

## Comparison of Fashion Innovativeness and Opinion Leadership Scales

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**Conceptual framework.** Rogers' (2003) adoption-diffusion model contains two key constructs: innovativeness and opinion leadership. Researchers who want to measure these constructs must decide whether to develop a new scale or use an existing scale. The advantage of using an existing scale is that it has been tested and information on reliability and validity are documented. Several scales are available to measure innovativeness and opinion leadership— which one should a researcher use? The **purpose of this study** was two-fold: (a) to compare four scales for measuring fashion innovativeness and/or fashion opinion leadership that have been used to segment consumers into groups for research purposes and (b) to examine the scales for construct validity using the dependent variables fashion involvement and materialism. These two variables were chosen for comparison because they have received enough research attention that it is reasonable to hypothesize that there will be differences among consumer segments.

**Method.** The procedure was: (a) measurement of each scale's reliability and (b) correlations among them; (c) using the scales in a multivariate analysis to examine differences in fashion involvement and materialism; (d) assessing results of how groups differ in fashion involvement and materialism to arrive at a (e) a conclusion about construct validity. Four scales for measuring fashion innovativeness and/or fashion opinion leadership were compared: Batinic, Wolff & Haupt's (2008) Trendsetting Questionnaire (TSQ), Goldsmith & Hofacker's (1991) Domain Specific Innovativeness scale (DSI), Hirschman & Adcock's (1978) Fashion Innovativeness and Opinion Leadership scale (FIOL), and Flynn, Goldsmith, & Eastman's (1996) Opinion Leadership scale (OL). The mean and standard deviation from each scale were used to divide participants into four innovative/leadership (IL) groups: highest IL1; moderately high IL2; moderately low IL3 and lowest IL4. O'Cass's (2004) scale measured fashion involvement; Richins and Dawson's (1992) scale measured materialism. **Hypotheses tested were:** H1a-d: Innovative/leadership groups of TSQ, DSI, FIOL, and FL will differ in fashion involvement. H2a-d: Innovative/leadership groups of TSQ, DSI, FIOL, and FL will differ in materialism.

**Results.** Reliability was acceptable: TSQ = .961, DSI = .692, FIOL = .905, OL = .836, fashion involvement = .982 and materialism = .836. TSQ, DSI, FIOL, and OL were positively correlated ( $p < .001$ ) at a level considered substantial (.50-.69) and very strong (.70 or higher). Correlations varied from .652 to .770 indicating that from 42.5% to 60% of variance in one scale could be predicted by another scale. The highest correlation (.770) was between DSI and OL.

M/ANOVA was conducted for each scale (TSQ, DSI, FIOL, OL) using IL groups as the independent variable and fashion involvement and materialism as the dependent variables. For all four analyses (TSQ, DSI, FIOL, OL), M/ANOVA were significant at .001 and the SNK post hoc test showed that IL groups differed significantly ( $p < .05$ ) from each other in fashion

involvement and materialism (see table for mean scores--means sharing the same superscript did not differ significantly from each other.). H1a-d and H2a-d were supported.

Fashion involvement															
TSQ				DSI				FIOL				OL			
IL1	IL2	IL3	IL4	IL1	IL2	IL3	IL4	IL1	IL2	IL3	IL4	IL1	IL2	IL3	IL4
49.05				51.10				50.57				49.83			
	37.94				34.29				36.04				34.48		
		25.89				25.58				25.78				26.98	
			16.02				16.20				17.74				14.22

  

Materialism															
TSQ				DSI				FIOL				OL			
IL1	IL2	IL3	IL4	IL1	IL2	IL3	IL4	IL1	IL2	IL3	IL4	IL1	IL2	IL3	IL4
60.46				63.20				61.57				64.23			
	53.24 <sup>1</sup>				54.27				52.46 <sup>3</sup>				53.66 <sup>4</sup>		
		53.10 <sup>1</sup>				48.77 <sup>2</sup>				51.75 <sup>3</sup>				49.97 <sup>4</sup>	
			45.96				45.57 <sup>2</sup>				47.57				44.56

**Discussion/Implications.** The four scales gave similar results for fashion involvement and materialism. Highest correlation was DSI/OL which is interesting because DSI measures innovativeness and OL opinion leadership. Construct validity is achieved when (a) a construct is defined concisely; (b) an independent variable affects dependent measure(s) in the predicted manner (nomological validity); and (c) the independent variable (e.g., innovativeness) co-varies with related (e.g., opinion leadership) but conceptually distinct constructs (Brancato et al, 2006). Regarding which scale a researcher should use—these four scales have acceptable reliability and construct validity. All scales measure the same construct but it has been labeled differently.

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