Shopping Orientation and Clothing Benefit Sought by the Preference for Fast-Fashion

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to identify the differences in shopping orientation and clothing benefit sought of a group of consumers according to the preference for fast-fashion. Data were collected from a questionnaire conducted on 416 female adults. The results were as follows. First, the factor analysis used to identify shopping orientation involved the following five factors: hedonic, economic, convenient, brand-oriented, and relation-oriented. The dimensions of the clothing benefit sought consisted of fashion, social status, practicality, figure flaw compensation, and sex appeal. Second, the differences in shopping orientation and clothing benefit sought according to the preference for fast-fashion were identified using a t-test. The consumer group preferring fast-fashion exhibited a hedonic, convenient shopping orientation, and the non-preferring group exhibited an economic, brand-oriented shopping orientation. The consumer group preferring fast-fashion pursued fashion and sex appeal clothing benefits, and the non-preferring group pursued social status and practicality clothing benefits.

Key Words : shopping orientation, clothing benefit sought, fast-fashion

I. Introduction

As consumer demands become ever more varied and the consumption environment continues to change, companies are now facing a crisis in the search for new distribution channels. At this point, fast-fashion, which promptly supplies new products according to current trends at low prices, is being highlighted as a new consumption trend. Fast-fashion brands have global distribution channels, and are concentrating on expanding their global business. Zara, a fast-fashion brand, posted approximately 5 trillion won in sales at more than 700 shops world-wide,[1] and H&M, whose sales have grown rapidly by 30% every year, is operating up to 1200 super-stores in 21 countries worldwide.[2] Nowadays, many fast-fashion brands are entering the Korean market, and fast-fashion brands, by cooperating with large enterprises in Korea, are forecast to dominate the market in Korea with their enormous capital.[3] At this time of growth of the fast-fashion brands, a study on fast-fashion is required. In reality, companies attempt to manufacture and sell products capable of satisfying all the consumer's desires within a given market are ineffective. By identifying a homogeneous consumer group, and comprehending the characteristics of that group, effective marketing can

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be carried out. Thus, this study aims to suggest the basic data required to establish a marketing strategy for a fast-fashion brand by determining the consumer characteristics of groups preferring fast-fashion. In other words, consumer groups were divided according to their preference for fast-fashion, and the consumers' inner profiles, shopping orientation and benefits sought were compared and analyzed. Such a study is expected to help overcome the crisis of the domestic market by introducing global fast-fashion brands, and setting up a marketing strategy to create a global brand in Korea.

Ⅱ. Literature Review

1. Fast-Fashion

According to the definition of The National Institute of the Korean Language, the term 'fast-fashion' refers to clothes in total that are brought out by changing rapidly to the trend.[4] Fast-fashion creates products by reflecting the consumers' demands, preferences, and trends, and unlike the traditional method of dividing one year into two main seasons, it seeks to continuously attract the consumers' attention and to induce them to visit stores frequently with an endless supply of new products[5]; indeed, the most significant characteristic of fast-fashion is that of providing the latest fashion styles. Most of the international fast-fashion brands continuously supply new products based on the latest trend data from up to 100 designers and buyers of headquarters. Also, at the headquarters, all posts in management and marketing, product design, distribution, store arrangement, interior, advertising, etc, are integrated and managed.

The fast-fashion brand manages the SPA(Specialty Store Retailer of Private Label Apparel) store, where 'SPA' refers to the fact that planning, production, sales, etc, all fall under the responsibility of one company, while retailers sell the products under the company's own brand name.[6] It is in fact an integration of the manufacturing industry and the distribution industry, with the middleman removed in order to supply high quality products at lower prices, and as such reduces the time taken for product supply. Such fast-fashion stores are managed on a large scale at the best location, and are equipped with interiors and an environment that make for pleasant and desirable shopping despite the low and mid-price brands on offer. As comprehension of consumer's needs, supply of trendy and diferentiated products, and reduction in the cost of production are reckoned as the keywords for success in fashion industry with the success of fast-fashion, the importance of production environment and organization and innovation on distribution is coming to the front. Therefore, it shows fast-fashion a continually spreading trend not a passing phase.[7]

2. Shopping Orientation

Shopping orientation refers to the shopper's style, focusing on a specific activity of shopping behavior.[8] This includes consumer's activities, interest and opinions connected to shopping as a complicated phenomenon related to society, the economy and way of spending leisure time.

Generally, as shopping orientation has been studied on a market segmentation basis, studies were mainly conducted by analyzing the shopping orientation elements, and by dividing up consumer groups. Consequently, shopping orientation elements were shown to be diverse, as consumers with different shopping orientations display diverse consum-

er profiles such as psychological and demographic properties. On the other hand, by dividing consumers into groups showing differences in shopping orientation, studies are conducted by further segmenting consumers. In other words, a study segmenting consumer groups into age group,[9] women,[10] and males[11] was conducted.

Gu and Lee[12] studied adult females between the ages of 20 to 48, living in the suburbs of Seoul on their sense of value as it relates to shopping orientation. They classified shopping orientation into categories which they named 'showing-off', 'browsing', 'hedonic, 'addictive' and 'independent' styles. While married women showed a high tendency towards the 'independent' style of shopping, unmarried women showed a high tendency towards the 'browsing' and 'addictive' styles. Shim, Kotisopulos and Knoll[13] carried out a survey on male subjects and reported that there was a correlation between consistent clothing attitude with physical contentment and shopping behavior. Darden & Howell[14] proved that the life cycle of the family, the person's psychological distinctions, and demographic characteristics influence a person's shopping orientation.

As a result, shopping orientation was shown to be different according to the study's subjects. Thus, it is expected that the shopping orientation of groups preferring fast-fashion will be shown differently from groups with no such preference.

3. Clothing Benefit Sought

Benefit sought is the demand or desire consumers subjectively feel related to the property of a specific product, and can be viewed as the subjective reward or expected positive result consumers hope to attain in relation to the use of the product.[15] Benefit sought is influenced by psychological prop-

erty, and can be studied through the decision making process related to the selection of a product or store by the consumer.[16] The clothing benefits sought that a consumer seeks by purchasing clothing have been identified by many studies. The common clothing benefits include the symbolization of fashion/aesthetic, social status, economy, and practicality, as well as brand value, sex appeal/feminity, figure flaw compensation, individuality, the pursuit of youth, and so forth.[17][18][19][20] From the results of many studies, it was proven that benefit is a useful factor in determining consumer sentiment as a chief factor in explaining consumer behavior.

Lee and Kim[21] classified benefit sought into 5 factors: 'fashion/social status', 'individuality', function/comfort, figure flaws compensation, and economic value. The result showed significant differences on 3 benefits sought (fashion/social status, individuality, function/comfort) according to family life cycle.

Hwang[22] investigated the internet perceived risk segments in regard to clothing benefits sought. The result showed that consumers were segmented by four groups based on internet perceived risk factors: 'privacy risk group', size risk group, low risk group, and price/social psychological risk group. She reported that the price/social psychological risk group sought fashion more than other groups.

Kim[23] examined the differences in benefits between each consumer groups divided by preferred product types(masstiege high-end products, original old high-end products). The consumers preferring original old high-end products pursued conspicuous features significantly more and the consumers preferring masstiege high end products considered aspects of aesthetic and conformity elements as more important.

Thus, since shopping orientation and clothing

benefit sought can figure out the inner profile of a specific group and consumer profile as useful factors explaining consumer behavior, this study aimed to identify the consumer profile of groups preferring fast-fashion.

Ⅲ. Method and Procedure

1. Research Issues and Definition of Terms

Research issues in order to examine differences in shopping orientation and clothing benefit sought of a group of consumers according to the preference for fast-fashion are as follows.

1) To identify the dimensions of shopping orientation.
2) To identify the dimensions of clothing benefit sought.
3) To examine the differences in shopping orientation and clothing benefit sought according to the preference for fast-fashion.

The operational definitions of terms used in this research are as follows:

1) Fast-fashion: clothes in total that are brought out by changing rapidly to the trend
2) Shopping orientation: the shopper's style, focusing on a specific activity of shopping behavior.
3) Clothing benefit sought: the demand or desire consumers subjectively feel related to the property of a specific product

2. Sample and Data Collection

Data were collected from a convenience sample of 416 women in their 20's~40's who were living in Seoul and Gyeonggi-do area in Korea. The main survey was conducted from November 15 to December 20, 2005. A total of 450 questionnaires were distributed to a convenient sample; and data from 416 respondents were submitted to analysis, excluding data of 34 respondents who did not provide answers to more than one third of questions. The respondents ranged in age from 20 to 48. The mean age of the respondents was 27.8 years. About 72.1% of respondents were located in Seoul and 27.9% of respondents were located in Gyeonggi-do. For an education variable, approximately half of the respondents (51.8%) had a bachelor's degree or higher. About 49.2% of respondents had a monthly household income between 3,000,000 won and 5,000,000 won.

3. Measurement

Questionnaire was developed based on previous research. A pilot study was conducted to test for and clarify ambiguity in wording, comprehension of the instruction and terminology. A convenience sample of 55 subjects was recruited. Based on the analysis of the pilot study, the final questionnaire was prepared.

The questionnaire consisted of the questions about shopping orientation, clothing benefit sought, and demographic variables. Respondents were asked to indicate a level of agreement with 23 shopping orientation statements. These statements were adapted from previous studies.[24][25] Eighteen questions of clothing befits sought for this study were reorganized based on the questions of Hwang[26] and questions of Lee & Kim.[27] In addition, demographic variables including age, education, residence and monthly household income were used. The preference for fast-fashion brands was studied of purchase experiences and preference after selecting and presenting five highly recognized brands(Mango, Zara, Uniqlo, H&M, Topshop) through a docu-

mentary survey and a preliminary survey. Among those surveyed with more than 1 purchasing experience, preference was measured on a 5-point scale, and respondents with more than 3 points were classified as a preference group. All questions were prepared for measurement on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree(1).

4. Data Analysis

SPSS 10.0 for windows was used to analyze the data. Factor analysis was conducted for the questions about shopping orientation and clothing benefit sought as validity test. Cronbach's *Alpha* was calculated for reliability coefficient then internal consistency was investigated for reliability of questions. In order to investigate the difference in shopping orientation and benefit sought according to preference for fast-fashion, t -test was conducted. For the analysis of respondents' demographic characteristics, frequency analysis was used.

IV. Results

1. Factors of shopping orientation and benefit sought

1) Factors of shopping orientation

In order to identify shopping orientation factor analysis was conducted and the results were summarized in <Table 1>. Shopping orientation was classified into five factors which explained about 68.3% of total variations and had significant explanatory power as the confidence level of .7 and upward. Factor 1 was composed of pleasure of shopping, shop for clothes if there is some spare time, and do shopping for change of pace. Thus, it was called as 'hedonic' factor. Factor 2 was named

as 'economic' factor since it was related to use sale period, use permanent discount stores, and allocate budget. Factor 3 was called as 'convenient' factor since it included save time, convenient transportation and sufficient amenities and resting space. Factor 4 was called as 'brand-oriented' factor since it was related to buy famous brands and trust and confidence of famous brands. Factor 5 was called as 'relation-oriented' factor since it was composed of like to talk with salespersons etc.

Hedonic factor had the highest incidence(24.43%) out of the various factors, revealing that they are the most important factors that describes the shopping orientation. As brand attachment and human relations Kim[28] classified into pleasurable shopping orientation are shown in each independent factors, brand-oriented and relation-oriented, such results mean that they are chief factors composing shopping orientation. The results mean that fashion is the most important factor explaining consumer's benefit, and economy can be explained within practicality.

2) Factors of clothing benefit sought

In order to identify clothing benefit sought factor analysis was conducted and the results were summarized in <Table 2>. Benefit sought was classified into five factors which explained about 64.43% of total variations and had significant explanatory power as the confidence level of .80 and upward. Factor 1 was composed of importance of wearing fashionable clothes, buy clothes of the latest fashion and interested in information on new trends. Thus, it was called as 'fashion' factor.

Factor 2 was named as 'social status' factor since it was related to select clothes that befit social status and buy clothes of famous brands to show social. Factor 3 was called as 'practicality'

factor since it included preference of comfortable clothes and buy inexpensive and good quality clothes. Factor 4 was called as 'figure flaw compensation' factor since it was related to cover physical handicap with clothes etc. Factor 5 was named as 'sex appeal' factor since it was related to buy-clothes that make the person look attractive to the other sex etc.

Fashion factor had the highest incidence (26.74%) out of the various factors, revealing that they are the most important factors that describes benefits sought. As fashion and social status Lee & Kim (2005) classified into fashion/pursue social status are shown in each independent factors. The results mean that fashion is the most important factor explaining consumer's benefit, and economy can be explained within practicality.

<Table 1> Factors of shopping orientation

Factors & Items	Factor Loading	Eigen value	Explai-ned Variable(%)	Cronbach's α
hedonic				
Pleasure of shopping	.87			
Shop for clothes if there is some spare time.	.81			
Browse new clothes without planning.	.79	5.96	24.43	.85
Do shopping for change of pace when feeling nervous or depressed.	.80			
Do shopping frequently to catch up with new trends.	.76			
See clothes stores when going shopping for other items.	.64			
economic				
Use sale period for the purchase of clothes.	.72			
Usually use permanent discount stores for the purchase of clothes.	.63	2.88	14.92	.79
Allocate budget in advance for the purchase of clothes	.58			
Buy clothes only when it is necessary to do so.	.62			
Invest time to buy good quality clothes at low prices.	.60			
convenient				
Use stores that can help save time.	.69			
Use clothes stores with convenient transportation.	.64	2.31	11.41	.80
Stores with sufficient amenities and resting space.	.58			
Preference of stores with various items and brands.	.55			
Use clothes stores that are convenient for shopping.	.60			
brand-oriented				
Mainly buy famous brands.	.63			
Trust and confidence in clothes of famous brands	.58	1.82	10.28	.74
It doesn't matter whether the clothes are famous brands or not. (R)	.47			
Think famous brands are likely to guarantee good quality	.53			
relation-oriented				
Like to talk with salespersons.	.62			
Prefer shopping in stores that recognize me.	.51	1.67	7.26	.73
Prefer stores where the salespersons give advice.	.47			

<Table 2> Factors of clothing benefits sought

Factors & Items	Factor Loading	Eigen value	Explai-ned Variable(%)	Cronbach's α
fashion				
It is important to wear fashionable clothes.	.83			
Buy clothes of the latest fashion to show a refined image.	.81			
Buy clothes of new fashion style ahead of others.	.77	4.98	26.74	.91
Interested in information on new trends.	.80			
Do not wear out-of-fashion clothes.	.71			
social status				
Select clothes that befit social status.	.74			
Buy clothes similar to the ones worn by the people of the class that one wishes to belong to.	.72	2.24	11.85	.86
Buy clothes of famous brands to show social status.	.63			
Think clothes reflect one's role.	.62			
practicality				
Prefer comfortable clothes to fashionable ones.	.75			
Buy clothes of good style even if they are inconvenient.(R)	.71	1.98	9.55	.89
Buy inexpensive and good quality clothes.	.59			
Mainly buy the products that are on sale.	.54			
figure flaw compensation				
Cover physical handicap with clothes.	.73			
Do not buy clothes that reveal physical handicap.	.68	1.73	8.28	.81
Choose clothes that highlight the strong points of one's shape and figure	.52			
sex appeal				
Buy clothes that make the person look attractive to the other sex.	.62	1.59	8.01	.80
Buy clothes that can emphasize my femininity.	.51			

2. The differences of shopping orientation and clothing benefit sought according to preference for fast-fashion

order to investigate the difference in shopping orientation and benefit sought according to preference for fast-fashion, t-test was conducted<Table 3>. The result showed significant differences on four shopping orientation factors. The consumer group preferring fast-fashion has a hedonic and convenient shopping orientation, and the non-preferring group has an economic and brand-oriented shopping

orientation. In Jeong & Jeong's study,[29] results that middle buying group with high frequency in buying fashion product has high shopping orientation and fashion-pursuing shopping orientation correspond with results that fast-fashion preference group has high shopping orientation and fashion-pursuing shopping orientation, and buys lot of clothes.

Meanwhile, the analysis revealed that the three benefits sought factors of fashion, social status, practicality, and sex appeal had significant differences. The consumer group preferring fast-fashion pursued fashion and sex appeal benefits sought, and

the non-preferring group pursued social status and practicality benefits.

V. Conclusion and Discussion

The shopping orientation of the consumer is composed of 5 factors: hedonic, economic, convenient, brand-oriented, and relation-oriented: while benefit sought is composed of 5 factors: fashion, social status, practicality, figure flaw compensation, and sex appeal.

As a result of comprehending the differences in the shopping orientation of each group according to their preference for fast-fashion, significant differences in 4 factors were evident. The consumer group preferring fast-fashion has a hedonic and convenient shopping orientation, and the non-preferring group has an economic and brand-oriented shopping orientation. As a result of comprehending the differences in the pursued benefits in each group according to the preference of fast-fashion, significant differences in 4 factors. The consumer group preferring fast-fashion pursued fashion and sex appeal benefits sought, and the non-preferring group pursued social status and practicality benefits. Thus,

compositions of shopping orientation and benefit were diversely composed according to studying target unlike existing studies, and significant differences in shopping orientation and benefit sought between each group according to the preference for fast-fashion were identified.

Based on the findings outlined above, we would like to propose the following to marketers: First, composing relation-oriented shopping orientation as the chief factor reflects the recent trend that consumers attach great importance to humane relations with salespersons, etc. Therefore, apparel companies should make a concerted effort towards good customer management and form relationships with the customers. Second, fashion factor proved to be the chief factor explaining clothing benefit sought. Therefore, companies should be equipped with a system of rapidly developing and selling clothes and reflecting current trends. In other words, fast-fashion is expected to grow more rapidly by coinciding with the consumer's desire to pursue fashion. Third, the fast-fashion preferring group exhibits hedonic, convenient shopping orientation, pursues the benefits of fashion and sex appeal. Thus, it is shown that the group prefers the latest fashions that are attrac-

<Table 3> Differences of shopping orientation and clothing benefits sought by preference for fast-fashion

| variables | groups | preference for fast-fashion | | |
		Preferring fast-fashion (n=189)	non-preferring fast-fashion (n=227)	t
shopping orientation	hedonic	4.01	3.20	-4.39***
	economic	3.11	3.98	-2.21**
	convenient	3.79	3.24	3.15**
	brand-oriented	2.78	3.44	4.01***
	relation-oriented	2.42	2.90	ns
benefits sought	fashion	4.13	3.22	14.15***
	social status	2.75	3.56	10.01***
	practicality	2.75	3.34	8.79**
	figure flaw compensation	3.13	3.43	ns
	sex appeal	3.04	2.56	7.99**

p*** <.001, p** <.01

tive to the opposite sex, buy a lot of clothes, and enjoy convenient and pleasant shopping. Therefore, with regard to the products, designs reflecting the latest trend and consumer desires should be endlessly developed, and from the viewpoint of contribution, distinctive and planned investment in the presentation of the store, convenient facilities, interiors, etc, along with an amicable supply of products, is required.

This study is limited by the following and suggests further study: there are limitations in generalizing the results of this study as the number of samples used was small and the study's emphasis was on females in their twenties. Therefore, for the purposes of future study, a more effective study of market segmentation, clarifying the differences by the consumers' age, sex, academic background, income, etc, should be conducted. Also, a comparison of foreign fast-fashion brands and domestic fast-fashion brands could provide useful information to marketers.

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