Media Exposure, Self and Fashion Clothing Involvement of Chinese Young People: Analyses of Effect Models

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ABSTRACT

This study develops a complicated analysis model to explore more understanding for fashion communication in Confucian culture background, especially for the latest Chinese fashion. The current study examines theoretical connections between media exposure, some psychological and social variables and fashion clothing involvement in Chinese society within a predictive framework. To better understand the relations between these psychological factors, social norms and fashion clothing involvement, this study also explores several effect models, such as moderation effect, mediation effect and mediated moderation effect.

Two studies were conducted using both quantitative and qualitative methods. In the first study, the author collected data through a random sampling survey. To cross-validate the survey findings, a second study adopting the method of group interviews was conducted.

Results indicate that fashion clothing involvement is a function of exposing to the media, achievement lifestyle, perception of success, peer influence, cognitive dissonance reduction, and comparing with others. The results also indicate the complicated relations, such as, lifestyle factor moderates the tie between media exposure and fashion clothing involvement; social comparison processes mediates the relationship between media exposure and fashion clothing involvement; self-discrepancy also influences the relationship as a moderator; notably, social comparison mediates the moderation effect from self-discrepancy. Individuals with high levels of self-discrepancy experience more negative emotion from comparing to thin-ideal image in fashion media than those with low levels. Another finding is that traditional media, particularly magazines, are as strong in explanatory power as new media (e.g. website) in the model of fashion communication.

Theoretical implications of this study provide an advance in understanding the mechanisms underlying internalization and the use of social norms, furthermore, develop the knowledge of self related theories.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION..........................................................................................................i
ABSTRACT.................................................................................................................ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.......................................................................................iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS............................................................................................iv
LIST OF TABLES......................................................................................................vii
LIST OF FIGURES....................................................................................................viii

Chapter I
Introduction ..........................................................................................................1

Chapter II

**Conceptualization**.............................................................................................3
  2.1 Fashion Clothing Involvement.........................................................................3
    2.1.1 Involvement.................................................................................................3
    2.1.2 Fashion Clothing Involvement.....................................................................3
  2.2 Psychological Antecedents of Fashion Clothing Involvement.......................5
    2.2.1 Self-Discrepancy Theory.............................................................................6
    2.2.2 Cognitive Dissonance Theory.....................................................................8
    2.2.3 Theoretical Explanation.............................................................................9
  2.3 Social Antecedents of Fashion Clothing Involvement.................................10
    2.3.1 Materialism...............................................................................................10
    2.3.2 Lifestyle....................................................................................................12
    2.3.3 Peer Influence...........................................................................................13
    2.3.4 Self and Social Comparison......................................................................14
    2.3.5 Media Exposure.........................................................................................15
  2.4 Social Context of This Research.................................................................19
    2.4.1 Consumerism............................................................................................19
    2.4.2 Consumerism in China.............................................................................20
    2.4.3 Fashion under Confucian Consumerism in China....................................23
  2.5 Research Questions.......................................................................................26
  2.6 Theoretical Model..........................................................................................30

Chapter III


Methodology ..........................................................................................................35
  3.1 Sample and Sampling Procedure .................................................................35
  3.2 Measurements .............................................................................................35
    3.2.1 Fashion Clothing Involvement ..............................................................35
    3.2.2 Media Exposure .....................................................................................36
    3.2.3 Materialism ...........................................................................................36
    3.2.4 Lifestyle ................................................................................................37
    3.2.5 Peer Influence .......................................................................................38
    3.2.6 Social Comparison ................................................................................38
    3.2.7 Cognitive Dissonance Reduction .........................................................39
    3.2.8 Self-Discrepancy ..................................................................................40
    3.2.9 Self-Dissatisfaction .............................................................................41
    3.2.10 Demographics ....................................................................................41
  3.3 Results ...........................................................................................................42
    3.3.1 Hypotheses Testing ...............................................................................42
    3.3.2 Results of Research Question 1 ............................................................47
    3.3.3 Results of Research Question 2 ............................................................48
    3.3.4 Results of Research Question 3 (Mediation Effect) ................................50
    3.3.5 Results of Research Question 4 (Moderation Effect)...............................52
    3.3.6 Results of Research Question 5 (Moderation Effect)...............................52
    3.3.7 Results of Research Question 6 (Mediated Moderation Effect) ..............53

Chapter IV

Conclusion and Discussion (Study 1) .................................................................55
  4.1 Conclusion ..................................................................................................55
  4.2 Theoretical Implications ............................................................................56
    4.2.1 Theory Developing and Supporting .....................................................56
    4.2.2 Developing Theoretical Instructed Measurement .................................57
4.2.3 Developing Theoretical Effect Models

Chapter V

Methodology (Study 2)

5.1 Research Question

5.2 Method

5.2.1 Sample

5.2.2 Group Interview

5.3 Results

5.3.1 Relation between Media Exposure and Fashion Clothing Involvement

5.3.2 Relation between Social Comparison and Fashion Clothing Involvement

5.3.3 Relation between Cognitive Dissonance Reduction and Fashion Clothing Involvement

5.3.4 Relation between Peer Influence and Fashion Clothing Involvement

Chapter

Conclusion and Discussion (Study 2)

Chapter

General Conclusion

7.1 The Cross-complementary Findings between Study 1 & 2

7.2 Contributions of This Research

7.3 Significances of This Research

7.4 Limitations

Reference

Appendix 1 Factor Analysis (Principal Component with Oblimin Rotation) on Fashion Clothing Involvement Indicators

Appendix 2 Factor Analysis (Principal Component with Oblimin Rotation) on Social Comparison Indicators

Appendix 3

Survey Questionnaire

Appendix 4

Translated Survey Questionnaire (Chinese Version)
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Sample statistics.................................................................105
Table 2 Factor analysis (principal component with
    Oblimin rotation) on lifestyle indicators......................................106
Table 3 Factor analysis (principal component with
    Varimax rotation) on self-discrepancy indicators.........................107
Table 4 Factor analysis (principal component with
    Varimax rotation) on self-dissatisfaction indicators.....................108
Table 5 Predicting self-dissatisfaction...........................................109
Table 6 Predicting cognitive dissonance reduction............................110
Table 7 Predicting fashion clothing involvement..............................112
Table 8 Predicting intramedia interaction effects
    on fashion clothing involvement.............................................114
Table 9 OLS regression: Joint effect of Striver lifestyle and
    media exposure on fashion clothing involvement........................115
Table 10 OLS regression: Joint effect of Self-discrepancy and
    media exposure on fashion clothing involvement.........................116
Table 11a Regression results for mediated moderation
    effect (X=magazine exposure)..............................................117
Table 11b Regression results for mediated moderation
    effect (X=website exposure)..............................................118