

Prospects of Consumer Life Information

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Abstract

The CLI(Consumer Life Information) is a new study to unite and create new values recognizing the importance of knowledge and information in information-oriented society based on domestic science and digital technology.

The objective of this research is to define academic identity of consuming science and CLI, to analyze the theory, styles, manners, psychology and the concept of consumption, which is the base of consuming life, and to present the direction of CLI with tasks and three major axes of CLI.

Nowadays, international order demands new paradigms from human beings. Especially, vision and creation of the values are settled as methodological ways considering the economic power. The CLI should be on the same horizon adjusting social change of pointing values and quality in consuming patterns of diversity and variety. Therefore, I would suggest the ways for the CLI to head for as follows.

First, it is to perceive the 3 major Axes & Task of CLI. Second, it is to develop service (experiencing goods) and goods that can lead consuming lives. Third, it is to study merchandising strategy, to create new signs and symbols of goods, and to collaborate of R & D(research and development) and Business. Fourth, it is to head for globalization.

Consequently, this study will be helpful to establish the theory of relationship between producer and consumer in fashion business included research and developments of qualitative goods.

Key words: Meanings of Consumption, Consumption Aesthetics & Psychology , 3 major Axes & task of Consumer Life Information, Creation of Values.

I. Introduction

The objective of our lives can be differed from each individual but clothing, food, and shelter for the life as a human being are essential through all times and places. Home economics used to be studied and educated clothing, food, and shelter of a family, the smallest unit of a society scientifically. However, the ability of home economics became weaker while it has been

though industrialization, information-oriented society, and different organization of the family according as societies have changed. Therefore, the degree of external dependence of consuming life as a family has been increased.

Furthermore, developments of scientific technique have produced a high-leveled consuming society. Consumers' needs and wants have created goods and service connecting producers with consumers

organically. Producers are not a main body of economics but consumers are the main body of economics. That is to say, human life, itself can be the continuity of consuming life.

It is important for consumers to choose the best one among tons of goods, various ways of sale, complicated process of distribution, and a lot of information about products. It is because it is crucial for consumers to have the greatest effect from the least given resources in our high-leveled consuming life. The CLI(Consumer Life Information) is a new study to unite and create new values recognizing the importance of knowledge and information in information-oriented society based on domestic science and digital technology.

As for the reasearch method, the related theses, publications, books were used in support of the identical theory for CLI. Hence, first of all, the objective of this research is to define academic identity of consuming science and CLI. Second, it is to analyze the theory, styles, manners, psychology and the concept of consumption, which is the base of consuming life. Third, I would like to present the direction of CLI with tasks and three main axes of CLI.

This study will be helpful to make human life more abundant, that is to say, high tastes & culture, high touch & tech in fashion, textile, fabric and so on. And this study will be helpful to establish the theory of relationship between producer and consumer in fashion business included research and developments of qualitative goods..

II. Production & Consumption

Production is manufacturing goods to be used

for existence of human being, which is the foundation of a society. Consumption is a process or a state of change according to using the value or the form of goods, such as high tastes & culture, high touch & tech in fashion goods.

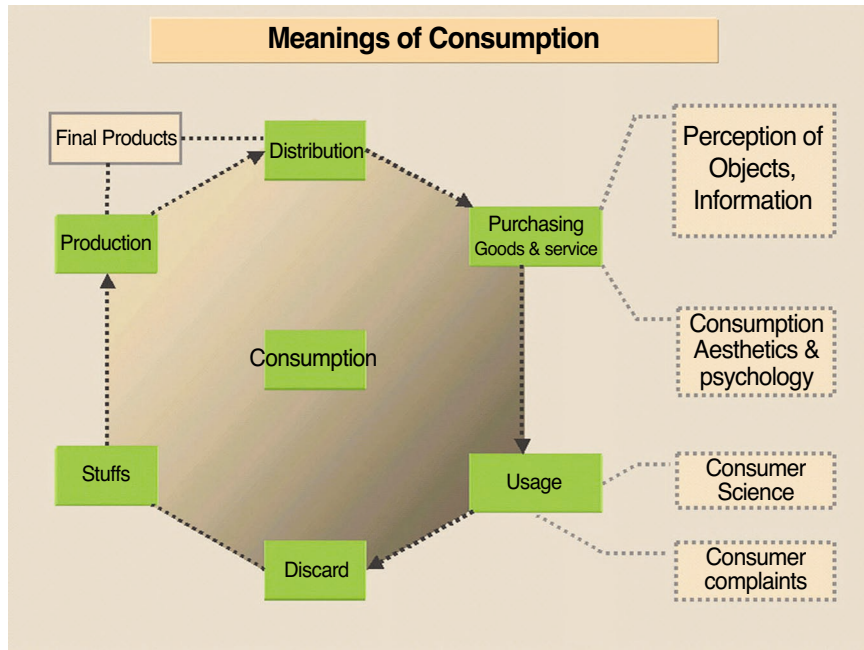
1. Consuming science

Consuming science is a study to examine many problems happening in the process of consumption, which is confronting producing science to examine lots of troubles among the process of production. That is, consuming science deals with various problems happening in terms of, except production, the distribution, the process of sales, choices, the process of purchase, and usage, management and waste of goods, because it is the way of consuming the final products, manufactured by the method of producing science, for people, who are the foundation of the society, to survive in our society.

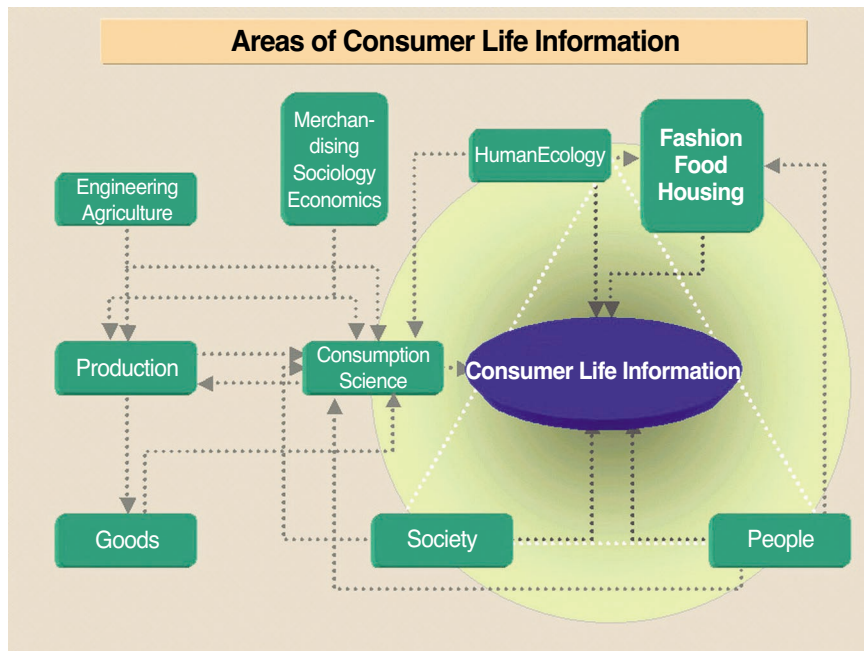
<Figure 1> shows the meanings of consumption, from distribution of the final products made from stuffs to discard (waste of goods). The most important thing in process of purchasing goods and usage is consumption aesthetics(taste) & psychology of consumers, and the complaints of consumers related to goods or services.

Consuming science generates problems regarding business operation and the distribution in the process of the distribution and sales and there would be other problems about consumers' attitude toward their lives, their values, a motive of purchase, evaluation of goods, and security, indication and standard of the quality of goods.

It brings about problems in terms of the process



<Fig. 1> Meanings of Consumption



<Fig. 2> Areas of Consumption Life Information.

of usage and management, like appearance, form, values, quality and performance of goods are getting worse as people use the products more and more. In addition, there would be other problems about consumers' complaints in the process of choosing and purchasing goods.

In short, consuming science, the study about the distribution, choices, consumption of goods that are all related with people, is to aim the greatest satisfaction of consumers and to make human life more abundant.

2. Two kinds of viewpoint about consumption : Material consumption vs. Ideal consumption

There are many problems related to not only changes of forms or values of materials but also socio-scientific phenomena in consuming life. The CLI demands socio-scientific studies such as economics, sociology, psychology and the study of merchandise as well as cultural-scientific studies, because production and consumption are not only economic process but also social and cultural process.

<Figure 2> shows near areas of the CLI graphically. Therefore, viewpoint dealing with consumption can be split into two major points. One is material consumption and the other is ideal (socio-cultural) consumption.

And so I explain social and cultural (or 'conceptual') consumption which is the base of theory of consuming life in chapter III.

Consequently, the CLI includes those two viewpoints and consists of three major axes with people who are the subject of consumption. I would describe 3 major axes in chapter IV.

III. Theory of consuming life

The ultimate objective of a consumption is to seek for the maximum of efficiency, improving the quality of life and satisfaction through the choice, purchase, usage and management. A role of cultural values and symbols is helpful to analyze the consumption, because to purchase the product and to consume it means the acquisition of specific cultural symbols and values. I would like to describe the theory, styles, manners, psychology, concept and aesthetics of consumption which compose the theoretical basis of the theory of consuming life.

1. Theory of consumption

Consumption affects on the way to build up and keep one's awareness of who I am and who I want to be. Hence consumption is still an essential process in terms of socio-psychological aspect as well as economic aspect. Consumption and ideology of consumption, as social, cultural and economic practices, play a better leading role in the information-oriented society than in the industrial society. Especially, the role of signs and symbols, like various forms of advertisement about consumer's goods, is clearly expressed in consumption and ideology of consumption which are one of the important processes in the modern society. Therefore, consumption of the capitalism in the late 20th century means not a simple economic and practical process but a social and cultural process including cultural symbols and signs.¹⁾

Consumption has made consumers desire a product in the advertisement using mostly signs and symbols during the process of selling the product in the capitalistic society. For example, there would be always some desire to be a

particular type of person purchasing diverse styles of clothing or furniture in spite of economic depression. This kind of desire can work on even unemployed people. Consumers become recognized as an existence having practical and unexpected decisive power regarding choice and usage of cultural goods, not as a passive victim of uncontrollable commercialism.

The theory of consumption contains a danger to make consumers epicureans because it is related to experience of a brain, that is, matters of mentality more than any other times. It is because positive ideal consumption is not the process to satisfy biological and physical wants simply but is about finding the meaning of the life by purchasing goods and service²⁾.

2. Manners of Consumption

Consumption spends images and thoughts in television advertisement. For instance, that consumers buy clothes, cars, records, video tapes, and furniture is not only direct and practical behavior but also delivering some kind of meaning or showing the particular kind of person who the consumers want to be when they purchase things. Consumer goods are a kind of awareness about identity, like questioning who I am, by using symbols of manners of consumption. Many people are attracted to consume products. Whatever the object of desire is, people who have been exposed in media, have the thing or the service they want to buy in their mind after they get the necessities of life. To be a consumer is to acquire values and symbols from the particular culture³⁾.

Therefore, consumption expresses the difference from the result of self-controlled

economics, and also it is the successive social and cultural practice contributing to establishing the difference between groups on that society. For example, there is important difference between the lower class and the middle class in terms of manners to purchase fashion, food, drinks, furniture, interior and even what they watch on television. The middle class tries to get a clue from the higher class about manners and objects of consumption. This means that the manners of consumption contribute to forming individual awareness and identity⁴⁾.

Moreover, social ranks do not affect on the manners of consumption any more. People do not think based on the ranks any more even though they considered "Cut your coat according to your cloth" as philosophy of their life before. People are interested in styles, games, stimulus, work, and play that do not make them feel bored, or they are concerned about how to be attractive to other people. Those became essential interests in people's life and they affect on the manners of consumption, instead of ranks, classes, and imitating living styles or manners of consumption from a particular group.

3. Psychology of consumption

Consumption is based on "the Lack", that is, always a desire about something that does not exist. Hence, consumers are never satisfied. The more they consume, the more they want to consume.

Once consumers purchase a thing, they occasionally feel empty, although they have eagerly wanted to buy the thing and saved money for it, because expecting consumption is an experience making people feel better than an

experience of consumption itself. It tells that there is no limit in consumption. If it is simply regarded as concentration or greed, people must be satisfied with what they bought, but it is not true. We want to purchase more and more and this impulse of consumption is not a result of psychological determined factors or simply not a power of competition. If consumers do not seem to control his/her consumption, consumption is a completely conceptual practice which has nothing to do with rules in real life or satisfaction of a desire.

Consumption is a conceptual practice, and it means that concept is consumed, not the material. That is to say, people consume concept even though they eat food. I could insist on this kind of senseless thought because I would like to emphasize that consumption is a matter of relationship between cultural symbols and signs. Besides, it means that consumption would never be ceased.

Consumption is a conceptual practice. So there is no final satisfaction with material. We are destined to have to want endless experience of consumption and constant consumer goods in the society developed by post-modern capitalism.

The psychological desire is a result from social and cultural practices surrounding people not completely but partially⁹⁾.

4. Consumption Aesthetics(tastes)

We do regard laundry detergent as “Hiti” and hamburgers as “Macdonald”, because they are acquired as signs of material objects. There could be qualitative as well as quantitative development in evolution of human being, because people had ability to use not only signs

but also symbols. We need to examine determined concept that is a symbol.

Symbol can connote delivering concept of itself. Language is the prominent usage of symbols to human being. In other words, language is a method to make symbols and signs. Do we know why the aesthetics should be the center of consumption, why billions of money should be paid to intensify brand image or strategy for image in marketing? It is because signs and symbols are conception and the conception is, that is, spirit and mind. So it is not a big deal to spend billions of money to make a product placed and fixed in consumers' minds, because it is the doubtless strategy to make billions and trillions of profit.

Most people know that there are written language, visual language and body language creating signs and symbols. Designs of products are signs and symbols, and advertisements are signs and symbols. Attitude and voice of sales person are the signs and symbols, as well. Therefore, it is time for business men and consumers to recognize that aesthetics is the key of creating new value⁹⁾.

In business case, semiotics and sensitive meaning are crucial, for instance, how to look at consumers' cultural background (sensitive meaning) and how to define the meaning of consumption (semiotics) before investigating consumers' want. The concept of aesthetics of consumption or aesthetics of marketing appears in a marketing study. It is luxury brand business that puts stress on the concept of aesthetics of consumption⁷⁾.

Consumption is considered as a process that recreation of symbols dominates, not satisfies desire for material. People, who have desire to be a consumer of goods or service on the media,

are increasing. Business people emphasize business mind to think about strategy of how to develop products aesthetically and have people get the desire for the goods.

A main role of marketing is to advertise the category or the list of products which the business has produced or will sell, though marketing could figure out consumers' desire.

That is, it should go through the marketing process to decide how much price it is suitable for the products, what kinds of sales channel to use, and how to promote sales.

Meanwhile, aesthetics of consumption regards consumers' taste as an important factor and it is started from estimating how to symbolize their tastes and hobbies. That to say, aesthetics is to give special meaning to consumers' hobbies and symbolize them. This kind of aesthetics is aesthetics of practice, in other words, consumption aesthetics⁹⁾.

IV. The 3 major axes and tasks of CLI

Until now, I have explained two sides of consumption, that is, material and conceptual consumption, and practice of consumption aesthetics. In other words, the latter focused on people who are the basis of our society and the former focused on objects. <Figure 3 > shows the relationship objects, people, and society. So I would describe the 3 major axes and tasks of the CLI.

1. The 3 major axes of CLI

The CLI consists of the 3 major axes that are objects, society and people. People have

experienced and are experiencing a lot of change according to the times centering around these 3 major axes.

For example, when looking at the axes of the objects(see figure 4), it was headed for quantitative production and consumption in the past but now it is headed for qualitative high-tech and high touch products such as high value-added and scarcity(rare)value in the CLI.

When looking at the axes of the society(see figure 5), the information-oriented society is deepening on the basis of digital technology after the industry society and seeking for realization of digital ubiquitous life which people can connect and use computer anytime, anywhere. Computers that can substitute for people are expected while advancing into an intellectualized society of information and knowledge.

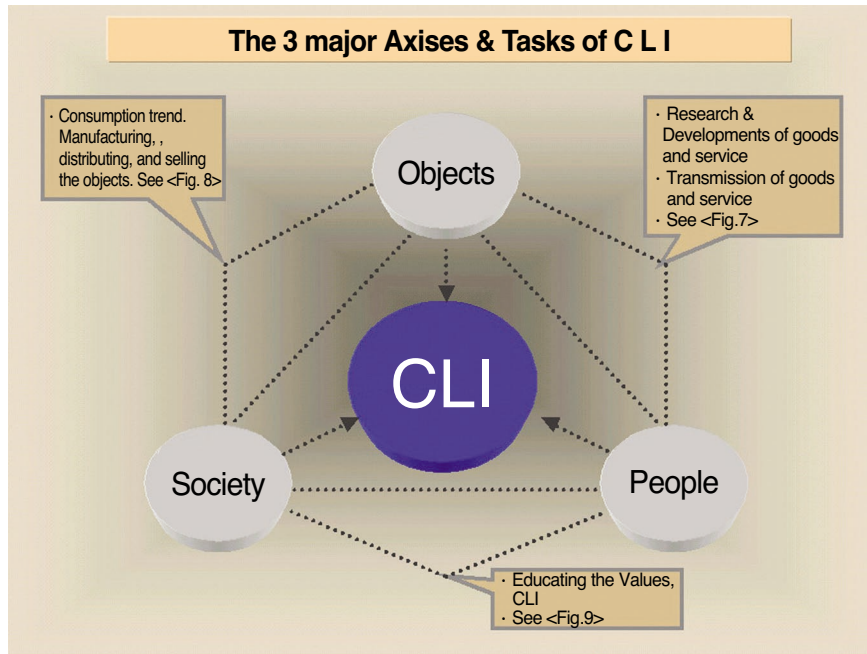
Moreover, looking at the axes of the people(see figure 6), new images of people, such as x-generation, n-generation, hippies, yuppies, bobos, and so. on continuously appear and make highly cultural goods(cultural and aesthetic goods) with new signs and symbols of those new images of people.

2. The 3 major axes and tasks of the CLI.

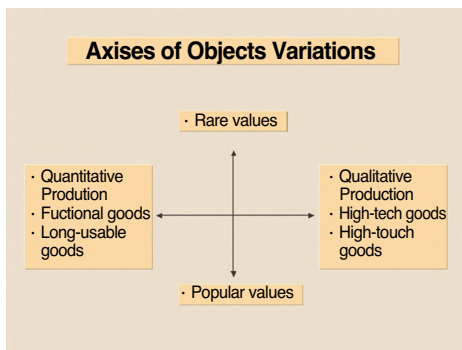
To create new values in the change(variations) of the 3 major axes(the objects, society and people), we must understand the 3 major axes and see through systemic association among them.

<Figure 7> shows the relationship between the objects and people. In the relationship,

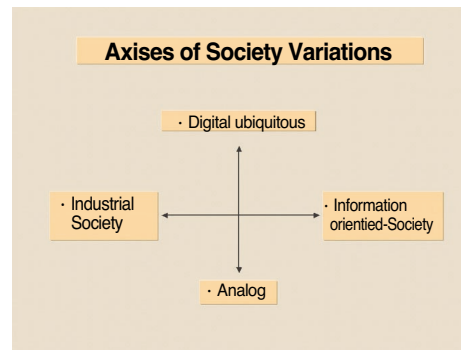
tasks of the CLI. are to research and develop designs for better convenience and capacity of the goods, to create signs and symbols of the



<Fig. 3> the 3 major Axes & Tasks of CLI.



<Fig. 4> Axes of Objects Variations.

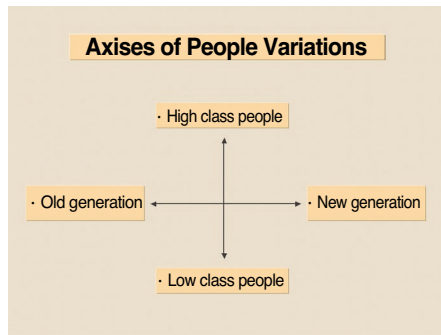


<Fig. 5> Axes of Society Variations.

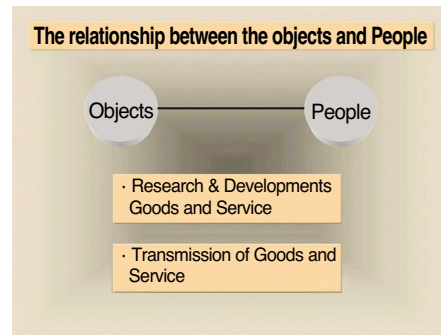
products which emphasize sensitivity, tastes, and aesthetic aspects, and to transmit information of goods and service to consumer, such as the senses of coordinating, modeling, harmonizing, and delivering practical and informational values of the goods.

<Figure 8> shows the relationship between the

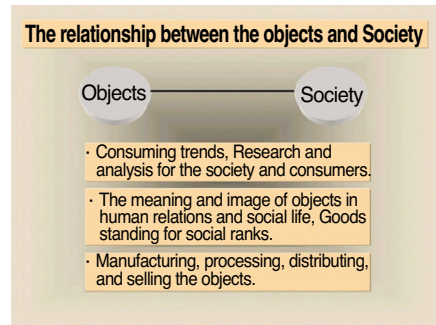
objects and the society. In the relationship, tasks of the CLI. are to research and analyze consuming trends, the meaning and image of the objects in human relations and social life, socio-psychological ability of the objects, that is, relating to trends, goods standing for social ranks, and manufacturing, processing,



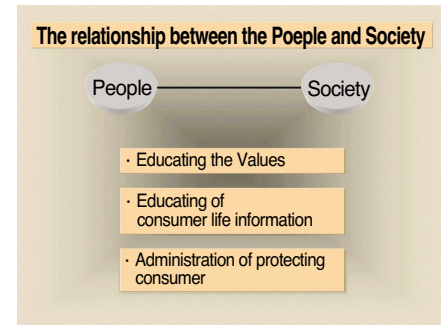
<Fig. 6> Axes of Society Variations



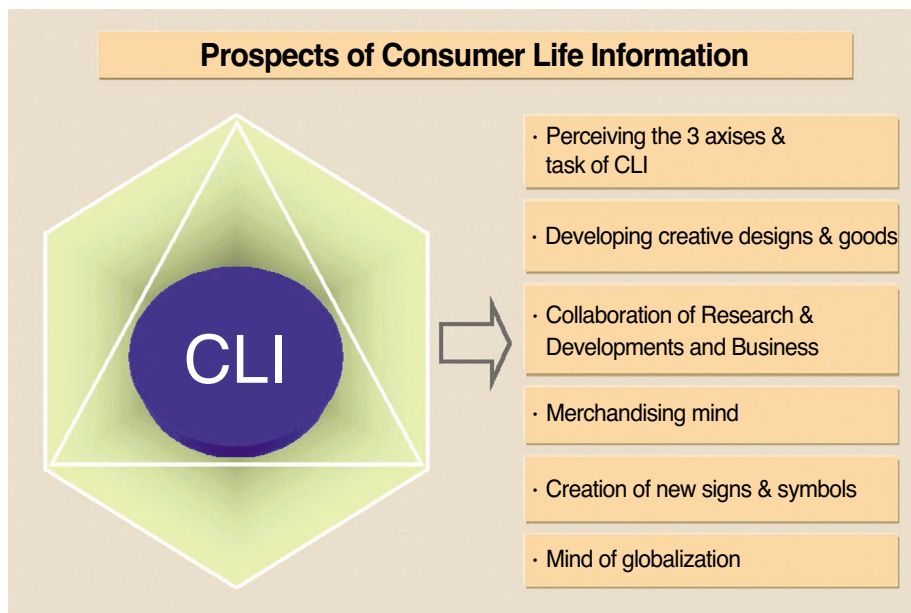
<Fig. 7> The relation between the objects and people



<Fig. 8> The relation between the objects and Society



<Fig. 9> The relation between the people and Society



<Fig.10> Prospects of Consumer Life Information

distributing, and selling the objects.

<Figure 9> shows the relationships between people and the society. In the relationship, tasks of the CLI. are to educate the values of human being, citizenship, to administrate protection of trade mark, regulation of the unfair trades, guarantees of the quality, standard of the goods, regulation of the advertisement, and safety.

If I display the 3 major axes and tasks of the CLI mentioned above as a graphic, it would be like <the figure 3>.

V. Conclusion : Prospects of the CLI

Future society are immediate in front of the intellectualized society applying digital ubiquitous infrastructure and practicable communication anytime, anywhere deepening intellectualized society of information and knowledge. To cope with this, cultivation of individual ability is really important. Nowadays, international order demands new paradigms from human beings. Especially, vision and creation of the values are settled as methodological ways considering the power of competition. The CLI should be on the same horizon adjusting social change of pointing values and quality in consuming patterns of diversity and variety. Therefore, I would suggest the ways for the CLI to head for as follows.

First it is to perceive the 3 major axes(triangle axes of goods, people, and society) and task of the CLI.

Second, it is develop service (experiencing goods) and goods that can lead consuming lives. It is required goods that people can directly experience reacting to expansion of imaginary space. It is demanded abilities that develop original goods, improve designs, continuously

create new products.

Third, it is to collaboration of R&D (research and development) and Business. It is made up market operation on the premise of R&D assuming the market. It is required business mind that unites R&D and market information, which information network is constructed and all the business process, such as acquisition of the technology, development of goods and service, commercialization, marketing, etc, is systematically linked.

Fourth, it is to analyze merchandising strategy. Merchandising is a project about commodities that summarizes plan, production, and promotion of the goods. Producing goods requires merchandising mind figuring out consumer's sensitivity and reflecting it statistically to the project.

Fifth, it is to create new, original signs and symbols in goods, and to lead consuming life and culture.

Finally, it is to open the eyes, and to try mind of globalization. If we have the spirit of hunger and wide viewpoint, we can naturally think of humbleness. In addition, cultivation of mind, aiming at the worldwide, to make the practice of business as our own is important. If I display a prospect of the CLI mentioned above as a graphic, it would be like <the figure 10>.

I hope this study will be helpful to establish the theory of relationship between producer and consumer in fashion business included research and developments of qualitative goods.

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Received 6 October, Accepted 15 November.