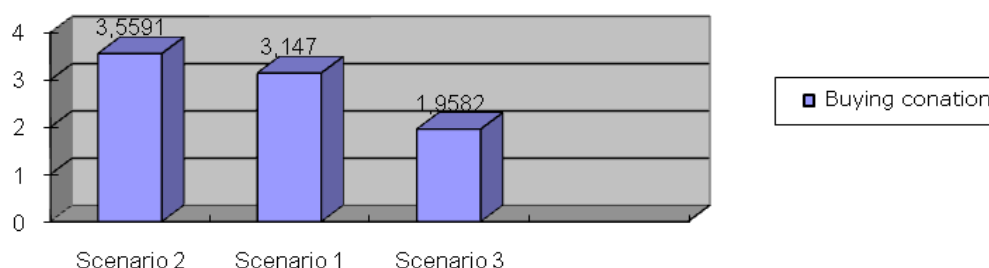

Fig. 3. The buying conation comparison under three scenarios

Through paired design t-test, we found that the buying conation was significantly increased after adding the positive moral information about the brand (t = -7.488, P- = 0.000), whereas the buying conation was significantly decreased after adding the negative moral information about the brand (t = 17.236, P- = 0.000). Thus it can be seen that once the positive moral information was added to the advertising of luxury it would push consumers to buy the luxury, whereas once the negative moral information was added to the advertising of luxury it would weaken the buying conation.

2. Face need effects on luxury buying conation in three advertising scenarios.

In order to explore the "LIAN NEED" and "MIAN NEED" effects on consumer's attitude toward advertising of luxury, our study divided the samples into three groups, respectively according to the intensity scores of "LIAN NEED" and "MIAN NEED". Those with low intensity scores belonged to group 1, while with high intensity scores belonged to group 3. Then, we used ANOVA analysis to explore whether the intensity of "LIAN NEED" and "MIAN NEED" affected consumer's attitude toward advertising of luxury in three different scenarios.

2-1. "LIAN NEED" effects on luxury buying conation in three advertising scenarios.

ANOVA was used to test whether there are differences among three groups' buying conation in terms of intensity of "LIAN NEED". Before ANOVA, the test of homogeneity of variances showed that the variances of both samples are equal (Sig. > 0.05). See Table 4.

Table 4. Homogeneity of variances test among 3 experimental groups in terms of different intensity of "LIAN NEED"

	Levene statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Scenario 1: Flaunting ads.	1.036	2	307	.356
Scenario 2: Flaunting ads.+ Positive moral information	2.063	2	307	.129
Scenario 3: Flaunting ads.+ Negative moral information	1.429	2	305	.241
Scenario 1: Flaunting ads.	1.036	2	307	.356

ANOVA results showed that if the level of significance α was 0.1, then the intensity of "LIAN NEED" had a strong effect on buying conation toward the luxury watch in scenario 1 (F = 2.768, P- = 0.064) and scenario 2 (F = 0.097, P- = 0.087); The intensity of "LIAN NEED" had a no significant effect on buying conation toward the luxury watch in scenario 3 (F = 0.097, P- = 0.908). Thus, as to hypothesis H1:
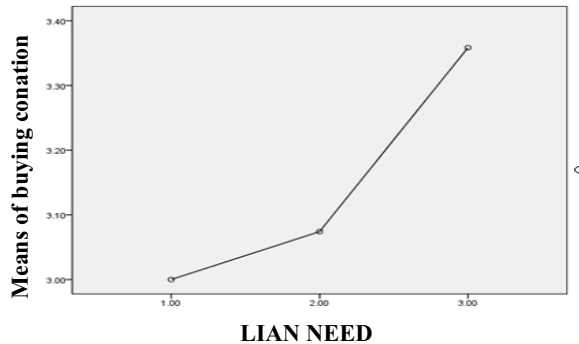
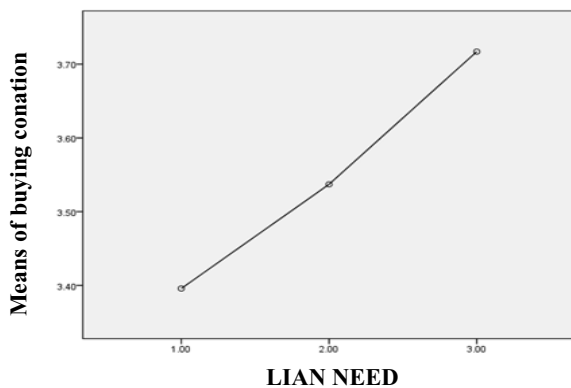*H1a: "LIAN NEED" has a strong positive effect on buying conation toward the luxury watch in scenario 1.*

H1b: "LIAN NEED" has a strong positive effect on buying conation toward the luxury watch in scenario 2.

H1c: "LIAN NEED" has a strong positive effect on buying conation toward the luxury watch in scenario 3.

H1a and H1b have been supported, whereas H1c hasn't. Furthermore, we can see from Figure 4 and Figure 5 (on the X-axis, 1 stands for the low intensity, 2 stands for the moderate intensity, and 3 stands for the high intensity), the buying conation in scenario 1 and scenario 2 was both positively related to the intensity of "LIAN NEED".

Fig. 4. Relationship between buying conation in scenario 1 with the intensity of LIAN NEED
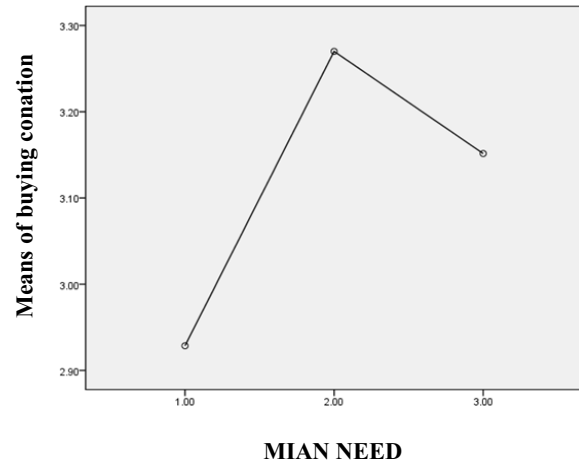

Fig. 5. Relationship between buying conation in scenario 2 with the intensity of LIAN NEED

2-2. "MIAN NEED" effects on luxury buying conation in three advertising scenarios.

Then we used ANOVA to test whether there are differences among three groups' buying conation in terms of intensity of "MIAN NEED". The results showed that if the level of significance α was 0.12, then the intensity of "MIAN NEED" had a strong effect on buying conation toward the luxury watch in scenario 1 ($F = 2.210$, $P- = 0.111$). The intensity of "MIAN NEED" had a no significant effect on both buying conation in scenario 2 ($F = 0.046$, $P- = 0.955$) and in scenario 3 ($F = 0.175$, $P- = 0.839$).

After further exploring the relationship between buying conation in scenario 1 with different intensities of "MIAN NEED", we found that the relation-ship follow an inverse-V shaped curve (as shown in Figure 6), that is, compared with those who have low intensity and high intensity of "MIAN NEED", subjects with moderate intensity of "MIAN NEED" show stronger buying conation toward the luxury watch in scenario 1.

Fig. 6. Relationship between buying conation in scenario 1 with the intensity of MIAN NEED

Thus, as to hypothesis H2:

H2a: "MIAN NEED" has a strong positive effect on buying conation toward the luxury watch in scenario 1.

H2b: "MIAN NEED" has a strong positive effect on buying conation toward the luxury watch in scenario 2.

H2c: "MIAN NEED" has a strong positive effect on buying conation toward the luxury watch in scenario 3.

Only H2a has been supported, which means that "MIAN NEED" has a strong positive effect on buying conation toward the luxury watch in scenario 1; and the buying conation gradually increased as the intensity of "MIAN NEED" increased from low level to moderate level. While the buying conation gradually decreased as the intensity of "MIAN NEED" increased from moderate level to high level.

Conclusion and implication

Based on qualitative and quantitative study, this study has explored the dimensions of the face need. Then paired-samples t test was used to compare the subjects' buying conation differences in three scenarios of advertising of luxury. Finally, through ANOVA analysis we tested how the dimensions of the face need affected the buying conation of luxury. Conclusion and implications were listed as follows.

First, the face need included four dimensions: moral-oriented face need, ability-oriented face need, economic-status-oriented face need, and social-relationship-oriented face need. In this paper, "moral-oriented face need" symbolizes the basic dignity and virtues worthy

of being respected, which belongs to the "LIAN NEED". On the other hand, "ability-oriented face need", "economic-status-oriented face need", and "social-relationship-oriented face need" reflect individual's reputation through visible achievements and self-flaunting, which belongs to "MIAN NEED".

Second, in three advertising scenarios, compared with scenario 1 (advertising of luxury using the feature of extravagance as selling point), subjects had a higher buying conation of luxury in scenario 2 (adding positive moral information about the brand participating in public welfare), whereas a lower buying conation of luxury in scenario 3 (adding negative moral information about the brand). As a result, adding positive moral information about the brand will strengthen buying conation, whereas adding negative moral information about the brand will weaken buying conation. So we can figure it out that buying luxury behavior is not only for showing off, but also for moral reputation.

Third, the different dimensions of face need have different effects on buying conation in three advertising scenarios. Specifically, (1) both "LIAN NEED" and "MIAN NEED" have significant positive effects on buying conation toward luxury product with flaunting appealing. In other words, under the stimulation of flaunting advertising of luxury, the higher face-conscious the consumer is, the stronger buying conation the consumer will have; (2) Compared with "MIAN NEED", "LIAN NEED" significantly and positively influences the buying conation when adding positive moral information in advertising of luxury. That is to say, compared with pursuing ability-oriented face need, economic-status-oriented face need and social-relationship-oriented face need, consumers pursuing moral-oriented face need are inclined to buy luxury brand with higher social responsibility; (3) "MIAN NEED" has a strong and positive effect on buying conation toward flaunting advertising of luxury. Moreover, the buying conation gradually increases as the intensity of "MIAN NEED" increases from low level to moderate level, while the buying conation gradually decreases as the intensity of "MIAN NEED" increases from moderate level to high level. It proves that, compared with the relationship between "LIAN NEED" and buying conation, the relationship between "MIAN NEED" and buying conation are more complicated. The abundance of connotation of "MIAN NEED" is a major reason resulting in this. Other than that, some disturbing variables, such as the type of luxury, the possession rate of luxury, etc. may further affect the relationship between "MIAN NEED" and buying conation.

Contributions and limitations

There are plenty of researches about "face", especially in sociology and psychology area. However, researches focusing on "face consumption" are only a few. Issue on face consumption is a research frontier of Chinese consumer behavior. Therefore, researches on face consumption can not only enrich CB theories but also help marketers better understand consumer behavior of Chinese.

We believe that our research makes two important theoretical contributions.

First, based on grounded theory suggested by Glaser & Strauss [12], we probed into Chinese face phenomena, collected hundreds of face items from interview, and finally formed a so-called face need scale. Then we found out that there is a strong relation between face need and luxury consumption in China market.

Second, by empirical study, we found proofs that supported the "LIAN-MIAN" theory suggested by Dr Hu. Moreover, it's found for the first time that moral-oriented face need, namely, "LIAN NEED", can be the motivation of luxury consumption. This study enriched not only the theory and practice of face research, but also the existing research on the luxury consumption motivation.

However, this research is an exploratory study. Samples are somehow homogenous even though they were collected from different cities in China. In addition, the interrelationship between the Chinese face cultures and the Chinese Confucian cultures hasn't been discussed in this study. Moreover, we used advertising of luxury as the experimental materials to explore the face need effects on consumer psychology and behavior. But we didn't measure the connotation of advertising of luxury.

Future research can take different categories of luxury as a moderator, and test the relationship between the face need and buying conation of luxury. Besides, research on how each item of the face connotation affects consumers' attitude toward luxury is also worth doing. Furthermore, cross-cultural research can be designed and developed on how face connotation differs among some Confucian countries, like China, Japan and Korea.

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