



PERSONALITY, VALUE, LIFE STYLE AND POSTMODERNISM CONSUMER BEHAVIOR: A COMPARISON AMONG THREE GENERATIONS

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Abstract

Traditionally, consumer behavior was based upon rational perspectives. Yet, the phenomenon that many consumers' behavior nowadays can not be easily reasoned gives rise to the breeding ground of post-modernism. Thereafter, the motivation of consumers has been dominated by "consumer symbolism," which clarifies purchasing products is no longer confined to the function of the products themselves. Instead, the motivation of purchasing products is piloted by product logos. In addition, post-modernism, in terms of consumption culture, pervades here and there in the modern world. The alternative terminology of younger generation becomes the most popular communicative tool. The unique culture of "Betel-nut Vendor Beauty" tremendously outlines the superficial and shallow meaning of post-modernism. The coming of the age of gender neutrality breaks traditional dualism, striding to a more diverse and harmonious orientation.

Therefore, this study aims to explore more into the phenomenon mentioned above, in the hope of manifesting 1) what impact post-modernism has on marketing and consumer behavior, 2) the meaning of the impact, 3) what change post-modernism brings to consumers, 4) which factors, lifestyle, value, and character traits, to name a few, correlate to consumers' post-modernism consumption tendency. Additionally, this study also aims to find out whether or not the post-modernism consumption tendency of consumers is related to the time and area they live in. Furthermore, the researcher hopes to detect if any difference exists among consumers of different generations and areas. This study, based upon consumers' character traits, value, and lifestyle, attempts to probe into the correlation of the three factors. Three generations are researched to testify if there's significant difference in their post-modernism consumption tendency.

This study applies 300 mailed questionnaires in which stratified sampling is used. Consumers of baby boomers, X generation, and Y generation, living respectively in northern, central, and southern part of Taiwan are targeted. In total, 284 questionnaires are answered and mailed back.

According to the result, there exists significant difference between character trait, value, and lifestyle and post-modernism tendency. What's more, there's also significant difference between different generations and post-modernism. As regards different area, there's no significant difference. Besides, post-modernism consumption tendency can be applied to predict consumer behavior.

Key words: personality, value, life style, post-modernism.

Introduction

Research Background and Motivation

Traditional consumers carry out their consumer behavior from a rational perspective. However, nowadays the consumer behavior we see cannot be explained by the rational perspective and this is the concept newly developed – Post-modernism. The starting point of all consumption is based on the so-called “consumer symbolism.” The motivation for purchasing a product is no longer limited by its function, but the implication the product symbolizes. Moreover, post-modernism can be seen everywhere in culture. The peculiar jargon spoken by the young generation becomes the most popular language. The betel nut girl uniquely seen in Taiwan best shows the implication of valuing appearance and superficialness in post-modernism culture. The upcoming of the unisex generation breaks the traditional dualism theory and has a tendency toward diversified and harmonious development.

Hence, this study tries to discuss this phenomenon and summarizes the following points as the research questions:

1. In terms of the marketing business and consumer behavior, what are the impacts and implications of post-modernism on them?
2. What is the outcome produced by post-modernism reflecting on consumer behavior?
3. What factors are related to consumers’ post-modernism consumption tendency?

4. Is consumers' post-modernism consumption tendency related to the consumers' childhood years or regions? Is there any difference in the post-modernism tendency for consumers from different generations or areas?

Research Objective

As the range post-modernism covers are broad, this study plans to focus on the marketing field. Through the discussions on relative concepts of population statistics, lifestyle, personality traits and value, a measurement model of consumers' post-modernism tendency behavior is developed. Hopefully it can provide reference for marketing personnel to use in the research of the application of post-modernism on the marketing field. In view of the above background and motivation, the main research objectives of this study are shown:

1. Review the definition and components of post-modernism and define post-modernism in marketing field and consumer behavior.
2. Try to understand the phenomena and outcomes brought by post-modernism on marketing and consumer behavior through literature review.
3. Establish a set of tools used for measuring post-modernism tendency through scale design and demonstrate it. Then discuss the possible decisive factors through questionnaire investigation.
4. Understand consumers with post-modernism tendency and their behaviors on marketing activities through empirical results.

Review of Literature

Definition and Components of Post-modernism

1. Definition of Post-modernism

The word “Post-modernism” first appeared in books of literature theory. American literary critic, Ihab Hassan, showed that “Post-modernism” was seen in some literary criticism articles in the 1930s (Shou-zhi Wang, 1998). However, the actual meaning and implication of the word was never defined and the opinions for the time of rising are widely divided. Hence, the most commonly used or seen definitions are:

Hassan (1993) explained post-modernism as “uncertain immanence.” It means post-modernism is unlike modernism which emphasizes on certainty and rationality. Hassan defined post-modernism as opposite to modern. Although it looks like post-modernism is differentiated by dualism, there are still differences between modernism and post-modernism.

Lyotard (1984) defined post-modernism as: Doubts towards “metanarratives.” It means treating scientific knowledge as linguistic games. For science that is traditionally thought as rational, people should be doubtful while keeping the model of breaking narrative knowledge in mind. People should use creative and imaginative thoughts to accept any possible uncertain and different theory or phenomenon.

Shou-zhi Wang (1998) pointed out post-modernism is “any style or a certain style after modernism. The main objective is to oppose the identity, narrate, essentialism and foundationalism of modernism. The difference is looked for but the identity is denied. The changes are looked for but the regular pattern is denied. The power is denied but new power is hoped to be formed. It is on the horns of a dilemma with contradictions everywhere.”

Based on the definitions and opinions of post-modernism from the scholars described the above, the definitions and opinions are not exactly the same. However, we can still see one similarity and that is post-modernism holds a doubtful and critic attitude towards modernism. It doubts facts, opposes rationality and criticizes consistency. It has a strong desire to get rid of the

so-called “rationality” covered by modernism and expects to view things from a creative and diversified viewpoint.

2. Components of Post-modernism

The opinions on the components of post-modernism from scholars are summarized as the following. From Hassan, he believed the components are indeterminacy, fragmentation, decanonization, self-less-ness, depth-less-ness, unrepresentable, irony, hybridization, carnivallization, participation, performance, constructionism and immanence (Xiang-fu Zheng, 1999). Baudrillard (1983) believed the components are simulation, explosion, and hyperreality. For Venkatesh (1999), the components are sign system, hyperreality, particularism and fragmentation. For Qing-zhi Li (1999), the components are duplication, double-coding, alienation and collage. For Ming-li Wen (1996), the components are promotion of individualism, anti-unification and consistency.” For Qing-song Shen (2000), the components are others (from the main moving towards the others), contrast, extrapolation and language learning.

In view of the above, the components of post-modernism can be explained essentially by three characteristics and they are uncertainty, irony and hyperreality. In terms of uncertainty, it means that people can never have a rational explanation for their own behavior. Complete contingency theory does not have a set of formula to follow. Irony means people carry out opposite behavior to fight against the strong repelling and willing-to-be released soul due to the minds that are restrained by tradition and constrained for a long time. Hyperreality is the reality world people bring themselves into for mental assurance in order to escape from the reality of material overflow. It is due to the continuous development of technology and society where people begin to feel the imbalance between material and mental status. Thus, the 11 basic

characteristics established by Hassan (1987) are used in this study as the fundamentals for measuring and discussing the post-modernism tendency.

Implication of Post-modernism on Marketing

In the book, *The System of Objects*, Baudrillard (1996) mentioned that “an object must become a symbol before it becomes the object of consumption.” A product has two sides. One is the price of the object which is the application value. The other is the price of the symbol which is the value created by the design, color, brand, relative advertisement implication and the corporation identity. Viewing from the current consumption status, we have already entered an era of symbols without knowing. Consumers establish their social status through products with symbolic implications (Song-zheng Qui-Wei and Mong-yu Lin, 2000).

The upcoming of the consumer symbolism era means people's thinking model is slowly transformed from rational to irrational. Therefore, the 11 basic characteristics of post-modernism tendency established by Hassan are used as the principal development factors for the behavior of post-modernism tendency in this study.

1. Indeterminacy

Indeterminacy includes every fuzziness, rupture and displacement that influences knowledge and society. Indeterminacy cancels the boundary and uses underdetermination and non-partial continuity to replace it (Hassan, 1987).

When choosing a product, as there is no more the purchase principle of dichotomy, consumers would find that there are more items to be chosen from. The reason is that industry operators created many diversified products in the fuzzy zone between the two binaries. Hence, consumers advocate the potential consumer behavior that allows them to choose freely. It is all due to the upcoming of the fuzzy zone.

Based on this, the definition of indeterminacy in this study is “the tendency for consumers to consume by different means (non-fixed means) under different consumption atmosphere.”

2. Fragmentation

Hassan emphasized that every existence is in fragments and there is no integrity and people try to create unique objectives through collage, combination and sticking (Hassan, 1987). Modern consumers like to pursue new, unique and personalized products to emphasize self-taste and self-image. For example, they would rearrange and combine the clothes to show unique style. Consumers do not like to wear clothes and pants of the same style, they like to mix things and to be more creative.

The definition of fragmentation in this study is “the tendency for consumers to consume based on partial and not all product cues.”

3. Decanonization

It means breaking old principles and allowing participants to set their own rules. Therefore there is no authority constraint and there is no one to follow (Hassan, 1987). The absolute conservative thinking model in the past is transformed into the open and free thinking model nowadays. People do not have to hold themselves back and can choose to represent them in diversified appearances. Individuals in post-modernism are valued differently. Consumers do not have to accept the principles given by other people passively, they can have the product they want based on how they like it.

Based on this, the definition of decanonization in this study is “the tendency for consumers to consume without following the social mainstream.”

4. Self-less-ness, depth-less-ness

It means breaking the old self, exposing every part of it and opposing self while denying the truth behind the phenomenon (Hassan, 1987). When consumers purchase a product, the first determinant is often the style and appearance of the product. As the life cycle for modern products is not long, even for mobile phones which are function-orientated, under the appeal of fashionable appearance, they become the accessories everyone must have. It explains that modern consumers love to “play with” the item more than “understand” the item. The definition of “self-less-ness, depth-less-ness” in this study is “the tendency for consumers to consume based on the appearance or non-principal object (and not the inside or the main object).”

5. Unrepresentable

It is defined as no reality, opposing to express the true self, disliking noble and imitating while pursuing low-class and emptiness (Hassan, 1987). When purchasing, modern consumers are strict about paying attention to their own privacy and do not like to tell others their purchase intention. In bookstores in Japan, if a book is purchased, the staff would cover the book at the check-out counter to avoid others to see what the purchaser purchased. In addition, it is a taboo for the sales staff to ask the purchaser what the purchase intention is. It is the marketing trend that respects the consumption rights and should be applied everywhere.

The definition of unrepresentable in this study is “the tendency for consumers to consume using non-self (not the truth self) as the basis.”

6. Irony

It means using uncertainty and diversity as the prerequisites to represent multiplicity, diversity, desultoriness, probability or even absurdity through irony (Hassan, 1987).

In the modern culture that pursues fashion, products that are absurd, weird and unique can be often seen in the market. Consumers can satisfy their wanting-to-be different mind through

purchasing this type of products. Those products explain the diversity and inclusiveness of post-modernism. It allows consumers to purchase sub-culture or non-mainstream products without being treated differently. Hence, by saying post-modernism is going from the “mainstream” to “elsewhere (others),” Qing-song Shen (2000) tried to imply that differences must be respected. By learning and tolerating, the mainstream can co-exist with the others. The phenomenon seen in the consumption culture is no longer strange. The definition of irony in this study is “the tendency for consumers to consume based on the mentality of wanting to be different (not wanting to be the same with others).”

7. Hybridization

It emphasizes on collage and duplication to mix high-class culture with low-class culture and move between now and the past to come up with diversified subject matter (Hassan, 1987). The main appeal of modern products focuses on the function. Hence, multi-functionality becomes the main appeal modern people pursue for timeliness. The appearance of the product combination is also to satisfy consumers’ diversified needs. Once the market opportunity is discovered, the scale of a product could be extended. Moreover, many brands are moving towards diversified development in order to be different from the tradition where one brand can only have certain products. Based on this, the definition of hybridization in this study is “the tendency for consumers to have preference for products of multiple types (comparing with products of a single type).”

8. Carnivallization

It is a show of losing rationality. Through carnivallization, people can create a virtual world by overthrowing the constraints from tradition and, crossing over the boundary to make life without its order (Hassan, 1987). In terms of modern culture, only impulsion and fun are true

and affirmative. The rest are psychiatric diseases and deaths. Carnivallization uses the excuses of releasing pornography, impulsion, freedom and others to aggressively attack normal value and behavioral model (Xiang-fu Zheng, 1999). From the viewpoint of marketing, consumption is not the only way people can have products. It has the function of increasing self-confidence, expressing individual, reducing frustration and avoiding unhappiness (Faber & Ronald, 1992). Therefore, people often have crazy behavior when they are extremely happy or unhappy to release the feeling in order to gain the expressing effect. They may have the senses of achievement and satisfaction from it. Strictly speaking, the pursue of fashion is a performance of losing rationality. It only explains that the affection part of this behavior is greater than the rational part. As there is the affection part in it, people are more enthusiastic to do things they don't normally do. Based on this, the definition of carnivallization in this study is "the tendency for consumers to have preference for happy mentality (not rational and strict mentality).

9. Participation, Performance

Due to the uncertainty of post-modernism, things are inconclusive. Therefore, it welcomes everyone to take part and work together to gain results even though this kind of behavior still is inconclusive. However, it emphasizes on participation. It is a way to self-observe, self-discover and self-intoxicate (Hassan, 1987).

The creation of fashion is originally participated by groups of people. Fashion must gain group support and identity before the foundation and trend of it are established (Richard, 1976). In terms of the development and the releasing of a new product, it is first used by a small group of people and slowly accepted by the majority of people. Of course, if consumers' preference is met by the product function more, the probability of taking over the market is higher. However,

consumers with post-modernism tendency do not only care about the liking of the product, they emphasize the atmosphere of group participation.

The definition of consumers' participation tendency in this study is "the tendency for many consumers (not single consumer) to participate in the consumption decision making process during consumption."

10. Constructionism

As technology is improving day by day, the world is on its way to be designed and created by people. The sense of reality is slow disappearing and a virtual reality world is created. The application of it is based on the uncertain and amorphous concepts (Hassan, 1987). In terms of the relationship between reality and experience, Venkatesh (1999) addressed a four-stage evolution. The first stage is to carry out actual experience along with reality; the second stage is to work with the descriptions of experience and reality; the third stage is to have a symbol for the consumption reality; the fourth stage is to treat the symbol as the reality. It implies that the real world we see now is actually the virtual world consisted of symbols. The atmosphere factor is the type of virtual world that influences consumers' purchase decision (Hansen, 1972). The definition of "Constructionism" in this study is "the tendency for consumers to consume by virtual means rather than physical means."

11. Immanence

It refers to the ability of the soul and body to continue growing through symbols. It means that individual nowadays fulfills self realization and expands the ability of self development with help from language or symbol (Hassan, 1987). Consumers nowadays are different from traditional consumers whose main appeals for products are function and efficacy. Apart from the basic functions, they have the demand for symbols. It is because consumers wish

to obtain self-identity and show self-image through the consumption of symbols (Grubb & Harrison, 1967). “Symbolic Self-Completion Theory” says that consumers try to look for symbols their self-image lacks of (Wicklund & Gollwitzer, 1982). Teenagers like to purchase basketball shoes in the name of Michael Jordon as they want to have the outstanding image like Jordon on the basketball field. Based on this, the definition of immanence in this study is “the tendency for consumers to consume on the basis of satisfying internal self-demands.” The post-modernism tendency behaviors are developed and listed in the following table based on the 11 post-modernism characteristics addressed by Hassan. Please see Table 2-1.

Table 2-1. Examples for Post-modernism Tendency Behaviors

Characteristics of Post-modernism	Post-modernism Tendency Behaviors
Indeterminacy	● Even for the same type of product, the consumption means for the first time and the second time are often very different. ● Individuals use different decision making means to purchase the same product.
Fragmentation	● Consumers must know the product very well before purchasing. ● When purchasing a product, consumers often consider carefully and compare with others before making decision.
Decanonization	● Individuals like to purchase “unique and different” products. ● Once someone else has purchased the same product, consumers would not like purchase it again.
Self-less-ness, depth-less-ness	● Consumers like to purchase products with nice looking appearances and do not value the function of the product as much. ● If consumers like the product and can afford it, they would make the purchasing decision quickly.
Unrepresentable	● Consumers like to consume products which are not very practical but are symbolic and have unique implications. ● Logos and marks are important factors that influence individual’s purchase decision.
Irony	● When choosing a product, individuals do not like to tell others their intrinsic intention. ● Individuals like to consume products that are opposite to

	the mainstream products. ● If an individual likes the product, it does not matter if others make fun of them.
Hybridization	● Individuals think less is beauty and they don't like mixed-and-matched products. ● Consumers like simple and fixed products.
Carnivallization	● Consumers like to purchase interesting or even funny products. ● Individuals like to be happy, stressless and mindless when purchasing products.
Performance, participation	● Consumers have the habit of gathering everyone's opinions before deciding which product to purchase. ● Consumers like to deliberate everyone's suggestions before purchasing the product. ● Shopping with friends and families are better than making decisions alone.
Constructionism	● Individuals can accept product concepts that are unreal and virtual. ● Consumers think paying attention to usefulness is an old fashion concept.
Immanence	● Consumers like to purchase or collect products that have particular patterns or symbols.

Research Method

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire is designed by two experts who are majors in marketing. Pre-test is carried out to 30 subjects in the baby boom, X generation and X generation to make sure the meaning of the words applied is correct before the questionnaire is finalized. The questionnaire is divided into 5 sections: 1 – personality traits; 2 – important people, things and objects in life; 3 – lifestyle; 4 – consumption mode; 5 – consumption behavior.1. Functional definition of the concepts.

Consumption Mode

1. Indeterminacy - It is the tendency for consumers to consume differently in different consumption environment.

2. Fragmentation - It is the tendency for consumers to consume based on partial and not all product cues.
 3. Decanonization - It is the tendency for consumers to consume without following the social mainstream.
 4. Self-less-ness, depth-less-ness - It is the tendency for consumers to consume on the basis of appearances or non-principal object (and not the inside or the main object).
 5. Unrepresentable - It is the tendency for consumers to consume using non-self (not the truth self) as the basis.
 6. Irony - It is the tendency for consumers to consume based on the mentality of wanting to be different (not wanting to be the same with others).
 7. Hybridization - It is the tendency for consumers to have preference for products of multiple types (comparing with products of a single type).
 8. Carnivallization - It is the tendency for consumers to have preference for happy mentality (not rational and strict mentality).
 9. Participation, performance - It is the tendency for many consumers (not single consumer) to participate in the consumption decision making process during consumption.
 10. Constructionism - It is the tendency for consumers to consume by virtual means rather than physical means.
 11. Immanence - It is the tendency for consumers to consume on the basis of satisfying internal self-demands.
- (b) Consumption Behavior - It is the behavior consumers have toward the products, popularization, channel and price of a marketing combination.

Questionnaire Design of the Concepts

Section 1 – Consumption mode:

The questions of this concept are developed and constructed based on the 11 basic characteristics of post-modernism addressed by Hassan. In order to obtain the subjects' detailed attitude tendency regarding post-modernism, the Likert 7-point scale is used for measurement. 1= Strongly disagree; 2= Disagree; 3=Slightly disagree; 4= No comment; 5=Slightly agree; 6= Agree; 7= Strongly agree.

Section 2 – Consumer Behavior:

This concept uses the marketing 4P as the focus and the questions are composed by referring to the relative theories of 4P described in Principles of Marketing written by Kotler and Armstrong (1999). There are 23 questions and the Likert 7-point scale is used for measurement. 1= Strongly disagree; 2= Disagree; 3=Slightly disagree; 4= No comment; 5=Slightly agree; 6= Agree; 7= Strongly agree.

Samples and Sample Extraction

Stratified sampling is used by means of postage to consumers in the baby boom, X generation and Y generation in Northern, Central and Southern Taiwan. There are 300 questionnaires distributed in which there are 284 effective returned samples.

Data Analysis

Based on previous description, the statistical software, SAS, is used as the tool for analyzing the statistical data in this study. The statistical analyses used are as follow.

Table 4-1. Summary of Samples Returned

	Baby boom			X generation			Y generation		
	Number of returned samples	Number of samples distributed	Return rate	Number of returned samples	Number of samples distributed	Return rate	Number of returned samples	Number of samples distributed	Return rate
Northern	60	64	93.75%	56	56	100%	18	18	100%
Central	35	39	89.74%	34	34	100%	9	11	81.81%
Southern	32	36	88.89%	31	31	100%	9	11	81.81%

1. Descriptive Statistics

The main purpose is to understand the subjects' general outline of the concepts.

2. Inferential Statistics

It uses ANOVA, Analysis of Correlation, Factor Analysis and Cluster Analysis to carry out verification.

Empirical Results and Analysis

Construction Analysis

1. Consumer Behavior

In terms of consumer behavior, seven factors are extracted after applying Factor Analysis. The factors are “quality and service orientation,” “famous brand orientation,” “low price orientation,” “sales promotion orientation,” “promotion orientation,” “channel and service orientation” and “trial and preference orientation.” The Cronbach' α for the factors are between 0.481 and 0.786 which shows the reliability of the scale is above standard and has a certain degree of steadiness.

2. Post-modernism Tendency

The concepts of the scale are constructed based on the 11 characteristics established by Hassan. Factor Analysis is not applied to the concepts. As shown in Table 4-5, “indeterminacy” is covered by question 1 and 2 and the Cronbach’ α is 0.760; “fragmentation” is covered by question 3 and 4 and the Cronbach’ α is 0.812; “decanonization” is covered by question 5 and 6 and the Cronbach’ α is 0.549; “self-less-ness, depth-less-ness” is covered by question 7 and 8 and the Cronbach’ α is 0.362; “unrepresentable” is covered by question 9 and 10 and the Cronbach’ α is 0.516; “irony” is covered by question 11, 12 and 13 and the Cronbach’ α is 0.557; “hybridization” is covered by question 14 and 15 and the Cronbach’ α is 0.675; “carnivallization” is covered by question 16 and 17 and the Cronbach’ α is 0.302; “participation, performance” is covered by question 18, 19 and 20 and the Cronbach’ α is 0.825; “constructionism” is covered by question 21 and 22 and the Cronbach’ α is 0.554; and “immanence” is covered by question 23.

Overall, the Cronbach’ α of the scale are between 0.302 and 0.825 which meet the lowest standard of reliability (above 0.3). Hence, the scale has internal consistency.

Correlation Analysis between the Concepts and Post-modernism Tendency

Section1. The impacts of Post-modernism Tendency on Consumer Behavior

This section mainly focuses on discussing the impacts the 11 characteristics of post-modernism tendency have on consumer behavior. Stepwise regression analysis is applied to find out the relationship.

As shown in Table 4-14, the concepts of consumer behavior are divided into “quality and service orientation,” “famous brand orientation,” “low price orientation,” “sales promotion orientation,” “promotion orientation,” “channel and service orientation” and “trial and preference

orientation.” Stepwise regression analysis is applied to each of these concepts with the 11 characteristics of post-modernism tendency.

“Participation, performance” is the most obvious characteristic that explains post-modernism tendency. “Famous brand orientation” and “channel and service orientation” are the two consumer behavior concepts that have post-modernism tendencies. Detailed analysis results are summarized in Table 4-14.

Section 2. Difference Analysis of Post-modernism Tendency for Consumers of Different Generation and Region.

This section mainly focuses on discussing consumers from three generations (baby boom, X generation, Y generation) and three regions (northern, central, southern region) and whether or not their post-modernism tendencies would be significantly different due to differences in generation and region. One-way ANOVA is applied to carry out tests for consumers from three generations and three regions. The analysis results are shown below:

1. Differences in Post-modernism Tendency for Consumers from Different Generations

Table 4-14. Stepwise Regression Analysis Results for the impact of Post-modernism Tendency on Consumer Behavior

Dependent variable Independent Variable	Quality and service orientation	Famous brand orientation	Low price orientation	Sales promotion orientation	Promotion orientation	Channel and service orientation	Trial and preference orientation
α	6.977***	2.304***	3.115***	1.589***	2.766***	2.452***	4.581***
1 Indeterminacy				0.148***			
2 Fragmentation	-0.306***					-0.115***	
3 Decanonization						0.153***	
4 Self-less-ness, depth-less-ness		0.107**			0.303***	0.182***	
5 Unrepresentable		0.256***				0.126***	
6 Irony							-0.119**
7 Hybridization	-0.112***						

8 Carnivallization			0.132*				0.110**
9 Participation, performance		0.095**	0.234***	0.157***			0.204***
10 Constructionism		0.098**		0.274***		0.097*	
11 Immanence							
F value	51.33	21.77	10.80	17.04	16.50	17.94	13.80
P value	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001
R ²	0.2962	0.2646	0.0813	0.1738	0.0631	0.2712	0.1455

Note:* : $p < 0.10$, ** : $p < 0.05$, *** : $p < 0.01$

Table 4-15. Difference Analysis Result of Post-modernism Tendency for Consumers from Different Generations

dependent variable independent variable	Model F	P value	Baby Boom Mean	X Generation Mean	Y Generation Mean
1 Indeterminacy	1.35	0.261	3.804	3.899	4.208
2 Fragmentation	14.44	0.0001***	2.699 (L)	3.515 (H)	3.208
3 Decanonization	6.99	0.001***	3.207 (L)	3.530	4.071 (H)
4 Self-less-ness, depth-less-ness	2.28	0.104	3.295	3.530	3.750
5 Unrepresentable	1.56	0.211	3.757	3.861	4.194
6 Irony	1.09	0.336	3.535	3.585	3.843
7 Hybridization	3.79	0.024**	2.752 (L)	3.134 (H)	3.111
8 Carnivallization	1.17	0.311	4.411	4.534	4.708
9 Participation, performance	1.52	0.220	4.312	4.206	4.630
10 Constructionism	4.37	0.014**	3.009 (L)	3.377	3.597 (H)
11 Immanence	1.69	0.186	3.602	3.843	4.083

Note:* : $p < 0.10$, ** : $p < 0.05$, *** : $p < 0.01$

As shown in Table 4-15, among the 11 characteristics of post-modernism tendency, four

of them are significantly different for consumers from different generation. The characteristics are “fragmentation,” “decanonization,” “hybridization” and “constructionism.” Comparing with consumers in the X generation and Y generation, consumers in the baby bloom are the ones that do not show post-modernism tendency.

Conclusion and Suggestions

Conclusion

Based on the results of the analyses in the prior sections, conclusions are drawn and summarized in this section in the order of Factor Analysis, Descriptive Statistical Analysis and Research Hypotheses (including correlation analysis, ANOVA and stepwise regression analysis).

1. Factor Analysis

Factor Analysis is performed on each of these five concepts: personality traits, value, lifestyle, consumer behavior and post-modernism tendency. The Cronbach' α of these five concepts are all greater than 0.365 which means the reliability of the scales has a certain degree of steadiness (Cronbach' $\alpha > 0.3$).

2. Descriptive Statistical Analysis

In terms of post-modernism tendency, most of the subjects show insignificant level of it. In terms of consumer behavior, the analysis shows that “quality and service orientation” and “trial and preference orientation” gained general recognition. In other words, when consumers carry out consumer behavior, they still value the product quality, sales service and after service; before they purchase a product, they would use the trial sample first in the hope to have more experience and understanding of the new product.

Suggestion and Contribution

1. Suggestion and Contribution for Follow-up Research

(a) Try to give a clear definition and characteristic of the word “Post-modernism”

The definition of the word “Post-modernism” established by scholars is widely divided and the characteristic of it is different according to different opinions the scholars have. Hassan’s 11 characteristics of post-modernism are used to derive the implications of consumer behavior and are cited by other scholars. However, if different definitions or characteristics are adopted by other researchers, the research results would be different. Hence, follow-up researchers must find the best definition and characteristics of post-modernism to stabilize the research direction.

(b) Enhance the viewpoint of post-modernism in terms of marketing

Post-modernism was a theory developed in the perspectives of literature, arts and philosophy. Hassan’s 11 characteristics extracted in this study are also from the theory. There are not many researches related to the literacy part of post-modernism let along the application in the marketing field. Hence, in terms of post-modernism consumer behavior, this study is the exploratory research. Hopefully this study can have the effect of breaking the ice and the discussion and research of post-modernism in terms of marketing by follow-up researchers can be increased so that the trend of consumer behavior can be grasped better in the era of consumer symbolism.

(c) Enhance the measurement tool of post-modernism tendency

Hassan’s 11 characteristics of post-modernism are used to develop the measurement scales in this study. Follow-up researchers can establish measurement scales according to the characteristics addressed by experts with public credibility in order to compare with or modify the scales of this study. Hopefully a measurement tool that is more appropriate for post-modernism tendency can be established to make it more reliable and creditable externally.

(d) Cross analyze the concepts in this study that have post-modernism tendency

Follow-up researchers can perform correlation analysis between personality traits, value and lifestyle that have post-modernism tendency and the concepts of consumer behavior. Marketing staff can then carry out detailed marketing 4P to consumers that belong to the above categories. (Note: The consumer behavior scale of this study is established from the framework of marketing 4P)

(e) Carry out further research and verification to the topics addressed in the discussion.

2. Suggestion and Contribution to Practice Field

As previous section described, although the consumers with post-modernism tendency are contradictory, fragmented, sometimes rational and sometimes irrational, it is found that the post-modernism tendencies for consumers of different generation, personality traits, value and lifestyle are significantly different. In other words, when carrying out marketing researches related to groups with post-modernism tendency in the practice field, the analysis results of the four concepts described above can be considered to begin with. Hopefully the consumer behavior for consumers with post-modernism tendency can be grasped more definitely.

The following shows the specific marketing strategies for consumers who have the most post-modernism tendency under each concept.

(a) Personality traits

Consumers who have “conservative and anxious tendency,” “fashionable and open tendency” and “incautious tendency” are the groups of people who have post-modernism tendency. In terms of consumers who have conservative and anxious tendency, non-mainstream or unique products suit their fancies. Moreover, by making group consumption image or guiding them with groupthink can also catch their consumption mood. In terms of consumers who have fashionable and open tendency, business owners can design products that have symbolic

implications or humanistic appeals, especially products with nice or unique appearances, to attract those consumers. However, for consumers who have incautious tendency, consumption atmosphere that is relaxing and free-thinking must be created and the onsite service staff should provide consultation on their own initiative. Moreover, the product design should focus on nice appearances which can be represented by advertisements or wordings.

(b) Value

“Youth and appearance value” is the concept that has most post-modernism tendency. For this group of people, products that are unconventional and nice looking and have unique meanings can attract them the best. Marketing staff can use the atmosphere created in the advertisement to give the products special meanings. In addition, consumers of this group value peer relationship very much. Hence, creating a theme that is recognized by peers can catch their attention which is a very important marketing start point.

(c) Lifestyle

“Fashion and foreignism worshipping concept” is the concept with the most post-modernism tendency. Consumers with this lifestyle like to use foreign and fashionable products to show they are leading the fashion. Business owners can hire foreign idols to be the product spokesmen. The product content should be shown in foreign languages and famous foreign cities can be used as the background.

(d) Consumer Behavior

“Famous brand orientation” and “channel and service orientation” are the concepts with the most post-modernism tendencies. Consumers that are under famous brand orientation are especially particular about the appearance and that delicate packaging is the most popular. They also like products with brand symbolism. They prefer collective bargaining or consuming

together to obtain identification or to show off to friends. They also like products that come in virtual forms. Hence, marketing staff can use high price or political celebrities as the market division to promote the brand status and imply that high technology means high standard to enhance the rank of virtual products.

For consumers under channel and service orientation, they often purchase desired products based on the channel. It is very different from the general population who often decide what to buy first and the channel later. Therefore, for these consumers, the positioning of the channel itself must be very clear and definite. The store arrangement must be in accordance with the characteristics of the product and it is better represented as a main theme. For example, franchised stores must have the unique franchised store style; convenient stores must have convenient goods; department stores are the channels for high-class products. By doing so, the channel attribute can have effects on consumers of this type.

(e) Generation Difference

Apart from consumers in the baby boom who have the least post-modernism tendency, the means for consumers in the X and Y generations regarding “fragmentation,” “hybridization,” “decanonization” and “constructionism” are the highest. In terms of consumers in the X generation, marketing staff can gain their responses through media means that are fragmented and reasonless. As for the product design, the more diversified choices provided means the better they respond. In terms of consumers in the Y generation, the uniqueness of the product can be enhanced to create an atmosphere that is new and unconventional to allow them to have the sense of superiority of being different. Moreover, as the Y generation likes to surf on the internet, the products can be transacted by virtual means and the website should be cool and fashionable in order to be eye catching.

The marketing strategies described above are the viewpoints addressed by this study regarding the research results. They are only for reference. Detailed problems await follow-up researchers to solve in order to allow marketers to understand and grasp post-modernism tendency more. Hopefully effective marketing strategies can be established subsequently to correspond to the problems.

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