

The Effect of Generation Y Male Consumers' Body Satisfaction on Purchase Intentions toward Trendy Clothing Using the Theory of Reasoned Action

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Introduction In the past five years, men's consumption of apparel in the U.S. has increased by over 21% (Bergl, 2015). The menswear market reached \$107.7 billion in sales in 2012 and is predicted to reach US\$139.2 Billion in 2017 with a growth of 29.3% from 2012 to 2017 (Chattaraman, Simmons, & Ulrich, 2013). Even though men's fashion market has been growing recently, little research has been conducted to examine men's body satisfaction and how it would affect their fashion involvement and purchase intentions towards trendy clothing. In addition, Bakewell and Mitchell (2003) suggested that more research focusing on the decision-making process of Generation Y would be necessary as Generation Y consumers have developed different shopping styles than other generations. Therefore, built upon the Theory of Reasoned Action, the purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of body satisfaction upon purchase intention toward trendy clothing among Generation Y male consumers in the U.S.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) was utilized with additional variables (i.e., body satisfaction and fashion involvement) to predict purchase intention toward trendy clothing among Generation Y male consumers. TRA proposes that both attitude and subjective norm will predict purchase intention (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005). The more positive attitude the consumers have, the more likely they are to make purchases; the stronger the consumers comply with other people, the more likely they are to purchase products to satisfy other people's expectations. *Body satisfaction* refers to the degree of satisfaction with the parts of the body perceived by an individual (Jourard & Secord, 1955); *fashion involvement* refers to the degree to which the consumers consider fashion-related activities as a significant part of their lives (O'Cass & Choy, 2008). Kim (2008) sampled both female and male college students and found that body dissatisfaction was positively related to fashion involvement in the context of online apparel shopping. Although fashion involvement, attitude, and subjective norm have been found to impact consumers' purchase intentions (e.g., Summers, Belleau, & Xu, 2006), little research has examined how body satisfaction may impact attitude and subjective norm. Thus, two hypotheses were proposed in this study:

H1: Body satisfaction negatively influences Generation Y male consumer's fashion involvement, attitudes toward trendy clothing, and subjective norm.

H2: Generation Y male consumer's fashion involvement, attitude toward trendy clothing, and subjective norm positively shape their purchase intentions toward trendy clothing.

Method Through random sampling and snowball sampling approaches, data were collected using surveys to male students at a large western university who appeared to fit the age criterion of Generation Y. The survey included questions measuring their body satisfaction, fashion involvement, attitude toward trendy clothing, subjective norm, and purchase intention toward trendy clothing, as well as demographic information. All measures were borrowed and/or modified from existing scales. Reliabilities of the scales ranged from 0.60 to 0.98. Composite scores were developed for each of the variables for further analyses.

Results A total of 83 male students participated in the study ($M_{\text{age}} = 26$). Among the participants, 80% were Caucasian, 7% Hispanic, 7% Asian American, and 6% of mixed race and other. On average, 49% of the participants reported that they would spend under \$25 a month on buying clothing; 29% would spend \$25 to \$50 a month. To test the hypotheses, three sets of simple regression and one set of multiple regression were conducted. Results showed that body satisfaction negatively influenced fashion involvement ($\beta = -0.49$, $t = -4.85$, $p < 0.001$) and attitude toward trendy clothing ($\beta = -0.31$, $t = -2.80$, $p < 0.01$) among Generation Y aged male consumers; however, body satisfaction did not influence subjective norm ($\beta = -.14$, $t = -1.20$, $p > 0.05$). Thus, H1 was partially supported. Multiple regression results showed that the overall model was significant ($R^2 = 0.38$, $F = 15.81$, $p < 0.001$). Specifically, attitude toward trendy clothing ($\beta = 0.50$, $t = 4.17$, $p < 0.001$) and subjective norm ($\beta = 0.20$, $t = 2.12$, $p < 0.05$) positively influenced purchase intention toward trendy clothing; however, fashion involvement ($\beta = 0.04$, $t = 0.37$, $p > 0.05$) did not influence purchase intention toward trendy clothing. Thus, H2 was partially supported.

Discussion and Conclusions To the researchers' knowledge, this was the first study examining the effect of body satisfaction on Generation Y male consumers' purchase intentions using the TRA framework. This study also expanded the body satisfaction literature by focusing on a different gender group (i.e., males) as many body satisfaction related studies tend to have female samples. Similar to Kim (2008), findings of this study suggested that the more satisfied male consumers were with their body, the less likely they would be involved with trendy clothing and the weaker their attitudes were toward trendy clothing. Findings also confirmed the TRA framework in that attitude and subjective influences purchase intention. Body satisfaction did not impact subjective norm which could be explained by the individualist culture in the U.S. Limitations of this study included a small sample size and convenience sampling in the college setting. Future research can investigate the relationship of body satisfaction and purchase intention toward trendy clothing using a more diverse ethnic sample as body satisfaction, attitude, and subjective norm might vary across cultures.

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