

## Hedonic and utilitarian shopping motivations of male fashion leaders

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### Background and Theoretical Framework

The introduction of new fashion products is an important growth strategy for retailers to be competitive. Fashion leadership, a two dimensional construct (fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership), plays an important role in the adoption and success of new fashions as it facilitates and accelerates mass acceptance (Kang & Park-Poaps, 2010). Fashion innovators adopt new styles, interpret them and give them visibility within their social worlds, while fashion opinion leaders interact and spread the innovation both visually and verbally (Rogers, 2003). Purchase decisions are driven by certain shopping motivations categorized as utilitarian (task-oriented and timely expenditure of resources) and hedonic (multisensory enjoyable, and entertaining) (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003). Research acknowledge difference in gender based shopping behavior especially in terms of motivational factors (Kim, 2006). The purpose of this study was to empirically investigate to what extent hedonic (e.g. adventure, social, gratification, idea, role and value) and utilitarian (e.g. efficiency and achievement) shopping motivations differ between male fashion innovators and fashion opinion leaders (fashion leadership). The research hypotheses, as well as the conceptual framework, were based on shopping motivation literature and Rogers' (2003) diffusion of innovations theory.

### Method

To understand the motivational factors that compel male fashion leadership behavior, a survey research design was followed. Data was collected from a purposive sample, via a pre-tested self-administered questionnaire developed from existing scales. To measure fashion opinion leadership scales were adapted from Goldsmith et al. (1996) for fashion innovativeness and from Flynn et al. (1996) for fashion opinion leadership. Shopping motivation constructs were measured with a six hedonic dimensions scale from Arnold and Reynolds (2003) and two utilitarian dimensions (Kim, 2006). A total of 250 questionnaires were completed and analyzed. The sample consisted of males, residing and working in an urban metropolitan, aged between 19 and 58 years, with an average age of 28.6 years.

### Results

An exploratory factory analysis was performed on the items utilizing Varimax rotation. Nine factors with an eigenvalue of above 1 were retained. The nine factors were labelled: fashion innovativeness, fashion opinion leadership, achievement, efficiency, role escapism, value, social and idea shopping. A *proc fastclus* cluster analysis was performed to divide the sample into two clusters according respondents' fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership. The clusters rendered a good cubic clustering criterion of 39.726 (> 3). From the 250 respondents 30 were omitted since they did not fit into the fashion opinion leader cluster (FOL<sub>clus1</sub>; n = 117) or

fashion innovator cluster ( $FI_{clus2}$ ;  $n = 103$ ). Test statistics (Wilk's Lambda = 0.657,  $F = 22.360$  [df: 5.000, 214.000],  $p < 0.0001$ ) indicated that there is a significant difference between the means of hedonic and utilitarian shopping motivations (Wilk's Lambda = 0.814,  $F = 24.761$  [df: 2.000, 217.000],  $p < 0.0001$ ) across  $FOL_{clus1}$  and  $FI_{clus2}$ .

The MANOVA indicated that the mean score differed significantly ( $p = 0.0001$ ) between the two clusters for escapism ( $FOL_{clus1}$ :  $M = 2.622$ ; Std. error = 0.086 and  $FI_{clus2}$ :  $M = 3.49$ ; Std. error = 0.092), role ( $FOL_{clus1}$ :  $M = 2.37$ ; Std. error = 0.086 and  $FI_{clus2}$ :  $M = 2.97$ ; Std. error = 0.091), social ( $FOL_{clus1}$ :  $M = 2.39$ ; Std. error = 0.086 and  $FI_{clus2}$ :  $M = 3.02$ ; Std. error = 0.091) and idea shopping ( $FOL_{clus1}$ :  $M = 2.33$ ; Std. error = 0.076 and  $FI_{clus2}$ :  $M = 3.51$ ; Std. error = 0.081), but value shopping ( $p = 0.259$ ) did not differ significantly. Fashion innovators ( $FI_{clus2}$ ) are more motivated by hedonic shopping motivations than fashion opinion leaders ( $FOL_{clus1}$ ). In terms of utilitarian shopping motivations the mean score differed significantly ( $p = 0.0001$ ) between the two clusters for efficiency ( $FOL_{clus1}$ :  $M = 4.63$ ; Std. error = 0.083 and  $FI_{clus2}$ :  $M = 3.85$ ; Std. error = 0.088) but not for achievement shopping ( $p = 0.085$ ). Fashion opinion leaders ( $FOL_{clus1}$ ) are relatively more motivated by utilitarian aspects than Fashion innovators ( $FI_{clus2}$ ) as further tests revealed that the grand mean for efficiency was  $M = 4.24$  and for achievement shopping  $M = 4.46$ .

### Conclusions

The findings indicate that both male fashion innovators and fashion opinion leaders can be targeted through utilitarian drivers (achievement and efficiency), especially within the current economic climate. The success of new fashions will increase if retailers ensure a fashionable product offering at the right price, merchandised for easy access and convenience. By creating the perception of a quality shopping experience that will save time and resource will appeal to male fashion leaders. However, the fashion innovator still desires the more frivolous. Fashion innovators are influential consumers that can be targeted through the hedonic shopping motivations of escapism, role and idea. Retailers need to warrant a high degree of fashionability, novelty, exclusivity and relevant information in order to appeal to fashion innovators, but above all that the shopping experience is effective and the desired product is visible and easy to find.

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