African Tradition and Global Consumer Culture: Understanding Attachment to Traditional Dress Style in West Africa

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Abstract

This article investigates the attachment of Senegalese to traditional consumption patterns and its effects on the construction of a coherent identity. In particular, we investigate loyalty to traditional dress across multiple occasions and in the face of global consumer culture dominance. To explore the multiplicity of meanings of tradition, this study relies on in-depth interviews, focus groups and a structured means-end analysis. The results reveal that loyalty to tradition enables individuals to attain social and self-identity benefits. The link of benefits sought from traditional consumption and behavior to end-goals pursued by individuals, reveals that attachment to traditional dress styles relates mainly to self-esteem and expressions of religious values, ethical values and African identity. This attachment to tradition and associated values varies according to behavioral patterns and frequency of use.

Keywords: culture, values, African identity, tradition, social change

1. Introduction

The development of exchanges and connections among people, cultures, goods and brands favour the development of a global consumer culture (Amselle, 2002). Global media, global brands, as well as the growing exchanges of people across borders, imply the development of a homogeneous consumer culture, in which consumers acquire behaviors characteristic of a 'deterritorialized global consumer culture' (Cleveland & Laroche, 2007). This global consumer culture is a 'cultural entity not associated with a single country, but rather a larger group generally recognized as international and transcending individual national cultures' (Alden, Steenkamp & Batra, 1999). People become acculturated to this global consumer culture, through a process of adopting the norms, values, skills and behaviors of a culture different than their native one (Peñaloza, 1989).

By contrast, ethnic (national) identity refers to a person's sense of belonging to an ethnic (national) group and reflects the extent to which he or she identifies with it. It influences people's thoughts and values (Alden, He & Chen, 2010; Markus & Kitayama, 1991) and determines behavior (Oswald, 1999; Stayman & Deshpandé, 1989). To varying degrees, the competing pulls of local traditional cultures and of a global consumer culture affect individual consumption behaviors, depending on how they adopt foreign or global consumption patterns, mix global behaviors with local elements or remain strongly identified with their culture of origin and resist global values.

To investigate these predictions, Africa offers an ideal setting, in that it is subject to the influences of global consumer culture but also represents a place where tradition plays an important role in society (Kleist, 2011; Logan, 2009). Thus complex interactions exist between local contexts and the developing influence of a global consumer culture. As Arnett (2002) argues, as a result of globalization, many people develop bicultural identities, "combining their local identity with an identity linked to the global culture." Various artistic activities and consumption patterns tend to reflect the traditional values embraced in Africa, which engage in a complex interplay with global content. Wilk (1995) therefore recommends that cross-cultural researchers consider the "complex interplay … rather than arguing for the primacy of one over the other."

Accordingly, we seek to understand the attachment of a West African population to traditional consumption

patterns, in face of the development of a global consumer culture. We argue that African consumers are influenced both by global and local consumer cultures. Rather than simply accepting a global consumer culture and giving up their ethnic identity and associated behaviors, consumers in Senegal account for the importance of traditional values and integrate multiple cultures. Through such integration, they alternate among cultures, depending on the social context. We attempt to identify the determinants of traditional consumption behaviors, including their associated benefits and related values (or end goals). With this identification, we can better comprehend loyalty to traditional and resistance to global consumption patterns. Remaining loyal to traditional consumption patterns in diverse occasions emerges as an important expression of both self- and group identity (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010).

In our empirical investigation, we focus on clothing consumption, a category with economic importance and strong influences stemming from both the global economy and local tradition. Fashion facilitates expressions of self-identity and enables consumers to switch from one style to another, depending on the situation. To investigate this aspect of culture and consumption, we adopt a qualitative approach with the conduct of both in-depth interviews and focus groups of Senegalese men and women who vary in their attachment to traditional dress styles. We formally uncover the links they make between the perceived benefits of wearing traditional dress, the instrumental values they wish to express and the end goals they pursue. We model these links through a means-end analysis.

In the next section, we outline the relationship between consumer goals and attachment to traditional consumer behavior through a brief literature review. After we describe the methods we used to address our research objectives, we present our findings and identify the reasons for consumers' attachment to traditional (African) dress styles. We structure these reasons according to a means-end analysis to clarify consumer goals and values. Finally, considering that values and behaviors vary across individuals, we distinguish meanings and values for frequent versus infrequent users of traditional dress styles in West Africa.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 Tradition and Dress Styles

The concept of tradition can be ambiguous; for example, dress styles of past centuries are not considered an option. Furthermore, modern African nations comprise various ethnic groups with many different styles. As is the case for any fashion, dress styles constantly are re-invented and evolve. However, it is possible to establish an unambiguous contrast in forms, colors, patterns and cloths between traditional West African dress styles and global Westernized dress styles, from both physical and psychological perspectives.

Studying the attachment of Africans to a traditional dress style is appropriate because clothing is a strong expression of identity and enables people to express themselves in an observable way (Hamilton, 1991). It is an accessible, visible and changing indicator of individual character, identity and status. Clothing is also an expression of group identity, such that it can strengthen ethnic, religious or political recognition and belonging.

Many authors have stressed the importance of clothing in Africa as an expression of self and group behavior (Allman, 2004); it also offers the simultaneous coexistence of traditional and modern dress styles in many occasions and across consumer profiles. Wearing traditional dress may be an expression of national, regional, tribal or religious identity. In turn, wearing global (Western) dress may signal a more modern or cosmopolitan style. Western style also may be associated with literacy, education, power and a global sense of culture—or with a loss of identity, loss of control over the youth or women's loss of morality (Hopkins, 2006). Switching from modern to traditional dress may occur because 'ethnic dress helps to position an individual in time and place relationships' (Eicher, Roach-Higgins & Johnson, 1995), possibly linked to a feeling of kinship when traditional dress allows a person to look the same as significant others (Gordon, 1987) and distinguish oneself from outsiders who are not members of the cultural group.

Cleveland, Laroche & Hallab (2012) show that the adoption of European or American fashion by Lebanese consumers is linked to acculturation to global consumer culture (not to ethnic identity). The more sensitive people are to global consumer culture, the more they wear Western-style clothes, independent of their ethnic identity. In contrast, the adoption of traditional Lebanese fashion is linked negatively to acculturation and positively to ethnic identity. Therefore, the adoption of global fashion corresponds to the dominance of a global culture, whereas adoption of the local, traditional style corresponds to a cultural strategy of separation and resistance to global culture.

Although prior research has suggested little integration of two cultures (Berry, 1997), in which case people would adopt both fashion styles, depending on the occasion or social context, observations in West Africa

indicate that many consumers wear both Western and traditional dress. On certain occasions, a traditional style may reflect cultural integration rather than cultural resistance, such that old and new cultures and structures co-exist through mutual adaptations. Gusfield (1967) cites a series of cultural fallacies and argues that 'the old is not necessarily replaced by the new. The acceptance of a new product, a new religion, a new mode of decision-making does not necessarily lead to the disappearance of the older form. New forms may only increase the range of alternatives. Both magic and medicine can exist side by side, used alternatively by the same people.' He further suggests that "tradition and modernity are frequently mutually reinforcing, rather than systems in conflict" (Gusfield, 1967).

2.2 Dress Code and Consumer Goals

Belk (1988) famously posited that consumption activities help consumers define their sense of who they are, by extending and strengthening their sense of self, expressing their self-identity and asserting their individuality (R. E. Kleine, S. Kleine & Kernan, 1993). This reasoning clearly applies to the choice of dress, for which many options exist in the market (Auty & Elliot, 1998; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004). Furthermore, the choice of dress serves a social purpose and may reflect ties to various groups, such as family, community, cultural groups or religious groups (Escalas & Bettman, 2005).

In a related sense, people buy (and wear) products for what they mean; these meanings in turn define a self-concept (Levy, 1959). Therefore, consumers express themselves through their choices, particularly of visible goods such as clothing. Meaning also accrues through the use of a product by a reference group, because that usage implies values held by the group. Group membership (e.g., ethnic, religious, sports, social) thereby helps determine brand usage and product choice (Bearden & Etzel, 1982). Consumers buy products consistent with their in-group values or expectations, but they reject meanings and brands associated with an out-group with which they do not want to share meaning (Escalas & Bettman, 2005). For example, if a Senegalese considers her- or himself an intellectual and fellow intellectuals wear global dress styles in an international conference, she or he likely uses a similar dress style to indicate her or his belonging to this group. However, if this conference were held in Senegal and the in-group reference became Senegalese or African intellectuals, the same person might wear traditional dress.

Literature pertaining to the meaning of brands and brand-consumer relationships might help clarify the meaning of dress styles and consumer relationships with traditional attire too. That is, brands are vehicles for expressing self-meanings, and according to a comprehensive study of brand meanings by Strizhakova, Robin and Linda (2008), consumers purchase brands for reasons of quality, personal identity (self-identity, group-identity and status), personal values (values, interests and concerns of consumers) and traditions (grouping family and national traditions). With the exception of quality, which is specific to a brand and not a category (e.g., traditional dress might vary in quality), we expect these brand meanings to apply to the choice of traditional dress.

A final theoretical consideration pertains to religion and religiosity. Religion designates a particular faith (e.g., Christianity, Islam) and directs a person's life in accordance with religious role expectations (Weaver & Agle, 2002). Religiosity instead is 'the degree to which beliefs in specific religious values and ideals are held and practiced by an individual' (Swinyard, Kau & Phua, 2001). In Senegal, Islam has been active since the 11th century, more than 90% of the population is Muslim and religiosity is vivid (Diagne, 1992); therefore, we expect consumer behavior in general and choice of dress style in particular to be affected by both religion and religiosity. The Senegalese maraboutic model (Note 1) is present in public life, and icons of affiliation with the Sufi order and a maraboutic guide are common (Villalón, 1999).

3. Method

To investigate culture and consumption linked to an attachment to traditional dress styles in Western Africa, we conducted our investigations in Dakar, the capital of Senegal. Home to 2.5 million inhabitants (21% of the Senegalese population), Dakar accounts for 80% of the economic activity of the country and is the centre of tourism. Government and international agencies and the headquarters of major national and international companies are situated in Dakar (Fall, 2008). Thus inhabitants are well exposed to global consumer culture. Yet across genders, income levels, education levels and ages, eight out of ten Senegalese in Dakar wear traditional dress at least once a week (Thiof magazine, 2009).

We conducted two studies, one using in-depth interviews with ten Senegalese consumers to uncover their behaviors, meanings and values associated with traditional dressing and one involving two focus groups, designed to link benefits and meanings to end-goals through the use of a laddering technique.

3.1 Study 1: Meanings and Values

To investigate behaviors, meanings and values associated with traditional dressing styles, we conducted ten in-depth interviews. A recruiting agency located the informants and guaranteed a diverse sample in terms of age, gender, income and educational background, to ensure we had a rich range of experiences linked to dressing. One author conducted all of the semi-structured depth interviews (Table 1).

Table 1. Interview participants

Informant	Gender	Age	Family status	Educational Background	Occupation	Religion	Wearing traditional dress (days per week)
Amadou	Male	36	Married	PhD	Professor	Muslim	1
Maguette	Female	59	Married	MD	Doctor	Muslim	3
Codou	Female	34	Married	Primary	Housewife	Muslim	5
Babacar	Male	41	Married	Primary	Shoemaker	Muslim	6
Aminata	Female	57	Married	Middle school	Secretary	Muslim	7
Héléne	Female	38	Married	Master	Assistant	Christian	2
Seynabou	Female	41	Divorced	Master	Assistant	Muslim	3
Paul	Male	21	Single	High school	Security guard	Christian	1
Malick	Male	39	Married	Primary	Salesman	Muslim	2
Angèle	Female	26	Single	Primary	Cleaning lady	Christian	7

Interviews conducted at 22–23–24.03.2012.

The interviews lasted between one and two hours and took place at the informants' homes, which helped them access experiences, behaviors and meanings associated with traditional dress styles. To begin the interviews, the author who conducted them provided a description of behaviors linked to wearing traditional and global dress styles. Informants then were to elaborate on and provide explanations about the circumstances, occasions, reasons and personal relevance for wearing traditional dress. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed, and both authors analyzed the resulting transcripts. We identified occasions, benefits and motivations linked to wearing traditional dress and their relationship to any expressed attachments to traditional dress style. Next, we content analyzed the interviews to understand the meanings of dress styles and the values associated with these meanings.

Sall Amadou, Professor at University Cheikh Anta Diop, Dakar

Amadou is a 36-year-old man who has been married for 10 years. He is a Muslim and the father of a 4-year-old child. After obtaining his doctoral degree in England, he began working as a consultant and teaching at the university, which requires him to travel widely. Amadou is a genuine African intellectual. He wears traditional dress once a week, on Fridays. He was brought up in a religious family and attended Koranic school until the age of 6 years. He married a Christian woman who subsequently converted to Islam. Amadou associates the wearing of traditional dress with religion. He is concerned about the views of those around him, regarding his faith in Islam, so he advertises that faith by wearing traditional dress:

Despite the prevalence of Western culture, I am attached to my local culture. I wear Western dress when I go to work. That way, I feel freer in my movements. I also dress like that when travelling. Nevertheless on Fridays I wear traditional dress, for Muslim prayers. I want to be seen as a good Muslim, a religious man who fulfils his duties as a good Muslim.

The importance attached to traditional dress also is tied up with the image he wants to create of himself as an older, responsible person. He seeks the respect of others, to conform with group values, as well as to depict himself as a model husband:

When I wear traditional dress, people think I'm older than I am. When I wear Western dress, I always feel younger. I have to wear traditional dress at festive social occasions such as marriages, funerals and baptisms. I also wear it on religious holidays such as the Muslim New Year, the end of Ramadan and Eid El-Kebir As I'm married, I have to dress this way for some family occasions if I want to earn respect.

Ndiaye Maguette, Doctor, Dakar

A 59-year-old married woman and mother of four children (two at university and two in secondary schools), Maguette is a gynecologist in Dakar. She is Muslim and was born in a family of modest means. She loves wearing traditional dress on Fridays, not to go to the mosque but to assert her cultural identity of an African woman unashamed to advertise her beauty and class. She wears traditional dress at least three days a week. Her husband, a civil servant who is proud of his wife's professional success, joins with her in a modern partnership. In this sense, Maguette blends global and local cultures. She associates the wearing of traditional dress with her marital status and age. This modest form of dress respects others and asserts her role as a good mother; it also can attract other's attention and help her assert her identity as an African woman:

When I take part in seminars, I prefer to wear traditional clothes as they accentuate my femininity. They make me feel more confident and enhance my social status. I also wear traditional clothes for family occasions and when my husband invites his friends at home. As a mother, I have to convey the image of a true African woman who has not lost touch with her roots and traditional values, despite her intellectual level. My clothes and behavior convey the image of a responsible mother, who understands the important role played by women in the African Muslim society. Even at dinner parties, I wear traditional clothes to hide my curves and to accentuate the unique beauty of the African woman. I am respected by others as a married woman of a certain age. Traditional dress confers a sense of responsibility and uprightness on those who wear it. I also need to know that I can still attract and be admired by people other than my husband.

Furthermore, she insists on high quality traditional dress, which enables Maguette to express her professional and social success, as well as her membership in Senegal's social elite:

When I wear traditional dress, I attach a great deal of importance to the quality of the fabric. It's a sign of social success. Given my social status, I have to be very choosy about the kind of traditional clothes I wear.

Samb Codou, Housewife, Dakar

Codou, a 34-year-old married mother of three small children, left primary school after a few years of study. Her husband is a mechanic, and Codou works to meet the needs of her young children, selling fabric and fashion accessories. Although she prefers to wear modern dress, especially on evenings out with her girlfriends, she wears traditional dress five days a week. She does so not only as a reflection of her religious and traditional beliefs but also to signal her membership in an ethnic group and respect for others. Finally, Codou has an economic rationale: She can make her own traditional clothes and those for her children.

I wear traditional clothes when I am with my in-laws or have guests. We often visit religious leaders and on such occasions my husband insists that I wear traditional dress, which he says is more decent. When I accompany my husband on pilgrimages to holy places, I wear traditional dress because that brings me closer to God and my religion. When I was pregnant, I wore traditional dress to cover my belly and protect me from others looking at me. Covering certain parts of my body (such as my belly or my head) protects me against evil spirits and djinns with evil powers. Wearing a headscarf, for example, protects me against headaches. In our society, miscarriages are believed to be linked to evil spirits who have taken possession of your body….

I belong to a family from the Lebou tribe whose family tradition is to wear a "pagne"(Note 2)when receiving guests at home. It's a symbol of decency and respect for guests. What's more, wearing traditional dress is cheaper. I can clothe myself or my children by buying inexpensive fabrics and making clothes to suit my tastes.

Ndiaye Babacar, Shoemaker, Dakar

A cobbler with a primary school certificate, Babacar is a 41-year-old polygamous married man, with seven children. He dropped out of school to work to help his farmer parents; both his wives sell food. All his children are receiving educations, and the two eldest are in secondary school. As a devout Muslim from the Mourid brotherhood, Babacar has a religious mentor and regularly takes part in religious events. Before getting married, he often wore Western dress, but since his marriage, he wears traditional dress at least six days a week. It allows him to assert his sense of group identity, whether as part of a religious group or a group of sports fans. Traditional dress also protects him from evil spells:

I wear traditional dress to go to work or to visit family or friends. I only wear Western dress on Sundays when I

am not working and stay home with my family. I prefer traditional dress because it's better suited to the local climate. I feel more at ease and I find it natural within my religious environment. For my wedding, my parents advised me to wear traditional dress with no underwear and not to approach my wife before the wedding night. The purpose of this was to prevent malevolent people casting a spell which could render me impotent on the wedding night. I am also a huge fan of Senegalese wrestling. I always wear traditional clothes at wrestling matches with my friends who are fellow supporters.

Gueye Aminata, Secretary at ministry, Dakar

Aminata is a 55-year-old woman married to a polygamous man 15 year her senior, who lives in the family home with her two co-wives. She is the mother of two children. With her education and secretarial diploma, Aminata works as a secretary in a transfer company and also participates in side businesses, because her husband is retired and she is responsible for her children's education. In addition to her business activities, she performs charitable works to help abandoned or problem children. She always wears traditional dress.

I'm a large woman and I've got bigger as I've got older. My husband is an elderly man who is an "Iman" (Note 3) at the mosque. I'm considered an important woman and the clothes I wear must reflect this. My religion forbids me from wearing clothes which reveal my figure. I wear traditional dress to work. It's also important for a mother to wear traditional dress as she looks after her children who tend to copy what their mother wears. On Friday, I wear traditional dress to go to the mosque, taking care to choose quality fabrics in white, the color of pure love for Allah.

Not only does Aminata associate traditional dress with modesty, wisdom and spirituality, but she also believes that when people reach a certain age, they should wear decent clothes that are both modest and polite. This form of dress also allows her to attract others, enhancing her charm and beauty, but offers protection against evil spirits.

I wear traditional dress because it asserts my Senegalese culture. It conveys the originality of African culture. The styles created by designers are very attractive and follow the latest fashion. There is a wide variety of traditional dress options and they change according to your age—clothes for older people tend to be looser. My choice of traditional clothes is governed by the criteria of decency and beauty. Wearing traditional dress does not make me a "has-been." On the contrary, people like it when I dress that way as they find me pretty and attractive. I attract the attention of others—it's a subtle form of attraction. When you wear clothes which reveal certain parts of your body, it attracts evil spirits, the devil or djinns who can possess your body and mind. It can also cause many illnesses which modern medicine can't treat.

Sagna Hélène, Pedagogy Assistant at Hight School Management, Dakar

Hélène, a 38-year-old married woman with no children, was trained in human resources, has a master's degree and works as a teaching assistant in a management school. She is from the Jola ethnic group, originally from Casamance in the south of the country. As a Christian, she goes to mass every Sunday. Furthermore, she proudly wears Western dress for weddings in the Christian community, though these weddings blend two cultures: On the wedding day, the bride and guests wear Western clothes. The next day, everyone wears traditional dress. Hélène also wears traditional dress two days a week, during certain ceremonies and on Fridays, mainly to imitate Muslim women and respond to social demands. She associates traditional clothes with an ethnic tradition, whereas her Western clothes allow her to remain young and sexy.

I live in a Muslim-majority country where traditional dress is usually worn. Living alongside Muslims, I adopt the same dress habits. It's always a pleasure to wear traditional dress. In the Jola community, parents insist that their daughters be initiated into wearing pagnes. Given the largely agricultural work, from which pregnant women are not exempt, women sometimes give birth outside the family home or a hospital. The pagne worn by the woman must be used to cover the new-born baby. Pagnes therefore become essential items of clothing. Women must also wear the pagne after giving birth to avoid draughts. Despite these ancestral traditions, I still continue to wear Western clothes, as I want to stay young and not get old too quickly. Husbands like to see their wives looking younger, dressed in modern clothes because it reminds them of the girl they knew before they got married.

Yet Hélène also associates traditional clothes with elegance and attraction, with the belief that tradition can also be modern and fashionable. She thus aims to create a distinct personality while conforming to local norms.

As a Senegalese, I like to assert myself by wearing traditional dress. At home, it symbolizes a woman who takes good care of her husband. Traditional clothes have evolved along with the latest fashion designs. The various changes in traditional clothes can be explained by the melting pot effect. Traditional clothes with modern

touches evoke the respect of others. Sometimes you can see the admiration in the eyes of onlookers who appreciate the beauty of what you're wearing. Traditional clothes highlight the beauty of the African women.

Sané Malick, Salesman at Sandaga Market, Dakar

A married, 39-year-old father of six from Casamance, Malick dropped out after primary school and now sells a variety of goods at the Sandaga market, a major market in Dakar. He is a Muslim and wears traditional clothes at least two days a week: on Fridays to go pray and on some days for work. Since getting married and having his large family, he feels more responsible and wears traditional dress more often than in the past. He also forbade his wife from wearing modern or Western clothing, such that she dresses modestly to demonstrate her education as a model woman.

Given my age and the burden of my responsibilities as a husband and father, I told myself I had to change the way I dressed and adopt a more traditional style. As the head of a family, I had to change by wearing looser clothes which denote my sense of responsibility. After we got married, I strictly forbade my wife to wear modern dress. I see no point in her dressing like that because she's not an intellectual. She did not go to the French school—she went to a Koranic school and is part of a large religious family which does not allow girls to wear modern dress.

Malick thus associates the wearing of modern clothes by women with their level of education and type of schooling; he is very concerned about what his wife wears. He considers traditional dress a sign of respect, both from and for others, and believes that women, who are responsible for their children's education, must set a good example and earn respect by not parading their body in public.

When dressed traditionally, my wife is respected by my friends, relatives and neighbours. Women should set their children a good example by dressing decently. You know, if children see their mothers wearing modern clothes, they look at them differently and can't respect them. Modern clothes are often tight and leave little to the imagination. I find that very childish. You have to know how to dress to attract but also to respect others.

3.2 Discussion

These interviews reveal that wearing traditional dress provides several benefits and meanings that are an important source of value (Richins, 1994a). Wearing traditional dress also enables people to satisfy a range of psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Maslow, 1954). We thus can examine what meanings are associated with wearing traditional dress and what psychological needs are satisfied through this behavior.

Specifically, to classify the meanings associated with wearing traditional dress, we used the 11 categories Richins (1994b) developed to classify the public and private meanings of possessions (utilitarian, enjoyment, represents interpersonal ties, facilitates interpersonal ties, self-expressive, represents achievement, symbolizes personal history, appearance-related, status, spiritual, financial). Two coders independently examined each interview for indications of these meaning categories, and the results confirm that traditional dress styles generate meanings and values associated with the range (Richins, 1994b), with the exception of the financial aspect (Table 2). Therefore, wearing traditional dress styles is highly meaningful and valued by wearers for a range of reasons. This richness of meaning and the associated values help explains people's attachment to a tradition, which is a source of enjoyment, social relationships, self-expression, status and religious expression.

3.3 Study 2: Means-End Analysis

We next aimed to link consumer benefits to motivations and finally to consumer end-goals or values. According to means-end chain theory, consumers exhibit a behavior (e.g., wearing traditional dress) to reach an objective or end (e.g., gain self-esteem). Generally, means-end chains consist of concrete and abstract attributes, functional and psychological consequences and instrumental and terminal values (Gutman, 1982). We are not interested in product attributes per se (e.g., type of cloth, color, pattern) but rather hope to understand how perceived benefits linked to wearing traditional attire relate to desired consequences (instrumental values), which then lead to end goals (terminal values). That is, consumers identify immediate benefits in wearing traditional dress (vs. modern dress), which generate positive consequences and help them attain values or preferred end-states at a more abstract or subconscious level (Zanolli & Naspetti, 2002). We ultimately measure the subjective meaning structures linked to wearing traditional dress and uncover the "ladders" or means-end chains that link benefits, consequences and end-goals (K. G. Grunert & S. C. Grunert, 1995), as shown in Figure 1.

The first step in this methodology is to identify the elements that constitute the three categories (benefits, consequences and end-goals). We undertook a systematic analysis of the interviews, using the data coding performed by two new judges (Reynolds & Gutman, 1988). The very few disagreements between judges were resolved by discussion. To build the means-end chains, we next organized two focus groups, one with frequent

users of traditional dress (3–7 days per week) and one with infrequent users (1–2 days per week), because we predicted that usage frequency might influence motivations and goals (Tables 3 and 4).

In a laddering technique (Reynolds & Gutman, 1988), we asked participants to provide reasons they wear traditional dress and encouraged them to reveal why each reason is important. Then participants were invited to disclose deeper motives. The format of the focus groups enabled participants to interact and reveal multiple reasons and associated motives, such that we could complete the list of benefits, consequences and end-goals identified previously (Table 5). In particular, we identified eight terminal values pursued by people wearing traditional dress, whether frequently or infrequently: aesthetics, pleasure and hedonism, ethical values, spirituality and religiosity, self-esteem, ancestral mystical values, social status and an expression of African self-identity.

Table 2. Meanings and values

Meanings and values	Examples from the interviews
Utilitarian	Hides the forms of the body. Less expensive and not costly to wash.
	Well adapted to the climate. Ample dress. Very comfortable. I really feel at ease. Very convenient to wear. The cloth is non-transparent, people cannot see through.
Enjoyment	Just to my taste. A pleasure for me to dress traditional. I feel good. I feel proud to dress traditional. I am happy to wear the pagne.
Represents interpersonal ties	Forces respect from others. Enables me to express my cultural identity. Shows that I belong to a group. Drives other to admire me. Inspires trust towards me. Shows respect for social traditions.
Facilitates interpersonal ties	I am considered as a perfect husband. I am considered as the wife of a wise man or of a religious leader. Protects me from sexual harassment or aggressions. Protects me from others starring at me.
Self-expressive	Shows responsibility. Gives me self-assurance. Gives me self-confidence. Expresses righteousness and honesty. Shows a good education. Gives psychological assurance. Brings self-esteem.
Represents achievement	Shows social success. Justifies professional and social success. Expresses the belonging to the upper social class. Enhances my social status.
Symbolizes personal history	I wear traditional dress when I go to my village where everyone dresses traditional. I wear traditional dresses because my parents have always bought it for me since I was a kid.
Appearance-related	Does not make you appear young. Gives the impression of an older person. Enables seduction. Brings elegance and style. Contributes to the beauty of the woman. Is a sign of decency.
Status	Very much worn by married women. Is a sign of motherhood. Shows the marital status of the women. Puts forward beauty and class.
Spiritual	I am seen as a good Muslim. I am considered as a religious person. Somebody who carries out his religious duty in going to the mosque. Shows faith in Islam. Enables to get closer to God and to religion. An obligation linked to Muslim religion.
*Mystical**	*Protects from evil spirits and djinns. Protects against evil spells. Gives mystical powers. Protects from malicious eyes.*

Measure added as a sub-category of spiritual, because these spiritual beliefs are not directly linked to religion.
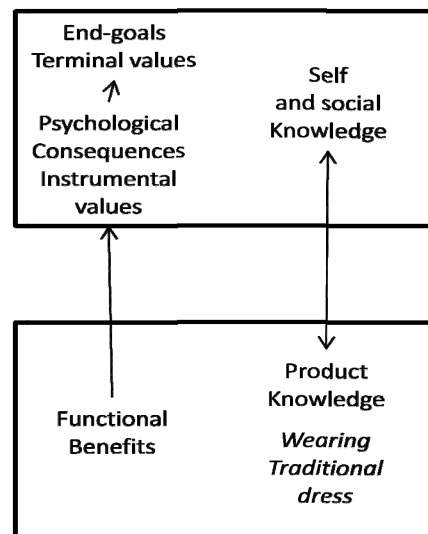
Figure 1. Means-end chain model

Table 3. Focus group informants (Infrequent users)

Informant	Gender	Age	Family status	Educational Background	Occupation	Religion	Wearing traditional dress (days per week)
Adja	Female	23	Single	Primary	Saleswoman	Muslim	2
Awa	Female	45	Married	High school	Employee	Muslim	1
Michelle	Female	60	Married	None	Housewife	Christian	2
Jean	Male	50	Single	Bachelor	Journalist	Christian	1
Masow	Male	32	Married	Professional	Security guard	Muslim	1
Omar	Male	47	Married	Master	Logistics manager	Muslim	2
Ousmane	Male	43	Married	High school	Salesman	Muslim	2

Focus group conducted in July 2012

Table 4. Focus group informants: frequent users

Informant	Gender	Age	Family status	Educational Background	Occupation	Religion	Wearing traditional dress (days per week)
Khady	Female	59	Married	High school	Accountant	Muslim	7
Christiane	Female	44	Single	Primary	Saleswoman	Christian	3
Binetou	Female	48	Married	High school	Employee	Muslim	3
Anastasia	Female	47	Married	Elementary	Housewife	Christian	6
Abdoul Aziz	Male	60	Married	Coranic	Tailor	Muslim	7
Souleymane	Male	39	Married	Elementary	Street merchant	Muslim	4
Jean	Male	27	Single	Master	Salesman	Christian	3

Table 5. List of benefits, consequences and end-goals

Benefits	Consequences Instrumental Values	End Goals Terminal Values
1. Covers the whole body well	1. Favours consideration by others	1. Aesthetics
2. Signals ethnic origin	2. Limits sexual harassment	2. Pleasure, hedonism
3. To be worn in special occasions (marriages, funerals, etc.)	3. Favours respect from others	3. Ethics
	4. Signals responsibility	4. Spirituality, religiosity
4. Adapted to the climate	5. Shows honesty	5. Self-esteem
5. Conceals bodily forms	6. Is a sign of self-respect	6. Ancestral mysticism
6. Ample and comfortable	7. Expresses belonging to a social or an ethnic group	7. Social status
7. Enables to behave as others do		8. African self-identity expression
8. Keeps evil spirits away	8. Shows modesty and humility	
9. Cheap to purchase and maintain, can be worn several times	9. Expresses belonging to a religious group	
10. Makes you look older	10. A sign of proper education	
11. Simple to wear anytime	11. Favours self-confidence	
	12. Enables to be discrete	
	13. Favours trustworthiness	
	14. Shows proximity to God	
	15. Expresses decency	
	16. Good for health	
	17. A way to seduce	
	18. Respects social traditions	
	19. Enhances beauty	

We then asked each participant in the focus groups to build his or her own sequences of benefits-consequences-values (Bagozzi & Dabholkar, 1994). This procedure allows people to reveal their personal reasons and end-goals naturally. Each participant described one means-end chain at a time but also could detail as many as they wanted. In total, we obtained 129 chains (65 from frequent traditional dressers and 64 from infrequent dressers). The chains yielded implication matrixes that linked benefits to consequences and then to end-goals or values (Reynolds & Gutman, 1988). The matrixes suggested hierarchical value maps (HVM) that depicted the aggregate consumer means-end chains, summarizing the association network of benefits, consequences and values. We constructed a HVM for both groups, which represented only the most frequent relationships between benefits and consequences or consequences and end-goals. We find both similarities and divergences between the cognitive structures of the two groups (Figures 2 and 3).

3.3.1 Infrequent Users of Traditional Dress Styles

The seven participants in the focus group of infrequent users generated 64 means-end chains, expressing the benefits sought, associated consequences and linked terminal values. Among the nine possible terminal values, infrequent users pursued three main end-goals: express spirituality (religiosity), express ethical values and self-esteem (or self-image enhancement). The means-end chain shared by most participants was 'covers the whole body well—expresses belonging to a religious group—expresses spiritual values.'

The HVM for these infrequent users revealed that the pursued end-goals were linked more to values defined by the society rather than to the self. These consumers wore traditional dress on special occasions (mariages, religious or social gatherings) or Fridays (a Muslim religious day), to conform to social traditions and gain respect or consideration from others. They thus expressed their conformity with dominant social values (i.e., ethical and religious) and their belonging with the social group. In these rather infrequent occasions, women also regarded traditional dress as a means to gain notice from others or express their beauty and power of seduction,
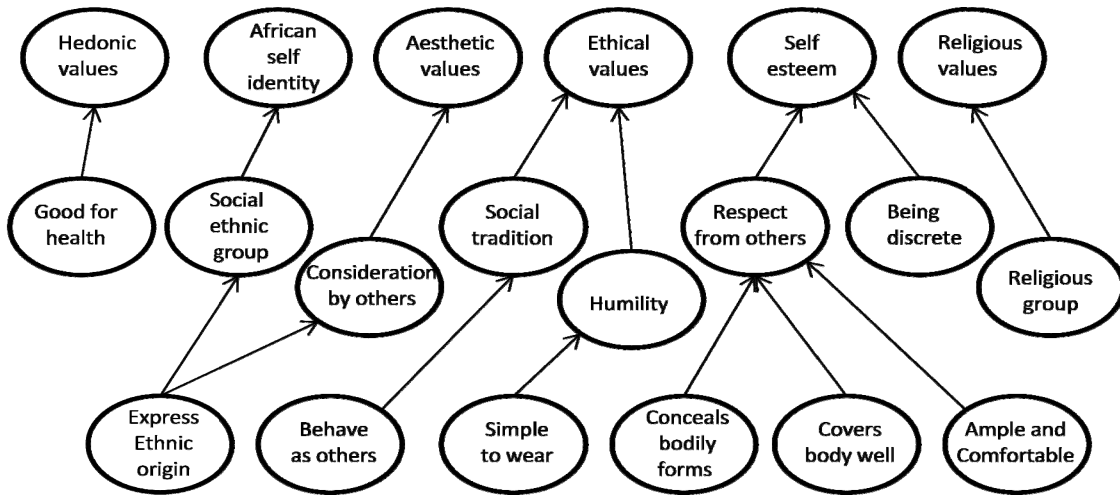
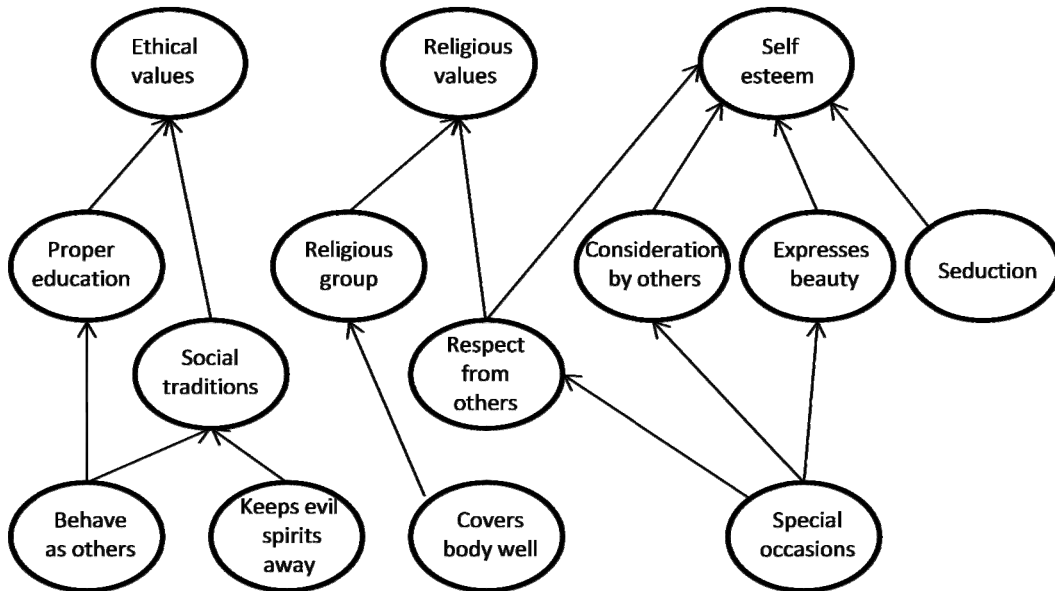Figure 2. Hierarchical value map for frequent users of traditional dress

Figure 3. Hierarchical value map for infrequent users of traditional dress

which are linked to a search for self-esteem. In other special occasions that we identified in the individual in-depth interviews, traditional dress offered a means to fight evil spirits (e.g., during pregnancy), which also conforms with social traditions.

3.3.2 Frequent Users of Traditional Dress Styles

Among the 65 means-end chains in this group, the number of end-goals identified was much higher than for the infrequent users. End-goals included those pursued by infrequent users (express spirituality, express ethical values, self-esteem), along with hedonic values, aesthetic values and African self-identity expression. The reasons for frequently wearing traditional dress therefore were varied. Clothing is loose on the body, reduces perspiration and does not compress nerves. This leads to hedonic values also linked to the belief that wearing traditional dress is good for health and recommended by doctors, to avoid compressing the body. The expression of ethnic origin also helped indicate belonging to an ethnic group, leading to improved self-identity expression as an African and a Senegalese. This expression of ethnic origin increased recognition by the social group, through accessing aesthetic values. Frequent users wore traditional dress to behave as others would and respect social

traditions they had known and followed since childhood. It also seemed simple to wear at any time and led to conformity and humility. Respecting social traditions and expressing humility through traditional dress also offered a route to ethical values. That is, traditional dress is ample and comfortable, fully covers the body and conceals bodily forms, which induces respect from others, unlike Western styles that appear aggressive or conspicuous. Respect from others in the social group and the discreteness of the dress offered another way to enhance self-esteem. Finally, frequently wearing traditional dress expressed religious beliefs and affirmed religious values.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

Attachment to tradition, expressed through wearing traditional dress, is linked to a range of meanings, benefits, instrumental values and terminal values or end-goals. The meanings linked to respect for tradition and goals pursued helps explain the importance of tradition in West Africa and resistance to global consumer culture. Wearing traditional dress is a source of personal enjoyment, facilitates social relationships, is a means to express one's self and belonging to the African culture, represents achievement and status, expresses beauty, shows respect and obedience to the Muslim religion and chases off evil spirits.

The distinction between frequent and infrequent users of traditional dress indicates differences in motives and end-goals. Infrequent users wear traditional dress for special occasions, such as social outings, family gatherings, going to the village, on Fridays (a religious day), during and after pregnancy and so on. Essentially, traditional dress helps wearers be seen and noticed by the social group, because through it they can express religious values, belong to a social group and appear beautiful. In contrast, frequent users wear traditional dress to conform to social rules, hide their bodies, be discrete, show humility and gain respect from others. It expresses respect for social traditions and an African identity. Although not directly expressed by the study participants, we discerned some resistance to global consumer culture and dressing styles, with their implications of showing bodily forms, attracting the attention of others and not abiding by religious or cultural norms. Instead, frequent traditional dress wearers' apparel is consistent with their in-group values, enabling them to reject the global dressing style worn by an out-group that they do not wish to join. Their ethnic identity seems strong. Therefore, local traditional culture provides a barrier to the rejected global consumer culture, as exemplified by husbands who would not expect their wives to wear anything other than traditional dress. They draw self-esteem from conformity to social norms and respect from others.

Furthermore, for infrequent users, self-esteem stems from an ability to attract attention with dresses that express beauty and seduction, with a goal of being noticed in some occasions. These consumers, acculturated into global consumer culture, wear global styles more frequently than African dresses. However, traditional dress offers them specific, culturally grounded benefits that enable them to express their conformity with religious, ethical and culturally bound values. Wearing traditional dress is also deeply rooted in tradition, as revealed by the respondents who viewed traditional dress as a means to protect themselves from evil spirits. Finally, traditional dress, just as is the case with a global dressing style, aims to highlight beauty and attract attention from others. We thus find traditional adaptations to global consumer culture, such as in fashion shows organised by African stylists. In this sense, tradition and modernity seem mutually reinforcing, with an integration of the two cultures. Tradition adopts some codes from global consumer culture, and consumers alternate between African and global cultures, depending on the social context.

For both frequent and infrequent users, tradition is well anchored in consumer culture and offers important end-goals, such as religious and ethical values and a search for self-esteem. Frequent users also aim to express their African identity. Apparel, as a culture-bound product category, enables all Senegalese, whether frequent or infrequent users, to express their cultural identity, in opposition to a global identity or by nourishing a global and a local combined identity.

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Notes

Note 1. Muslims in Senegal are organized around religious guides or marabous

Note 2. A "pagne" is the piece of cloth from which traditional dresses are made. It also designates the traditional dress itself.

Note 3. A person who leads Muslim prayers

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