Consumption Behavior and Fashion Orientation
for Luxury Brands of Japanese and Korean Consumers

Park Jina
Ph. D., Media & Governance, Keio University

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to clarify the relationship between consumption behavior and fashion orientation for luxury brands in Japanese and Korean consumers. For this study, the author carried out a questionnaire survey with objects of 816 Koreans and Japanese, and analyzed the relations among consumer attitude, purchase behavior, lifestyle and fashion orientation. First, in Korea, all fashion orientations gave positive effects on attitude toward luxury brands, and especially it has a significant relation with factors affecting luxury brand consumption, so when luxury enterprises establish a marketing strategy for Koreans, they need to refer to fashion orientation intensively. Second, as a result of analyzing the relation between fashion orientation and purchasing behavior, it was found that fashion interest is an important factor affecting luxury brand purchasing behaviors, in both Japan and Korea. Third, Japanese luxury brand enterprises need to focus on consumers who prefer standard goods, while Korean enterprises need to focus on consumers who prefer specific brands. Lastly, in case of Japanese consumers, the more they pursue self-esteem and reasonable consumption, the higher they prefer standard goods, while the more Korean consumers pursue conspicuous consumption, hedonic consumption and self-esteem, the higher Koreans prefer specific brands.

Key Words: luxury brand, fashion orientation, consumer attitude, purchasing behavior, lifestyle

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Corresponding author: Park Jina, Tel. +82-2-2123-3100, Fax. +82-2-312-8554
E-mail: jina1017@gmail.com
I. Introduction

Luxury brand is an industry sector with approximate 100 billion dollars of market size as of 2008 and 50% or more of total sales amount of main luxury brands is occupied by Asian customers. Also among luxury brand markets the Asian market shows the highest growth rate so that Asia is the most important target in luxury brands. Above all, Japan is evaluated as the world’s largest developed market with the highest sales amount of luxury brands, and Korea shows an annual high growth rate of 10% or more in luxury market and is considered as the important target market next to the Japanese one and simultaneously a market where luxury brands targeting China market test their appeals to consumers before entering into the Chinese market in earnest.1

However, there were rare studies that analyzed luxury brand consumption in Japan and Korea: moreover, these rare prior studies are mostly conceptual and exploratory ones so that an empirical research that analyzes luxury brands consumption behaviors in two countries is required. In addition, considering that the most representative luxury brands include high-priced apparel brands such as Louis Vuitton and Chanel, studies should be focused on fashion orientation. But there was no research that analyzed the relationship between fashion orientation and luxury goods consumption. Accordingly, in this study, the author set consumer attitudes, purchase behavior and lifestyle regarding luxury brands as study factors, and researched and analyzed the relation between them with fashion orientation to try to suggest useful data on luxury marketing to luxury brand enterprises. Under a situation where luxury brand enterprises have analyzed the consumer attitude only based on demographic characteristics, this study provides new data based on fashion orientation to these enterprises so that it helps their product development and marketing strategies.

The subjects in this study are as followings:

Subject 1. This study analyzes fashion orientation of Japanese and Korean consumers.

Subject 2. This study analyzes the relationship between fashion orientation and attitudes toward luxury brands of Japanese and Korean consumers.

Subject 3. This study analyzes the relationship between fashion orientation and luxury brand purchasing behavior of Japanese and Korean consumers.

Subject 4. This study analyzes the relationship between fashion orientation and lifestyle of Japanese and Korean consumers.

II. Literature Review

Preceding researches on luxury marketing can be classified as followings.

First of all, studies on luxury brand consumers include researches on the factors affecting luxury goods purchase behavior as well as on the classification of consumers. Dubois and Duqueness6 pointed out that important motives of consumers purchasing luxury goods include scarcity, uniqueness and high price. Whereas Jonathan and Penand5 conducted an empirical consumer research on luxury brand and the normal of ‘non’ luxury goods, based on three dimensions: functionalism, experientialism and symbolic interactionism. Also Vigneron and Johnson9 classified them into 5 groups according to psychological characteristics: Veblenian, snob, bandwagon, hedonist, and