

Attituds, Subjective Norms and Behavioral Intentions toward Purchasing Imported Casual Clothing 수입 캐주얼의류 구매에 대한 태도, 주관적 규범 의도에 관한 연구

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Abstract

국내 수입 캐주얼의류시장은 지속적인 성장을 거듭하고 있으나 이에 대한 소비자의 구매의도에 대한 연구는 없는 실정이다. 따라서 본 연구는 소비자의 행동을 예측하는데 그들의 태도(Attitude)와 주관적 규범(Subjective Norm)을 고려하는 theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1973, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975)에 의거하여 구매의도를 밝히고자 하였다. 본 연구의 자료를 위하여 서울 시내에 거주하는 20대 이상의 남녀를 대상으로 설문 조사를 실시하였다. 회수된 설문지 중 총 892부를 분석에 사용하였으며, 평균, 표준편차, 회귀분석을 실시하였다. 연구결과 소비자는 수입 캐주얼의류에 대한 구매의도가 낮았으며, 이를 예측하는데 있어서 태도와 주관적 규범이 유의적인 결정 변수였다. 또한 주관적 규범이 태도보다 소비자의 구매의도를 예측하는데 있어서 더 중요한 결정 변수였다. 본 연구의 결과는 의류에 대한 소비자 행동의 문헌에 기여함과 동시에 국내 마케터(local marketer)와 국제 마케터(international marketer)의 마케팅 전략 수립에 유용한 정보를 제시하여 준다.

Key words: Behavioral Intention, Attitude, Subjective norm, Imported Casual Clothing;
구매의도, 태도, 사회적 규범, 수입캐주얼의류

I. Introduction

The availability of imported clothing is growing in the Korean market as the Korean government has systematically eliminated trade barriers for textiles and apparels under an agreement with the World Trade Organization(WTO) since 1992. However, little research has been conducted on identifying Korean consumers' behavioral intentions toward purchasing imported clothing even though such behavioral intentions are regarded as the best

predictor of consumers' behaviors. Therefore, this study identifies Korean consumers' behavioral intentions toward the purchase of imported clothing and focuses on imported casual clothing as it is the biggest and fastest growing sector in the Korean imported clothing market.

This study employs the theory of reasoned action. The theory of reasoned action which considers subjective norm(the power of the people) as well as attitude in predicting behavior is a reasonable theoretical framework for this study because Korea is a collectivist culture in which

individuals are likely to be influenced by the norms of groups as well as their own attitudes. Viewed from the theory of reasoned action, the purchase of imported casual clothing can be predicted on the basis of behavioral intention which is determined by individual attitude, and by subjective norm as well: Attitude is one's general attitude toward the purchase of imported casual clothing, and subjective norm is one's overall perception of what relevant referents think about his or her purchase of imported casual clothing.

Grounded in the theory of reasoned action, in addition to identifying behavioral intention toward purchasing imported clothing, this study identified the variables (attitude and subjective norm) affecting behavioral intention and relative importance of these variables. This study also provides substantial information concerning the cognitive structures which underlie Korean consumers' attitudes and subjective norms. By revealing cognitive structures, this study seeks to identify why Korean consumers purchase imported casual clothing.

In order to focus on accurate information for the explanation and prediction of behavior, this study specifies action (purchasing), target (imported casual clothing), and time (within the next year) based on the theory. This study specifies time as within the next year to avoid misunderstanding behavioral intentions as economic condition changes. However, this study does not specify context (where a person purchases imported casual clothing) because it is reasonable to consider all contexts in which the behavior (purchasing imported casual clothing) may reasonably occur.

The theory of reasoned action is based on the assumption that human beings are quite rational and make systematic use of information as it is

available to them. Thus, the guiding premise for this study is that the purchase of imported casual clothing within the next year is a rational, systematic, and thoughtful activity rather than representing capricious or impulse purchasing behavior.

The results of this study will provide valuable understandings of and predictions of Korean consumers' behaviors for both international marketers, who deal with Korean consumers, and Korean local marketers, who need to capitalize on the advantages that they have in their competition with the increasing volume of imported casual clothing.

II. Literature Review

1. Korean Market for Imported Clothing

Apparel industry in Korea has been the leading export industry since the early 1970s. Apparel exports decreased, however, while imports increased in terms of both amount and share (Korea International Trade Association, 1997). According to Korea Federation of Textile Industries & Tex Herald(2000), imports in 1997 accounted for over \$1 billion, a marked increase of over 50% from \$61 million in 1994. However, because of Asia Economic Crisis, imports decreased from 1997 to 1998. Then exports increased from \$47 billion in 1998 to \$73 billion in 1999 owing to economic improvement (Korea Federation of Textile Industries & Tex Herald, 2000). Import was prompted mainly by the influx of low to medium priced clothes as well as by that of high-priced clothes. Most low to medium priced clothes are imported from Less Developed Countries such as China, Vietnam, and Indonesia because of Korean companies' sourcing production capacity from these countries.

The market for imported casual clothing is especially important because casual clothing for both men and women has taken up almost half of Korea's total imported clothing market. Korea Federation of Textile Industries & Tex Herald (2000) urge that Korean companies need provision against increase of imported casual clothing for both men and women. However, despite the importance of casual clothing market in Korea, not much efforts have been made by both international marketers and local marketers to understand Korean consumers. For international marketers, the more they become familiar with Korean consumers, the better their chances of expanding their market share in the Korean markets. For local marketers, the more they understand why Korean consumers purchase imported clothing, the better their chances of more effectively competing against international marketers.

2. Theory of Reasoned Action

The theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1973; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) suggests that the best predictor of a specific action is a person's behavioral intention and that the behavioral intention is determined by two components which are attitude and subjective norm. In relation to clothing, Perkins, Crown, Rigakis, & Eggertson (1992) and Chang & Burns (1995), using American subjects, have demonstrated that both attitudes and subjective norms are significant determinants of behavioral intentions. The validity of the theory for Korean subjects has also been attested by Lee & Green (1991). Based on Lee & Green, this study hypothesizes that attitudes and subjective norms are significant predictors of Korean consumers' behavioral intentions toward purchasing imported casual

clothing. The algebraic model of the theory of reasoned action is shown in Equation 1.

$$B \sim BI = W_0(Aact) + W_1(SN) \quad (1)$$

where B = the behavior in question,

BI = the behavioral intention to perform behavior B,

Aact = the attitude toward performing behavior B,

SN = the subjective norm,

W_0 and W_1 = weights that are empirically determined through multiple regression analysis, which represent the components' relative influence.

Most studies, using American subjects, have demonstrated a tendency for attitudes to take on a somewhat greater weight than did subjective norms. Ajzen & Fishbein (1980) reported that subjective norm played a more important role than attitude in about one fourth of the research, whereas attitude played a more important role than subjective norm in about three quarters of the research over a wide range of situations. In relation to clothing, Perkins et al. (1992) and Chang & Burns (1995) revealed that attitude was more influential than subjective norm.

Employing the theory of reasoned action, the study of Lee & Green (1991), cross-cultural study of the intention to buy a new brand of sneakers, discovered that Korean respondents were more influenced by subjective norms (beta coefficient = .52) than attitudes (beta coefficient = .42), whereas US respondents were more heavily influenced by their own personal attitudes (beta coefficient = .84) than subjective norms (beta coefficient = .06). Based on Lee & Green, this study hypothesizes that the subjective norm is a more important predictor in affecting Korean consumers'

behavioral intentions toward purchasing imported casual clothing than attitude. The hypothesis is also supported by studies of Ajzen & Fishbein (1970) and Ajzen (1971), using the Prisoner's Dilemma game. They revealed that, under conditions of cooperation, the subjective norm was more important, whereas, under competitive conditions, attitude toward the act was more important. Because Korea is characterized as a Collectivist culture that is more cooperation-oriented, Korean consumers are more likely to be influenced by subjective norms, social influences.

Understanding the relative importance of attitude and subjective norm is essential in establishing effective behavioral change strategies. According to Ajzen & Fishbein (1973), behavioral change can be best effected by manipulation of the important determinants of behavioral intentions. Ajzen & Fishbein (1972) showed how changes in normative beliefs were unrelated to behavioral intentions on which the subjective norms had little influence.

The first component (*Aact*) is a person's attitude toward performing the behavior in question and is measured by the sum of the scales for four bipolar evaluative semantic differential adjectives. *Aact* is also proposed to be a function of a person's salient beliefs that performing the behavior leads to certain outcomes and of his or her evaluations of those outcomes. It can be symbolically expressed as Equation 2.

$$Aact = \sum_{i=1}^n bi ei \quad (2)$$

where *bi* = the behavioral belief that performing behavior B will lead to consequence or outcome *i*,

ei = the person's evaluation of outcome *i*,

n = the number of salient outcomes.

The model suggests that attitude(*Aact*) is equivalent to *biei*. Burnkrant & Page (1983) confirmed that *Aact* and *biei* differ only in terms of the specificity with which outcomes are identified. Thus, *Aact* is called a direct attitude variable and *biei* is called an indirect attitude variable. The examination of cognitive structures such as salient outcomes, the strength of beliefs, and evaluations of the salient outcomes underlying the attitude provide insight into the reasons behind different attitudes. Therefore, before testing proposed hypotheses, this study reveals the cognitive structures underlying Korean consumers' attitude toward purchasing imported casual clothing to provide information concerning the salient outcomes to which Korean consumers believe that purchasing imported casual clothing leads and the power of those beliefs and evaluations of outcomes in the formulation of behavioral intention. Based on the theory of reasoned action, Park(1998) found that design and color were the two most important outcomes of Korean consumers' attitude toward purchasing imported clothing. Hong(1996) found, not based on the theory, that five dimensions of Koreans' attitudes toward imported casual clothing were brand uniqueness and good quality, high prestige, incongruity with native emotion and ethnocentrism, conspicuous consumption, and reasonable purchasing advantage.

The second component (*SN*), the subjective norm, deals with the influence of the social environment on behavior. *SN* is measured by the person's perception that most people who are important to him or her think that he or she should or should not perform the behavior in question. *SN* is also proposed to be a function of a person's expectations of what specific referents (individuals or groups) who are important to him or her think he or she should do and of the person's

motivations to comply with specific referents. It can be symbolized as Equation 3.

$$SN = \sum_{j=1}^n NB_j MC_j \quad (3)$$

where NB_j = the normative belief, the person's belief that reference group or individual j thinks he or she should or should not perform behavior B ,
 MC_j = the motivation to comply with referent j , which is like an importance rating,
 n = the number of relevant referents.

Subjective norm (SN) is equivalent to $\sum NB_j MC_j$. However, it should be noted that $\sum NB_j MC_j$ involves specific individuals or groups, whereas SN involves generalized important others. Thus, SN is called a direct subjective norm variable and $\sum NB_j MC_j$ is called an indirect subjective norm variable. The examination of cognitive structures such as the strength of his or her normative beliefs and motivation to comply with the salient referents underlying the subjective norm provides information about the consumers' referents whom marketers need to focus their promotional efforts on. Thus, by utilizing the theory of reasoned action, this study clarifies cognitive structures underlying Korean consumers' subjective norms toward purchasing imported casual clothing before testing proposed hypotheses. Lee & Green (1991) found that Korean college students chose friend, family, and store salespersons as salient referents to affect their decisions to buy a pair of sneakers, whereas American college students selected friends, family and boyfriend or girlfriend as their salient referents. Park (1998) found, based on the theory, that Korean consumers considered close friends and shopping companions as important referents when purchasing imported clothing.

III. Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Both attitude (Aac) and subjective norm (SN) are significant predictors of behavioral intention (BI).

Hypothesis 2: With respect to the relative importance of attitude (Aac) and subjective norm (SN), subjective norm (SN) is a more important predictor for the determination of behavioral intention than attitude (Aac).

IV. Methods

1. Questionnaire Development

Before the questionnaire was developed, the modal salient outcomes and referents were determined through a modified open-ended elicitation questionnaire taken from Ajzen & Fishbein (1980). At the top of the questionnaire, the definition of imported casual clothing was included. *Imported casual clothing* was defined as foreign brand casual clothing made in foreign countries by foreign companies and shipped to Korea. It excluded casual clothing made in Korea carrying licensed foreign brands and those made in foreign countries by Korean companies and then shipped to Korea.

The sample for obtaining the modal salient outcomes and referents consisted of 40 subjects over 20 years of age who were employees in a company in Seoul, Korea, and 40 subjects who were members of their families over 20 years of age. Of 80 distributed questionnaires, 65 were returned and 52 of them were used for analysis.

Responses were grouped on the basis of the contents, and then the frequencies in each group were counted. Nine salient outcomes emerged. They were (a) following the latest fashion, (b)

enjoying better designs, (c) enjoying better colors, (d) feeling uncomfortable because of high price, (e) feeling guilty because of the outflow of hard currency from Korea, (f) having difficulty because imported casual clothing does not fit me well, (g) enjoying high quality clothing, (h) enjoying the relative scarcity value of clothing ("I have it and you don't"), and (h) having a sense of high status or superiority because of name value. Four salient referents emerged. They were (a) family members, (b) friends, (c) work groups, and (d) consumer-action groups.

The definition of a work group was given on the final questionnaire. A *work group* was defined as a group of people within an organization, both formal and informal, including business, voluntary organizations, religious organizations, clubs etc, to which one has an active affiliation, both full-time and part-time. The final questionnaire was pre-tested by administering it to 20 university students.

2. Measurement of variables

The final questionnaire contained the measures for attitude, subjective norm, behavioral intention, and demographic questions. The measures had been developed and refined based on previous researches (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Lee, 1988; Chang & Burns, 1995). For measuring Aact, four evaluative semantic differential adjectives such as good-bad, pleasant-unpleasant, rewarding-punishing, and beneficial-harmful were used as Ajzen & Fishbein (1980) suggested. The numeric scale ranged from +3 to -3. bi and NBj were measured in bipolar scale from likely (+3) to unlikely (-3). For measuring ei, the adjectives such as important (+3) and unimportant (-3) were used as did the study of Lee (1988) which suggested the validity of the theory of reasoned action for Korean subjects, instead of the adjectives

good (+3) and bad (-3) which were used by Ajzen & Fishbein (1980). Because of the difference between the adjectives in this study and that in Ajzen & Fishbein, re-coding for ei towards three negative outcomes was done in the statistic program to formulate bie cross products.

Using bipolar scales for bi and ei, a person who has a negative(-) evaluation of a certain outcome and believes it is unlikely(-) that performing a certain behavior will lead to the outcome is assumed to have a positive(+) attitude by multiplying the evaluation and the belief. This assumption is logical: A person would have a positive attitude toward performing a certain behavior because his or her performing the behavior does not lead to an outcome which he or she regards as bad. Ajzen & Fishbein(1980) also addressed that use of bipolar scales has important advantage in measuring attitude toward performing behaviors which lead to negative outcomes. For example, a person who has a negative(-) evaluation of a negative outcome and believes it is unlikely(-) that performing a certain behavior will lead to the negative outcome is assumed to have a positive(+) attitude. That is, a person has a positive attitude toward performing a certain behavior because his or her performing the behavior does not lead to the negative outcome which he or she regards as bad. Noting that use of a unipolar belief scale does not have the same implications in the case of performing behaviors which lead to negative outcomes, Ajzen & Fishbein insisted to use bipolar scales for bi and ei.

For measuring MCj, a unipolar scale, *very much* (+7) to *not at all* (1), was used: Ajzen & Fishbein (1981) insisted to use a unipolar scale since people are unlikely to be motivated to do the opposite of what their salient referents think they should do. SN and BI were measured in bipolar scales of from *likely* (+3)

to *unlikely* (-3). For *SN*, subjects were asked to indicate their perception of the desire of the people who are important to them with respect to their purchasing imported casual clothing within the next year. For *BI*, subjects were asked to indicate their behavioral intention toward purchasing imported casual clothing within the next year.

3. Sampling Method

In order to incorporate a wide range of demographic characteristics of Korean consumers over 20 years old into the sample, two sampling units were selected.

First, elementary and high school students' parents were selected to obtain Korean consumers in their 30s and 40s. Three elementary schools and three high schools located in low-, middle-, and high-income districts (Gu) of Seoul were selected. Seven hundred sixty three questionnaires were distributed to the first and sixth graders of the three elementary schools and the first year students of the three high schools. Students were instructed to ask their fathers or mothers to complete the questionnaire.

Second, to obtain Korean consumers in their 20s and 50s and beyond, two colleges (E and S Universities) in Seoul were selected regardless of their location within the city. Two hundred fourteen questionnaires were distributed to the sophomores majoring in business, and they were asked to complete and return them in class. In addition, 428 questionnaires (two questionnaires for each student) were distributed to the same students. For one questionnaire, the students were instructed to ask their fathers or mothers to complete the questionnaire. For the other questionnaire, students were instructed to ask their grandparents. Students who were not living with their families in Seoul were instructed to ask

their relatives, such as uncles and aunts, or acquaintances over 20 years old living in Seoul.

4. Data

The data were collected in 1999. Obtained data from the two sampling units were pooled for statistical analysis. In all, 1,405 questionnaires were distributed and 1,101 of them were returned. Of the returned questionnaires, 892 questionnaires were deemed usable by the researcher. An alpha level of .05 was used for all statistical tests.

5. Description of the Respondent

The gender of 60.3% of the respondents was female. Of the 892 respondents, 31.6% were in the 40 to 49 age group. Next largest was the 20 to 29 age group (22.8%) followed by the 30 to 39 age group (21.0%), the 50 to 59 age group (15.4%), and the 60 and above age group (9.3%), respectively. In terms of the household annual income, 37.1% of the respondents reported a household annual income of between \$15,000 and \$29,999; 24.1% between \$30,000 and \$59,999; 19.0% between \$7,500 and \$14,999; 11.8% of \$60,000 and over; 8% of less than \$7,499. As expected in sampling method, this showed normal distribution focused on middle income range between \$15,000 and \$29,999. In terms of education, 52.5% were college students or college graduates; 26.8% completed high school; 9.4% were graduate students or had graduate degrees; 6.1% were not high school graduates; 5.3% were junior college students or junior college graduates.

V. Results and Discussions

1. Formation of Variables and Descriptive Statistics

The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for all of the

measurement items ($Aact$, bi , ei , $biei$, NBj , and MCj , $NBjMCj$) ranged from .61 to .95.

Table 1 provides means and standard deviations on direct attitude and subjective norm and behavioral intention. For all four semantic differential scales for attitude ($Aact$), negative mean scores from -.79 to -.17 were reported. This indicates that the majority of respondents felt purchasing imported casual clothing was slightly bad, unpleasant, punishing, and harmful. $Aact$ had a negative mean score ($M = -2.10$) indicating that, in general, most of these respondents had unfavorable attitudes toward purchasing imported casual clothing within the next year. The mean score of SN was negative, -1.66. This indicates that the majority of respondents believed it was quite or slightly unlikely that most people who were important to them would think they should purchase imported casual clothing within the next year.

The mean score for behavioral intention was negative, -1.28. This indicates that the majority of respondents would not likely intend to purchase imported casual clothing within the next year.

Table 2 provides means and standard deviations for measures of the variables (bi , ei , and $biei$)

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations on Direct Attitude ($Aact$), Direct Subjective Norm (SN), and Behavioral Intention (BI)

Variable	M	SD
Good-Bad (A1)	-.79 (N = 890)	1.64
Pleasant-Unpleasant (A2)	-.17 (N = 885)	1.55
Rewarding-Punishing (A3)	-.60 (N = 880)	1.62
Beneficial-Harmful (A4)	-.58 (N = 879)	1.49
$Aact$ (A1+A2+A3+A4)	-2.10 (N = 876)	5.58
Subjective Norm (SN)	-1.66 (N = 890)	1.50
Behavioral Intention (BI)	-1.28 (N = 891)	1.78

Note. Scales for A1, A2, A3, A4, SN , and BI range from -3 to +3. Scale for $Aact$ range from -12 to +12.

underlying attitude. For bi , two outcomes such as feeling uncomfortable because of high price, feeling guilty because of the outflow of hard currency from Korea had positive mean scores, whereas the other seven outcomes had negative mean scores. Among the outcomes which had negative mean scores, following the latest fashion had the largest negative score and having a sense of high status or superiority because of name value had the second largest negative score. Other outcomes-enjoying better designs, enjoying better colors, having difficulty because imported casual clothing does not fit me well, enjoying high quality clothing, and enjoying the relative scarcity value of clothing-had almost neutral responses ranging from -.37 to -.09. For ei , two outcomes such as following the latest fashion and having a sense of high status or superiority because of name value had negative mean scores, whereas the other seven outcomes had positive mean scores ranging from .35 to 1.39. Among seven outcomes which had positive mean scores, feeling uncomfortable because of high price had the largest mean.

The mean scores for $biei$ ranged from -2.68 to 2.00. In addition, $\sum biei$ (the indirect attitude variable) had the mean of -.32, which indicates that most respondents had quite or slightly unfavorable attitude toward purchasing imported casual clothing based on their behavioral beliefs (bi) and evaluations of outcomes (ei). The result of the negative mean score of $\sum biei$ is equivalent to the previous result of a negative mean score of $Aact$, supporting the theory of reasoned action in that $\sum biei$ is similar to $Aact$.

From the results of bi and ei , it can be concluded that feeling uncomfortable because of high price had the largest positive mean score of bi ($M = 1.35$) and ei ($M = 1.39$) and that following the latest fashion ($bi = -.60$, $ei = -.36$) and having a sense of

Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations on Behavioral Beliefs, Evaluations, and *biei* toward Outcomes

Outcome	<i>bi</i>		<i>ei</i>		<i>biei</i>	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Following the latest fashion	-.60 (N=891)	1.78	-.36 (N=892)	1.64	1.46 (N=891)	3.38
Enjoying better designs	-.24 (N=892)	1.81	.46 (N=890)	1.69	.85 (N=890)	3.54
Enjoying better colors	-.18 (N=890)	1.83	.76 (N=892)	1.61	.69 (N=890)	3.62
Feeling uncomfortable because of high price of imported casual clothing	1.35 (N=891)	1.73	1.39 (N=890)	1.52	-2.68 (N=889)	4.32
Feeling guilty because of the outflow of hard currency from Korea	.78 (N=892)	1.69	1.01 (N=891)	1.53	-2.31 (N=891)	3.64
Having difficulty because imported casual clothing does not fit me well	-.14 (N=891)	1.85	.53 (N=889)	1.80	-1.35 (N=888)	3.92
Enjoying high quality clothing	-.37 (N=891)	1.86	1.10 (N=892)	1.50	.20 (N=891)	3.94
Enjoying the relative scarcity value of clothing	-.09 (N=892)	1.94	.35 (N=891)	1.67	.84 (N=891)	3.68
Having a sense of high status or superiority because of name value	-.45 (N=892)	1.87	-.47 (N=890)	1.68	2.00 (N=890)	3.54
Σbie_i					-.32 (N=875)	16.6

Note. Scales for *bi* and *ei* range from -3 to +3. Scale for *biei* range from -9 to +9.

high status or superiority because of name value (*bi* = -.45, *ei* = -.47) had larger negative means of *bi* and *ei* compared to others. This result indicates that most respondents believed that it was most likely that purchasing imported casual clothing would lead to uncomfortable feelings because of its high price and evaluated this outcome as the most important one. At the same time, they believed that it was most unlikely that purchasing imported clothing would lead to following the latest fashion and having a sense of high status or superiority because of name value and evaluated these outcomes as the least important ones.

The result that most respondents expressed positive behavioral beliefs and evaluations of feeling uncomfortable because of high price and feeling guilty because of the outflow of hard currency from

Korea may be explained mostly by the economic hardship experienced by Korean consumers during the Asian economic crisis, the period when this study was conducted. The Korean economic crisis forced most respondents to be concerned and feel uncomfortable about the price of imported casual clothing. The result that most respondents expressed negative behavioral beliefs toward following the latest fashion and having a sense of high status or superiority because of name value may be explained by growing availability of local brands which appeal to fashion-oriented consumers in Korea. Most respondents tend to perceive that local casual brands surpass imported casual brands because these brands seek a fast turn around to reflect the fast-moving fashion trend and focus on marketing strategy to build

their brands' name value. In addition, most respondents' negative evaluations of these two outcomes suggest that Korean consumers do not consider pursuing the latest fashion which tend to have uniformity and brand name value as reasons for purchasing imported casual clothing. They seem to pursue their own fashion style regardless of the latest fashion and to choose the clothing brands based on satisfying this need rather than on the brand name.

Table 3 provides means and standard deviations for measures of variables (*NBj*, *MCj*, and *NBjMCj*) underlying subjective norm. For *NBj*, the mean scores of consumer action groups, family members, work groups were -2.2, -1.85, -1.73, and -1.60, respectively. For *MCj*, the mean scores of family members, friends, work groups, and consumer-action groups were 4.59, 4.34, 4.14, and 3.97, respectively, which were between slightly positive and neutral response.

The mean scores for *NBjMCj* were negative ranging from -6.63 to -8.74. In addition, $\sum NBjMCj$ (the indirect subjective norm variable) had the mean of -30.65, which indicates that most

respondents believed referents such as family members, friends, work groups, and consumer-action groups would not likely think they should purchase imported casual clothing. The result of the negative mean score of *NBjMCj* is similar to the previous negative mean score of *SN*, supporting the theory of reasoned action in that *NBjMCj* is similar to *SN*.

From the results of *NBj* and *MCj*, it can be concluded that consumer-action groups had the largest negative mean score of *NBj* and the lowest mean score of *MCj*. This result indicates that most respondents had neutral motivation to comply with consumer-action groups although they believed it was most unlikely that consumer-action groups would think they should purchase imported casual clothing within the next year. The result that most respondents strongly believed that consumer-action groups would not likely think they should purchase imported clothing may be explained by the Korean economic condition when this study was conducted. Due to the dampened economic situation, some consumer action groups protested purchasing imported products and

Table 3. Means and Standard Deviations on Normative Beliefs, Motivations to Comply, and *NBjMCj* toward Referents

Referent	<i>NBj</i>		<i>MCj</i>		<i>NBjMCj</i>	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Family Members	-1.85 (N=892)	1.44	4.59 (N=892)	1.51	-8.29 (N=892)	7.63
Friends	-1.60 (N=892)	1.56	4.34 (N=891)	1.36	-6.63 (N=891)	7.49
Work Groups	-1.73 (N=866)	1.47	4.14 (N=862)	1.40	-6.88 (N=858)	7.03
Consumer - Action Group	-2.20 (N=884)	1.16	3.97 (N=885)	1.46	-8.74 (N=880)	6.05
$\sum NBjMCj$					-30.65 (N=852)	24.10

Note. Scale for *NBj* range from -3 to +3. Scale for *MCj* range from 1 to 7. Scale for *NBjMCj* range from -21 to +21.

Table 4. Standardized Regression Result of Attitude and Subjective Norm for Behavioral Intention

Dependent Variable	β for Aact	T	β for SN	T	R square	F
Behavioral intention	0.38*	13.560 (.0001)	0.39*	13.750 (.0001)	.4476	352.459*

Note. *p* value in the parenthesis.

demanded protection of domestic industries. The campaigns led by consumer-action groups to discourage the purchase of foreign-made products make them powerful referents for the development of consumers' subjective norms. In addition, the result that most respondents had the highest willingness to do what most family members wanted to do may be explained by the characteristics of Korean culture which is strongly family-oriented influenced by *Confucianism*.

2. Hypotheses Testing

Standardized multiple regression analysis was performed to test hypotheses. Table 4 shows the result of F test and t test. The F value was statistically significant, $F(2, 870) = 352.459$, $p < .05$. The t test indicates that beta coefficients for attitude ($W_0 = .38$) and subjective norm ($W_1 = .39$) were statistically significant, which suggests that both attitude (Aact) and subjective norm (SN) were significant predictors of behavioral intention regarding the purchase of imported casual clothing. Thus, the hypothesis 1 was supported. Therefore, it can be concluded that Korean consumers' behavioral intentions toward purchasing imported casual clothing can be predicted and explained by their attitudes and subjective norms.

The beta coefficient of subjective norm ($W_1 = .39$) was slightly larger than that of attitude ($W_0 = .38$), which supports hypothesis 2 (see Table 4). It can be concluded that the impact of subjective norm on behavioral intention was slightly greater than that of attitude even though both attitude and subjective norm were significant predictors of

behavioral intention.

VI. Implications, Limitations, and Future Studies

For both international and local marketers, this study presents managerial implications in terms of (a) attitude change tactics, (b) promotional strategies, (c) behavior change strategy, and (d) the direction of consumer and marketing research.

First, marketers can change consumers' attitudes favorably by establishing a marketing mix in terms of product, promotion, and price, which is based on the revealed cognitive structures of attitudes. Regarding product policy, the strategy employed by international marketers should mainly focus on creating certain distinctive aspects of the latest fashions, high-quality, better designs, and better colors and providing the proper size system for Korean consumers. On the other hand, local marketers can compete with the imported casual clothing by delivering these elements which imported clothing do not have. Regarding promotional strategy, international marketers should do their best to minimize the association of negative attributes such as uncomfortable and guilty feelings because of high price and outflow of hard currency in Korean consumers' mind. In addition, the promotional strategy which focuses on a sense of high status or superiority because of the name value of imported casual clothing does not seem to be effective any more in changing Korean consumers' attitudes, whereas the strategy which focuses on the relative scarcity

value of imported clothing seems to be effective. Regarding price policy, international marketers may be better off choosing a low or medium price policy rather than choosing a high-price policy or increase the perceived positive attributes of the purchase of imported casual clothing in consumers' mind to offset the high price. On the other hand, local marketers should try to enhance consumers' cost versus benefits views toward imported casual clothing by focusing on a competitive price and good attributes of local brands.

Second, the promotional strategy should be focused on family members as endorsers, word-of-mouth communicators, or opinion leaders. In addition, related to the referents, international marketers have to be careful to deal with non-profit institutional organizations such as consumer action groups which are vocal and get attention. However, consumers' relatively lower motivations to comply with consumer-action groups compared to other referents suggest marketing opportunities for international marketers. On the other hand, this suggests that local marketers can not be shielded by the strong-tie with consumer-action groups.

Third, to effectively change Korean consumers' behaviors which are more affected by manipulation of their subjective norms than by that of their attitudes, marketers should focus on developing promotional theme of getting endorsements from referents such as family members rather than focusing mainly on developing promotional theme of favorable attitude.

Fourth, marketing research has to be related to the issue of referents who influence Korean consumers as well as the issue of attitudes they hold. In-depth investigating of social influences has been ignored in marketing research using Korean

subjects. In addition, in-depth researches on the impact of non-profit organizations such as consumer-action groups on Korean consumers' purchasing imported products including clothing is much desired.

This study has a few limitations. The first limitation arises from the Korean market situation when this study was conducted. The results of this study might not stable because Korea was confronting with the difficulties associated with opening its markets to the outside world, at the same time, it must implement structural rearrangements on a domestic level as well. The second limitation arises from the possibility to generalize the results of this study to other areas in Korea. The third limitation is the absence of fixed price range of imported casual clothing in questions. This study did not propose a fixed price range because it was impossible to adopt a price range that would satisfy the wide range of demographic characteristics found among the subjects: the subjects certainly have different price perceptions according to their demographics. The fourth limitation arises from the subjects in this study who might not have sufficient previous experience to buy and try on the imported casual clothing: This experience might be a most important factor to answer the questionnaires.

There are two suggestions for future studies. First, an additional analysis is needed to trace changes in Korean consumers' behavioral intentions as the market situation is changed and to compare its result with the result of this study. Second, researchers whose subjects are Korean should find theoretical frameworks which fully capture and provide in-depth insight into Korean consumers' subjective norms in diverse areas including the clothing area.

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