

Economic Perspectives of Consumer Buying Dynamics in Rural Market Segments of United Arab Emirates

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Abstract

The purpose of this is to investigate the consumer buying dynamics in small towns and settlements in United Arab Emirates for the benefit of marketers, manufacturers, policy decision makers, government of UAE and the academic world. This piece of research is to contribute to a deeper understanding of applying the various dynamics of customers in rural market of the entire GCC countries. Particularly, the literature review conducted for this study revealed that very little attention has been paid for consumer buying dynamics in the UAE rural consumers with specific reference to small towns and settlements.

The authors used a structured questionnaire consisting of five point Likert scale to collect data from thirteen small towns and settlements: Khor Fakhan, Kalba, Jabal Ali, Dibba - Al Fujairah, Madinat Zayed, Ruwais, Liwa Oasis, Dhaid, Ghayathi, Ar-Rams, Dibba - Al Hisn, Hatta and Al Madam. The population of them range from 11,120 to 39,151. The sample was composed of 2,083 persons from all the chosen thirteen small towns and settlements in United Arab Emirates. The rural customer profile of the United Arab Emirates is diverse, consisting of groups ranging from high-income Emirati nationals to high income expatriates to less affluent foreign workers from various countries. Consequently, customer behaviors, attitudes and preferences vary widely in the country and are often hard to pinpoint (Euromonitor). Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey, which was conducted in 16 Arab countries, showed that nearly half of Arab youth are keen to embrace modernity.

Moreover, the study's findings supported that the numbers were also reflective of the views in Emirati society. The current study results revealed that the rural customers along with the product they consider affordability in terms of price, also think about quality, performance, reliability, brand and other critical aspects. Therefore, it is recommended that the products be in line of rationality rather than just making low price appeals. Moreover, the study's findings emphasized that the rural customers maintain dignity and look for the deals focusing on value for money. Therefore, it is recommended that the lifestyle and value is one of the dominant factors of rural population in UAE.

Keywords: economic perspectives; consumer buying dynamics; rural market segments; small towns and settlements; United Arab Emirates.

JEL Classification: D11; D12; F62; J18.

Introduction

According to the economic perspective of studying consumers, the consumer is regarded as being rational. The consumer makes a decision of the choice as after taking into account the cost and benefit, and the overall value in economic terms. A settlement hierarchy is a way of arranging settlements into a hierarchy based upon their population or some other criteria. The term is used by landscape historians; also is used in the planning system for the UK and for some other countries such as Ireland, India and Switzerland. The term was used without comment by the geographer Brian Roberts in 1972. The cities, towns and settlements may be classified as extreme density, high density, medium density and low density. The compound and complex interconnections between rural and urban areas, people, business entities and how these affect the living standards and food insecurity are all too often ignored by the elite class in an economy. Small towns and settlements are an important but often neglected element of rural landscapes and food systems. They perform several essential functions, from market nodes for food

producers and processors to providers of services, goods and non-farm employment to their own population and that of their surrounding rural parts of the macroeconomic constraints. They are also home to more than half the world's urban population and are projected to absorb much of its growth in the next decades to follow (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2018). Such is their importance that they cannot and should no longer be ignored by policy makers concerned with poverty elevation. The growth of urban populations in both large capital cities and smaller municipalities feeds demand for increased localization of political power. It puts pressure on national institutions of governance and encourages them to take the steps toward decentralization. It makes the success of decentralization perhaps even more important. When urban governments have the power and ability to enact a development agenda, they can help the citizens of their cities hook up with the global economy. These cities then become reliable links in the global production chain and attractive destinations for foreign investment. Urbanization is integral to development, but it also presents difficult challenges (UNDP, Human Development Reports, 6th September of 2017). This research paper reviews the economic forces underlying urbanization and discusses what governments can do - and should not do - if they want to foster small towns and settlements as thrust areas of economic growth.

The study of the consumer behavior is related to how the individual make decision to spend their available resource (time, money, effort) on consumption related items. It includes the study what they buy, why they buy, when they buy, where they buy, how often they buy and how often they use it. One of the most important constant among all of us, despite the difference is that the consumer use or consume on regular basis food, clothing, shelter, transportation, education, equipment, vacation, necessities luxury service. Consumer plays a vital role in the growth of the economy at local, national and international level (Higgins 2015). The purchase decision, consumer makes effect the demand for the basic raw materials for transportation, for production, for banking, that effect the employment of the worker and the deployment of the resource, the success of some industries and the failure of others. In order to success in any business, and especially in today dynamic and rapidly evolving marketplace, marketers need to know everything they can about consumers- what they want, what they think, how they work, how they spend their leisure time. They need to understand the personal and group influences that effect consumer decisions and how these decisions are made. The term consumer behavior describes two different kinds of consuming entities: the personal consumer and the organizational consumer (Schiffman and Kanuk 2011).

The personal consumer buys goods and services for his or her use, for the use of the household, use by individuals, who are referred to end users or ultimate consumers. The secondary category of consumer is the organizational consumer, which includes profit and not for-profit business, government agencies (local, state and national), and institutions (e.g. schools, hospitals and prisons), all of which must buy products, equipment, and services in order to run organizations. Despite the importance of both categories of consumer- individual consumer – individuals and organization

1. Economic Perspective of Consumer Behavior in Small Towns and Settlements

The economic model explains buying behavior from an economic perspective. The assumption is that resources are scarce related to unlimited needs; a consumer seeks value: the consumer wants maximum benefit at minimum cost (Prahlad 2005). The economic models showed concern as to how scarce resources were allotted to satisfy the unlimited needs and wants. Products and services are the heart and arteries of rural marketing. It is a need satisfying dynamics to a rural consumer by Kapur *et al.* (2014). The product offering should satisfy the physical and psychology benefits the consumer expectations from the product. The product should be durable and sturdy and should be well packaged to attract the consumers' attention. In fact, in small towns and settlements market, brands are almost non-existent; consumers identify products by color, visuals of animals and birds and numbers. So a product 333, 888, azraq sabun (blue soap), asfarpheel (yellow elephant), ahmarmaejunal'asnan (red paste), fadhijamal (silver camel) are the kind of terms with which rural consumers identify brands. It is very important therefore for the marketer to understand that a lot needs to be done in terms of communication, media marketing and branding (Ander and Stern 2005). Thus, the marketer, while designing a product for the rural markets should take care that the product is simple and easy to understand by the rural consumer. In reality, as far as possible, local language and dialect should be used to communicate the functional benefits of the product to the consumers.

Vaswani *et al.* (2005) presented that the rural buyer-seller (Producer) matrix exhibited the scope of rural marketing. Shelf-I identifies the goods which are made by rural people in rural areas and consumed by rural population. Shelf-II describes the goods made and sold by urban people to rural areas. Shelf-III comprises of goods made in rural areas and consumed in urban areas. Shelf-IV does not fall under the purview of rural marketing. Consumers are changing. They are more connected than ever, and better equipped to benefit from a fast changing

marketplace. In such a dynamic scenario, what must the businesses do to succeed while simultaneously ensuring that the consumer wins along with the sellers in the rural market?

Figure 1. Rural Buyer – Seller Matrix

Rural Buyer – Seller (Producer) Matrix			
		Seller	
		Rural	Urban
Buyer	Rural	I Intra Rural (All Products)	II Consumer Goods / Services / Farm inputs, implements and machinery
	Urban	III Farm and Non Farm Products	IV Intra Urban

Source: Vaswani *et al.* 2005

2. Literature Review

Table 1. Study of literature and its review on economic perspectives of consumer buying dynamics in small towns and settlements of UAE

Authors	Key Findings
Van Leeuwen and Rietveld (2011)	Spatial consumer behavior in small and medium-sized towns, Regional Studies. Small and medium-sized towns are often recognized as important components of the rural economy. This paper focuses on the current function of small and medium-sized towns in providing retail services to local households in five European countries. Furthermore, it analyzed the spatial shopping behavior of these households. It appears that towns are still important places for shopping: more than half of the purchases of households living in town or the direct hinterland are bought in town.
Khare (2012)	The research studied the predictors of Indian consumers' mall involvement with respect to mall attributes and demographic factors. Applied Kapferer and Laurent's CIP to study consumers' mall involvement. The findings postulate that demographic factors (household income, age, and gender) and mall factors (service and ambience) influence consumers' mall involvement. The involvement predictors can help in planning mall ambience and assortment. This study attempts to fill the research gap on Indian consumers' mall shopping behavior with respect to their involvement with mall attributes. The findings can be helpful to mall managers and developers in mall-planning strategies.
Wolf (2014)	Many cities and communities are working toward urban sustainability goals. Yet, retailers and merchants may not find environmental benefits to be compelling when compared to the direct costs of landscape and trees. Nonetheless, a quality outdoor environment may provide atmospheric effects that extend store appeal to curb and heighten the positive experiences and psychological reactions of visitors while in a shopping district. A multi-study program of research shows that having a quality urban forest canopy within business districts and commercial areas can promote positive shopper perceptions and behavior. Positive responses include store image, patronage behavior, and willingness to pay more for goods and services. The study provides a summary of the research, connects results to psychological marketing theory, provides evidence-based design recommendations, and makes suggestions for potential future research activity.
Mishra (2013)	Developing an appropriate business model for the Indian retail sector was a challenge. In this exploratory study the researcher used corporate presentations of the organization and interviews its Chairman, to develop a business model along the parameters of customer value proposition, profit formula, key processes, and key resources to develop a retail model for Coffee Day Company. The model was suitable for the Indian retail sector to improve its sustainability and scalability but equally good for universal application.
Husnain <i>et al.</i> (2019)	Impulse buying is considered to be one of the significant factors to increase sales volume in the retail sector. Past studies have investigated the impulsive buying behavior of generation Y consumers in retail settings of somewhat medium- and large-sized cities. This article explored

Authors	Key Findings
	the influence of situational variables categorized as personal factors (time availability, family influence, money availability) and in-store factors (store environment, sales promotions, and friendly store employees) on generation Y impulse buying behavior in the Pakistani context in general and the country's small cities in particular. Results revealed that personal factors, that is, time availability and family influence has significant and positive impact on the impulse buying behavior of generation Y consumers, also in-store factors except money availability has significant impact on impulse buying behavior.
Mulky (2013)	An effective distribution channel can be a source of strategic advantage for companies. However, little research exists about the distribution channel structure in India, which is largely traditional and quite unique. The first part of this round table article provides an overview of distribution channels, particularly their constituents and structure, with a special focus on distribution channels. The second part of the article reports on a panel discussion with eminent academic and industry experts on the challenges that companies face in designing, constructing, and managing distribution channels on the ground.
Wandschneider (2004)	This paper investigates the role of small rural towns in local economic development in two poor states of India. It is based on research carried out in the context of a DFID-funded project on the rural non-farm economy in Madhya Pradesh and Orissa. The study highlighted the following issues: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) The need to understand rural-urban linkages; (2) The importance of small rural towns; (3) The size and quality of the enterprise sector in small rural towns matters; (4) The need for new enterprise development approaches; (5) Interventions at village level.
Ramanath <i>et al.</i> (2017)	According to 2014 World Bank Report, 67.63% of Indian population lives in rural areas. Most of the leading companies are now trying to target rural markets. One more peculiarity of rural population is strange cultural practices and belief systems. Because of small and scattered rural villages, big retail organizations find it very difficult to run their business economically. Though rural market is said to have huge potentiality, it is not free from peculiar problems. Expectations, perceptions, and participation of rural consumers are totally different compared to urban population. The main focus of this study is to understand the expectations of rural consumers of durable goods. The findings of the study may be used by marketers to formulate strategies to tap potential rural markets.
Kakkar <i>et al.</i> (2020)	The study mainly focused on the review of available literatures for the research idea and problems identified, on the evolution of retail activities, planning and strategies of retail activities/ and business, models and theories of change in retail activities, functions of retailing and behavior of consumers associated with buying of goods and services with specific reference to Indian consumers. The study concluded that attributes like image, format and layout of the retail store, cleanliness, lighting, music, scent, information graphics in the retail store, facilities offered to consumers and after sale service of the retail store are the main factors leading to frame buying behavior of consumers.

3. Research Gap

A research need is a gap that limits the ability of decision-makers in this research study are business owners, managers, consumers and policy makers from making decisions. A research gap is defined as a topic or area for which missing or insufficient information limits the ability to reach a conclusion for a question.

The available literature on consumer buying dynamics are covering few issues in certain parts of the world, still a lot of research needs to be done in specific United Arab Emirates small towns and settlements markets as the rural consumer buying dynamics varies in various product categories and Arabic peninsula. The literature review conducted for the current research makes it clear that very little research was carried on rural consumer behavior with respect to economic perspectives of consumer buying dynamics by the UAE rural consumers with specific reference to small towns and settlements. Therefore, conducting research to find appropriate solutions for the business owners, managers, policy makers and the academicians in economics/management to understand the dynamics of buying patterns of rural consumers in UAE to bring qualitative change in their living standards.

3.1. Objective of the study

Research objectives serve to guide the activities of research and are very important for the research being carried out. They are usually expressed in specific terms and are directed as much as to the researcher. Research objectives may be linked with a hypothesis or used as a statement of purpose in a study that does not have a hypothesis. Main objective of the current study is to identify the consumer buying dynamics in small towns and settlements in United Arab Emirates for the benefit of marketers, manufacturers, policy decision makers, government of UAE and the academic world. This piece of research opens the door for applying the various dynamics of customers in rural market of the entire GCC countries.

4. Methodology

Primary data is collected through administering a well-structured questionnaire consisting of five point Likert scale. For the convenience of the respondents, the bilingual questionnaire was used incorporating Arabic and English languages. The survey was conducted in thirteen small towns and settlements: Khor Fakhn, Kalba, Jabal Ali, Dibba - Al Fujairah, Madinat Zayed, Ruwais, Liwa Oasis, Dhaid, Ghayathi, Ar-Rams, Dibba - Al Hisn, Hatta and Al Madam. The population of each of them range from 11,120 to 39,151. The sample size was 2083 covering all thirteen small towns and settlements in United Arab Emirates.

Data collection is the process of gathering and measuring information on targeted variables of consumer buying dynamics in an established country like United Arab Emirates which then enables one to answer relevant questions and evaluate outcomes. It is a component of research in all fields of study including economics and business. While methods vary by discipline, the emphasis on ensuring accurate and honest collection remains the same. The goal for all data collection is to capture quality evidence that allows analysis to lead to the formulation of convincing and credible answers to the questions that have been posed. Sample unit for the current research consisted of rural population living small towns and settlements of United Arab Emirates who are both buyers and consumers. Data analysis tools and techniques such as Factor Analysis was conducted using SPSS software, to identify the factors that influence the purchase decision of rural consumers. Secondary data is collected from various sources such as websites companies in UAE, books and articles on consumer behavior, rural marketing, reports of consultancy companies and Government websites and departments. In this modern technical era, use of Internet is the major source of secondary data.

5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data analysis and interpretation have now taken center stage with the advent of the digital age and the sheer amount of data can be frightening. Data interpretation refers to the implementation of processes through which data is reviewed for the purpose of arriving at an informed conclusion. The interpretation of data assigns a meaning to the information analyzed and determines its signification and implications. The interpretation of data is designed to help people make sense of numerical data that has been collected, analyzed and presented. Having a baseline method(s) for interpreting data will provide the analyst teams a structure and consistent foundation.

Table 1. Demographics

	Items	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	845	41%
	Female	1238	59%
Age	Below 25	257	12%
	26 – 30	376	18%
	31 – 35	415	20%
	36 – 40	353	17%
	41 – 45	321	15%
	46 – 50	203	10%
	51 and above	158	08%
Education	Up to High School	604	29%
	Bachelor Degree	1096	53%
	Master Degree and Above	383	18%
Income	Below AED. 3,000	614	30%

Items	Frequency	Percent (%)
AED. 3,001 – AED. 8,000	735	35%
AED. 8,001 – AED. 15,000	442	21%
AED. 15,001 and above	292	14%

Source: Primary data collected in UAE

Objective of this research was to identify the underlying factors influencing the purchase dynamics of the United Arab Emirates small towns and settlements consumers. Twenty factors or variables that influence the rural consumers were identified after an extensive literature review. Table 1 below presents all the identified variables.

Table 1. Variables of economic perspectives of rural consumer buying dynamics in United Arab Emirates

1	Shop Keeper's recommendation	6	Need based product	11	Packaging	16	Dignity
2	Friend's recommendation	7	Brand awareness& loyalty	12	Product education & demonstrations	17	Comfort and size
3	Value for money	8	CRM	13	Quality	18	Shelf display
4	Affordability	9	Free offers & promotions	14	Match benefits to features	19	Lifestyle
5	Long lasting	10	Availability	15	Government promotions	20	Cultural issues

Test Statistic

A test statistic is a random variable that is calculated from sample data and used in a hypothesis test. It can be used to test statistics to determine whether to reject the null hypothesis. The test statistic compares the data with what is expected under the null hypothesis. Sphericity is the condition where the variances of the differences between all combinations of related groups (levels) are equal. Violation of sphericity is when the variances of the differences between all combinations of related groups are not equal. In this study of Sphericity resulted in a large value (16,514.3) that indicates the variables do not correlate with each other. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Test is a measure of how suited the data is for Factor Analysis. The test measures sampling adequacy for each variable in the model and for the complete model, the measure of sampling adequacy is 0.842. These two values allow the application of factor analysis. Using the "eigenvalue greater than 1" criteria, four factors were formed explaining a total variance of 74.12%. The study used on high loading in the rotated component matrix, sometimes referred to as the loadings, is the key output of principal components analysis. It contains estimates of the correlations between each of the variables and the estimated components. Rotated Component Matrix and similarity between the variables in the same column, four factors were selected and presented in the following Table 1.

Table 2. Factors, variables of factors and factor loadings of economic perspectives of rural consumer buying dynamics in UAE

Factors	Variables of Factors	Factor Loadings
Trust & Relationship	▪ Shop keeper's recommendation	0.967
	▪ Quality	0.913
	▪ Customer Relationship Management	0.902
	▪ Friend's recommendation	0.897
	▪ Cultural issues	0.880
	▪ Brand awareness and loyalty	0.789
Promotion	▪ Product education & demonstration	0.923
	▪ Free offers & promotions	0.826
	▪ Shelf display	0.807
	▪ Government promotions	0.776
	▪ Packaging	0.738
Product	▪ Match benefits to features	0.864
	▪ Affordability	0.821
	▪ Long lasting Availability	0.793

Factors	Variables of Factors	Factor Loadings
	▪ Availability	0.726
	▪ Comfort and size	0.706
Lifestyle & Value	▪ Need based product	0.824
	▪ Dignity	0.753
	▪ Value for money	0.662
	▪ Lifestyle	0.630

6. Analysis and Interpretation of the Factors, Variables of Factors and Factor Loadings of Economic Perspectives of Rural Consumer Buying Dynamics in UAE

Factor 1. Trust and Relationship

Trust and relationship factor plays a pioneering role in the buying dynamics process at the rural market segments. It has proved beyond any doubt that rural customers respect and follow the recommendations of shopkeepers (0.967 factor loading) as they are the closest relationship builders in the customer buying process. Quality is perceived in rural markets of UAE as it is proven that the customers prefer to buy (0.913 factor loading). Traditionally, rural customers trust and buy products that have built relationship (0.902 loading factor). Friend's recommendations influence the rural purchasing decisions because closely associated network reasons (0.897 factor loading). The rural market segments are heavily in favor of their culture and its domination (0.880 factor loading). Brand awareness and loyalty plays a critical role in role in establishing positive relationships at the rural market segment of UAE (0.789 factor loading). Trust and relationship is clearly a medium-long term process as the mechanisms for mutual benefits of customers and sellers are complex by themselves. They also involve various aspects of fiduciary relationships as indicated by the evolutionary theory of trust. The current research categorizes shop keeper's recommendation as one of the most influential variables in UAE's rural market segments.

Factor 2. Promotion

Promotions of product factor emerged as a major influencing issue and it has five variables in this research study. The variables are product education & demonstration (0.923 factor loading), free offers & promotions (0.826 factor loading), shelf display (0.807 factor loading), government promotions (0.776 factor loading), and packaging (0.738 factor loading). Rural markets are delicately powerful. Certain adaptations are required to cater to the rural population. The promotion strategies are of paramount importance for the producers and marketers of various products. The television advertisements play a vital role in strengthening the promotion strategy. The companies have to decide on promotional tools such as advertisement, sales promotion, personal selling, publicity and public relations. The method of promotion needs to be tailored to suit the expectations of the rural UAE market. Small Town/Settlement fairs and festivals are ideal venues for projecting product promotions. Evidently, rural communication needs creativity and innovation. This is because the rural buyer's adoption process is relatively takes longer time but once adopted, the effects lasts long.

Factor 3. Product

The product factor influencing the UAE rural customer purchase is incorporated with five vital variables such as match benefits to features (0.864 factor loading), affordability (0.821 factor loading), long-lasting (0.793 factor loading), availability (0.726 factor loading) and comfort and size (0.706 factor loading). Therefore, it can be truly interpreted that the rural customers of UAE seek multiple aspects in a product. The statistical figures indicate that the rural customers of UAE are gradually transforming into urban, metropolitan, and even cosmopolitan customers. Improved education, rapid means of transportation, access to mobile data and communication, high living standards, and many similar factors have drastically changed rural customer buying dynamics.

Factor 4. Lifestyle and Value

Current research proved that the rural customers link purchase and consumption of goods to their lifestyle and value. Since, in the current research, need based product has emerged as one of the important factor variables influencing rural lifestyle with value proposition (0.824 factor loading), it can be interpreted that the rural customers consider their value and lifestyle or standard of living. It has further proved that the rural customers prefer to buy goods that make them feel dignified to adapt such products (0.753 factor loading). Value for money is considered as the lifestyle and value factor variable (0.662 factor loading). The marketers may safely presume that the rural

folks are equally considering lifestyle and value as part of their standard of living like urban population. Thus the current research empirically proved that rural customers opine that consumption of goods enhances or adds to their lifestyle in their own way. According to them, they consider lifestyle (0.630 factor loading). Consumer lifestyles in rural setting are becoming well-accepted basis for market segmentation. In consumer behavior, lifestyles reflect different modes of living and the patterns of consumption that tend to accompany them. As lifestyles offer more comprehensive view of behavior and the motives that underlie many of the purchases made by the consumers, they are regarded as advantageous for market segmentation.

Reliability analysis

Cronbach's alpha is a measure of internal consistency, that is, how closely related a set of items are as a group. Exploratory factor analysis is one method of checking dimensionality. Technically speaking, Cronbach's alpha is not a statistical test – it is a coefficient of reliability (or consistency). Cronbach's alpha can be written as a function of the number of test items and the average inter-correlation among the items. Below is the formula for the Cronbach's alpha:

$$A = N \bar{c} / (N-1) + (N-1) \bar{c}^2$$

Reliability analysis included calculation of Cronbach's Alpha that measures the internal consistency and reliability of the instrument the current research, the Cronbach's Alpha for all 20 variables of factors is 0.819. Similarly, for each of the factors the Cronbach's Alpha is higher than 0.7 which indicates the significance of the model. To interpret the output, the current research considered 0.9 > as Excellent, 0.8 > as Good, 0.7 > as Acceptable, 0.6 > as Questionable, 0.5 > as Poor and < 0.5 as Unacceptable. The details of the data are presented as below:

Table 3. Reliability of factors influencing economic perspectives of rural consumer buying dynamics in UAE

Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of variables of factors
Reliability of Factor 1	0.95	6
Reliability of Factor 2	0.88	5
Reliability of Factor 3	0.85	5
Reliability of Factor 4	0.71	4
Overall Reliability	0.82	20

Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

A research study was conducted in the UAE on multi-culture consumer behavior in Abu Dhabi markets by Vadakepat (2013), focusing on the purchase behavior and level of satisfaction of consumers. The study revealed inter-cultural differences influence of multi-culture on consumers' behavior. The article was centered on the urban market (Abu Dhabi) wherein lots of such research was conducted globally. The current research is entirely different from the one mentioned above because it is aimed at analyzing and interpreting the consumer buying dynamics of rural market segments of the UAE. The study covered the geographical areas of small towns and settlements in the UAE based on the culture, education, income and buying motives are different in comparison to urban consumer. Therefore, the current research is unique and no such similar studies were conducted earlier in the UAE.

There was another similar research work that was carried out in the UAE by Sarabdeen (2016), which was presented at the 2nd International Conference on Social Sciences, Economics and Finance held in Canada. This research looked at the influence of cultural factors and the consumer behavior to the luxury brand success. The study showed that the younger generation has high taste for luxury products whereas the older generation had desire to consume luxury products for social status. Since the UAE is considered as high power distance (90%) countries in terms of culture, the high position people considered luxury items to showcase their social status. The females showed more loyalty towards luxury brands in comparison to their male counterparts. The scope and coverage of the current research is totally different from the above concluded study of research as the current research is targeted to rural inhabitants of the UAE and covered twenty variables of consumer buying dynamics and further classified them into four factors and made a detailed analysis and interpretation. Furthermore, the current study made use of advanced statistical tools to draw the inference which is unique in the current context in the UAE.

In 2017, research study was conducted in the eastern region of India (Manipur) with limited 120 respondents by Chiru (2017). The focus of the study was to measure the consumption of goods during economic blockades in the region. The study suggested that consumer must enquire about the product in relation to price, quality, quantity, manufacture date and expiry date while purchasing from the market. The study failed to measure the consumer buying dynamics in their rural market. Therefore, it is a clear indication that the research carried in the current study is unique and has no comparison with its findings study conducted in 2018.

On the international front, a comparative study was conducted in 2019 by Vincent Onyango Okeyoof and the aim of the study was to give idea and comprehension of the reasons of customer habits in society, mainly rural markets. It was to get an understanding, knowledge and interpretation of all marketing activities despite in which rural market was under study. The marketers will be able to use this study to learn how to relate to rural marketing by finding a plan of action designed to meet the goals in a given rural market. The study concluded that both Finnish and Indian market play a pivotal role as it provides great opportunities to the corporations to stretch their reach to most of rural population. Rural market also benefits the rural economy by providing infrastructure facilities, uplifting the standard and quality of life of the people who resides in the rural are. The researcher did not find any data pertaining to consumer dynamics in rural market of his study. Therefore, the present study is unique in its own ways in comparison to the study conducted in 2019 and the researcher in the current study analyzed 20 factor variables and such information was not available in the earlier study. Hence, the present study is much superior by all means.

Trust and relationship are key ingredients of almost all market interactions societies (Misztal 1996). Trust and relationship facilitates market exchanges by lowering transactions costs. Trust and relationship as facilitator of market interactions and customer buying dynamics has been widely studied.

The current research of La Porta *et al.* (1997) focused attention on customer buying dynamics can facilitate the emergence of trust and build relationships in UAE's rural market segments. Specifically, the potential of markets to allow for the emergence of social and cultural relationships characterized by trust and relationship has been relatively understudied. UAE's rural customers are trading up. The rural markets of UAE are giving way to branded products, and more-expensive goods are replacing basic versions, as customers gain more trust and relationship. Rural customers trust retailers in their small towns and settlements of UAE. During the field interaction, it has been noted that the shopkeepers are aware of the fact that their customers consider their recommendations to them, they are unaware of this magic principle of "Trust and Relationship Factor". Therefore, the current research recommend that the manufacturers / wholesalers must educate and train UAE's rural retailers/shopkeepers about modern tools and techniques of excellent business communication skills, customer relationship management, branding of products and emotional intelligence perspectives for better performance.

Rural customers understand and demand promotion of products in their small towns and settlements of UAE. Rural marketers should design innovative promotional strategies for rural markets that express messages in an easy way to the small town and settlement residents and compatible with their demographic profiles (IBEF 2016). Price sensitivity is extremely high and comparison with competitive prices is common issue in UAE's rural market segments. During the current research interactions with the rural customers, it has been noted that the rural consumers do not have a budget problem in general but they have cash flow problem. This is because the rural customers receive income after selling their produce which varies from one month to twelve months. At these times, they are capable of making high volume purchases but all other times, they do not have cash to buy the products they want to. If the company wants to capture the rural market, they must first carry on the detailed analysis of the rural market segments, aiming at the typical characteristics of the rural market right strategy. Therefore, we recommend that the shopkeepers/retailers at the UAE's rural market must offer credit facilities or have a tie-up with local banks to lend money for purchases.

As the urban markets are increasingly becoming competitive and in many products even being saturated. Rural markets cover all marketing activities ascertain the demand, product planning, distribution and operating the entire marketing process aiming to satisfy rural customer segments. The income level and standard of living is increasing rapidly in rural areas. The demand for branded products is also increasing consequently. While urban demand for consumer products remains sluggish worldwide, rural markets are growing faster than ever in some of the largest emerging economies (Kapur *et al.* 2014). The current study indicates the rural customers along with the product they consider affordability in terms of price, also think about quality, performance, reliability, brand and other critical aspects Therefore, it is recommended that the products be in lines of rationality rather than just making low price appeals.

The rural customer profile of the United Arab Emirates is diverse, consisting of groups ranging from high-income Emirati nationals to high income expatriates to less affluent foreign workers from various countries. Consequently, customer behaviors, attitudes and preferences vary widely in the country and are often hard to

pinpoint (Euromonitor). Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey, which was conducted in 16 Arab countries, showed that nearly half of Arab youth are keen to embrace modernity. The numbers were also reflective of the views in Emirati society. The current research study indicated that the rural customers maintain dignity and look for the deals focusing on value for money. Therefore, it is recommended that the lifestyle and value is one of the dominant factors of rural population in UAE.

Scope for future research

Future is bright for rural research particularly in GCC countries and the Middle East and Northern African region. Research projects are possible to suggest how marketing of goods in rural areas in the United Arab Emirates can also be performed through encouraging rural entrepreneurship and Emiratization. The existing business models in east and west may be studied and further improvised models can be built and tested with reference to customer buying dynamics in rural areas of UAE. It is possible to research the service sector in rural areas that will help bankers and government policy makers to come up with appropriate schemes to encourage the local talent.

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