



Cross-national market segmentation in the fashion industry

Cross-national
market
segmentation

A study of European, Korean, and US consumers

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Abstract

Purpose – To discover whether there are market segments for the fashion industry that cut across countries and respond differently to advertising messages.

Design/methodology/approach – A survey was administered to Korean, European, and US female consumers. Cluster analysis is used in an attempt to identify lifestyle segments that cut across cultures.

Findings – Four cross-national market segments are identified. These segments can be labeled as follows: “information seekers,” “sensation seekers,” “utilitarian consumers,” and “conspicuous consumers.” Findings also reveal that fashion lifestyle segment had a stronger effect on the reaction to a set of three ads for a major global fashion company (one each from the French, Korean, and US editions of *Vogue* magazine) than did consumer nationality.

Practical implications – Findings suggest that it is viable and perhaps desirable for global marketers in the fashion industry to target cross-national market segments as opposed to developing individual segmentation schemes for each country.

Originality/value – Relatively few studies examining the viability of cross-national segmentation have been studies. The study provides insight on building global brand equity and suggests standardized advertising is appropriate for some fashion marketers.

Keywords Advertising, Market segmentation, Fashion industry, Europe, South Korea, United States of America

Paper type Research paper



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Introduction

Given the rapid growth of global markets and an optimistic outlook for their future, researchers and practitioners have a keen interest in understanding the process of building strong brands in foreign market environments. An important issue in global branding is how to advertise a brand to establish equity that will lead to sustainable competitive advantages (Sandler and Shani, 1992; Yoo *et al.*, 2000). In an era of rapid globalization, an important question – and one that is little studied – is whether market segments that cut across national boundaries can be targeted with global advertising campaigns. The focus of the study presented here is on whether cross-national market segments exist in the fashion industry and, if so, whether these segments can be effectively reached via the use of a global advertising campaign.

Sales of global fashion brands are expanding rapidly in growing Asian markets such as China, Japan, and South Korea because young consumers in those countries are brand- and fashion-conscious (Bryck, 2003; Morton, 2002). A consumer preference for brands with a global image, even when quality and value are not objectively superior, has been proposed as a reason for companies to consider global brands (Shocker *et al.*, 1994; Taylor and Raymond, 2000). Therefore, a company needs to identify the response of consumers worldwide to its global advertising for a specific consumer segment. Although several researchers have suggested the need to cross-culturally analyze reactions to different types of advertisements (dePelsmacker and Geuens, 1998; Yoo and Donthu, 2002), few studies have been undertaken to assess differences in consumer attitudes toward global advertisements based on segments that cut across nations.

Evidence increasingly suggests that firms using a global strategy have an advantage in building brand equity (Best global brands, 2006). Although many studies have focused on product standardization, advertising standardization, and global marketing strategy (GMS), relatively few have examined whether cross-national segments can be effectively targeted by marketers (Taylor, 2005). The fashion industry for women is particularly relevant in terms of examining the feasibility of cross-national segmentation. Research indicates that females tend to be more fashion-conscious, be more knowledgeable about fashion brands (Blyth, 2006), and read more fashion magazines than male consumers (Chamblee *et al.*, 1993; Putrevu, 2004). This implies that marketers need to pay special attention to women when expanding and advertising fashion brands to international markets.

This study explores two key research questions in this regard. They are:

RQ1. Are there cross-national lifestyle segments that can be targeted by marketers of women's fashion merchandise?

RQ2. What type of advertising for fashion merchandise is most effective with women of different lifestyle segments and nationalities?

The latter research question is aimed at providing insight into how marketers can effectively position brands and develop better marketing communication strategies.

Literature review

Global advertising: a cross-cultural perspective

With increased globalization and advances in information technology, successful marketers are adapting and evolving their strategies to compete in a rapidly changing marketplace. An important issue in GMS is building a powerful brand.

One key mechanism for differentiating and effectively positioning a brand is the use of standardized advertising across cultures (Pae *et al.*, 2002; Reece, 2005). Advertising can be standardized in terms of the general strategy or specific executions used.

The fashion industry is characterized by a considerable amount of standardized advertising. In fact, global advertising in fashion magazines such as *Vogue* and *Elle* helps create the image of a designer brand name for fashion goods, such as apparel, accessories, and perfume, and has been used by many leading firms (Blyth, 2006). Increasingly, some fashion marketers have discovered that their advertising is directly linked to retail sales and strong retail performance (Callan, 2006). At the same time, global strategic advertising is aggressively expanding to Europe, Asia, and the USA. In the case of Burberry, its global expansion helped increase sales by 13 percent in the second-half of that year (Callan, 2006).

With an increase in the number of large multinational corporations, marketers endeavor to develop new markets or extend into international markets by creating a strong image or recognition of their brand for foreign consumers or buyers (Best global brands, 2006; Koudelova and Whitelock, 2001; Pae *et al.*, 2002; Whitelock and Rey, 1998). According to Pae *et al.* (2002), brand familiarity plays a significant role in consumers' perceptions of local and foreign-sourced ads in the global marketplace, leading to greater expectations for and acceptance of standardized advertising for brands the consumer is familiar with. For example, global advertising for a well-known fashion brand was perceived to be fairly standardized in Korea and the USA (Jo and Hong, 1998). Park (2001) also found standardized expression patterns in global ads for clothing (e.g. men's wear, women's wear, casual wear) in *Vogue* published in Korea and the USA.

Recently, a considerable number of studies have examined the standardization or localization of advertising in Asian markets (Pae *et al.*, 2002; Reece, 2005; Taylor and Raymond, 2000). From a cross-cultural perspective, it has been argued that standardized ads can have different effects in different cultures. Therefore, global firms must track advertising effectiveness for alternative positioning strategy in the various nations. Consequently, it becomes more important to examine whether there are some segments cutting across national boundaries that can be reached with standardized advertising.

Fashion lifestyle segmentation

In recent years, it has been suggested that we are seeing the emergence of a new group of consumers who have similar preferences and buy similar brands that are promoted globally as well as in local media. These new consumers have been referred to as "global consumers," who exhibit similarities to people in other nations in terms of lifestyle and consumption patterns (Hassan *et al.*, 2003). Although differences abound in music, values, and cultures, some have argued that commercial advertising on mass media (e.g. TV, magazine, and internet) has contributed to a global consumer culture, particularly for global brands (Arnould and Thompson, 2005). In various contexts, it is important to examine whether evidence really shows support for the notion of a global consumer context. Thus, again, it is important to examine whether fashion segments cut across national boundaries.

Lifestyle segmentation has received considerable attention in fashion products, such as clothing, accessories, and sportswear. Fashion lifestyle is defined as consumer

attitudes, interests, and opinions related to the purchase of fashion products (Gutman and Mills, 1982; Ko *et al.*, 2006). In a study of the female apparel market in the USA, Shim and Bickle (1994) outlined three fashion lifestyle segments: symbolic/instrumental users, who are younger, innovative, fashion-conscious, and represent a higher social-class level; practical/conservative users, who are oriented more toward comfort and function than toward fashion or appearance and are not likely to enjoy shopping; and apathetic users, who tend to patronize discount stores. In another study from the USA, Kim and Lee (2000) identified six fashion lifestyles – price-consciousness, fashion-consciousness, information seeking, self-confidence, attitude toward local stores, and time-consciousness – and was related to different segments that sought benefits from catalog shopping. Lee *et al.* (2004b) divide TV home shoppers into four segments based on fashion lifestyle – the aesthetic group, the economic fashion innovator group, the showy uncritical group, and the fashion-uninterested group – and discuss their different responses to product advertising on TV home shopping. Finally, Ko and Mok (2001) found that fashion lifestyles have significant effects on advertising effectiveness in an internet shopping context (Ko and Park, 2002).

As mentioned previously, fashion lifestyle is considered an important variable in predicting consumer shopping behavior for products or brands in retail environments. It is important to note, however, that no stable and accepted set of lifestyle segments has been identified by prior academic research. Perhaps, most important in regard to the objectives of this study, prior studies have not examined whether fashion lifestyle segments cut across cultures, with almost no research on the effect of specific advertising strategies on various fashion lifestyle segments.

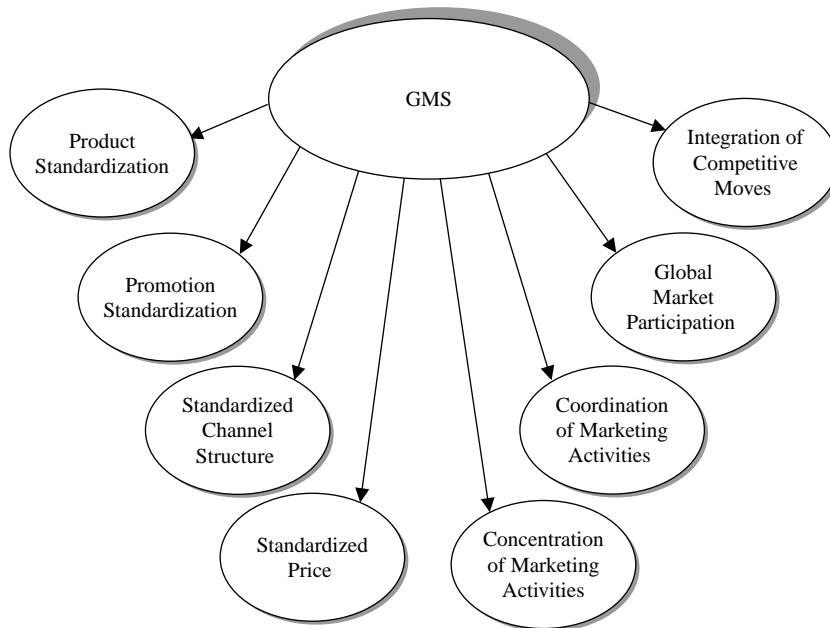
Research model and hypotheses

Theoretical framework

A growing consensus holds that when environments for standardization are sufficiently similar, marketers must consider strategies that contribute to a uniform brand image and, in turn, increase brand equity (Okazaki *et al.*, 2006). The GMS model developed by Zou and Cavusgil (2002) provides a useful theoretical framework for examining the opportunities created by global marketing and advertising (Figure 1). This model suggests that when external pressures force firms to attempt to capitalize on market interdependencies and seek out cross-market synergies and cost savings through economies of scale, firms that follow a GMS will be more successful than those who do not.

Specifically, Zou and Cavusgil's study demonstrates that MNCs that follow a GMS are, on average, more successful in terms of financial and strategic performance than those that do not, arguably due to competitive advantage built through economies of scale, additional synergies, and cross-subsidization (Levitt, 1983; Jain, 1989; Yip, 1995). In a world economy that continues to become increasingly intertwined, Zou and Cavusgil assert that GMS will only grow in importance over time.

The GMS model incorporates eight broad dimensions as shown in Figure 1, each of which represents a marketing action that is under the control of managers. The dimensions are: product standardization, promotion standardization, standardized price, standardized channel structure, concentration of marketing activities (degree to which marketing activities are deliberately performed in a few countries), coordination



Source: Zou and Cavusgil (2002)

Figure 1.
GMS: a broad
conceptualization of global
marketing strategy

of marketing activities, global market participation, and integration of competitive moves by the marketer.

In the context of this study, GMS theory would suggest that external pressures are leading firms to consider appealing to cross-market segments and use global advertising strategies. Consistent with Zou and Cavusgil's general findings about the impact of the use of a GMS on performance, Okazaki *et al.* (2006) found that firms using standardized advertising in the EU reported achieving higher levels of advertising effectiveness. Thus, GMS would suggest that standardized advertising in the fashion industry is becoming both more necessary and more effective due to globalization trends. The GMS perspective would also argue that the emergence of the "global consumer" should lead marketers to seek out cross-market segments in order to be able to implement more truly global strategies characterized by more standardization of the product offering, promotion, and other marketing variables. Thus, our first prediction is:

H1. Distinct lifestyle segments exist that cut across consumers of different nationalities.

GMS theory is used as a basis to predict the relative impact of fashion lifestyle segment vs nationality in terms of reaction to global advertising appeals. Of particular interest is whether lifestyle segment is a more important driver of the effectiveness of ads than nationality. Our prediction is that both of these variables (lifestyle segment and nationality) will matter, but that, consistent with GMS, lifestyle segment will actually be more strongly correlated with the effectiveness of a specific advertising strategy. Thus:

- H2. Attitude toward the ad. for global advertising of a fashion-based product is influenced by both the fashion lifestyle (H2a) segment and nationality (H2b). However, the impact of fashion lifestyle is stronger (H2c).
- H3. Attitude toward the brand for global advertising of a fashion-based product is influenced by both fashion lifestyle (H3a) segment and nationality (H3b). However, the impact of fashion lifestyle is stronger (H3c).
- H4. Purchase intention for global advertising of a fashion-based product is influenced by both fashion lifestyle (H4a) segment and nationality (H4b). However, the impact of fashion lifestyle is stronger (H4c).

The research model shown in Figure 2 was developed to describe our general predictions about the effectiveness of standardized advertising for fashion brands. Attitude toward ad., attitude toward brand, and purchase intention served as the dependent variables in global advertising effectiveness for the three nations' ads (Korea, France, and the USA). Fashion lifestyle segments and nationality served as independent variables for examining their effects on attitude toward ads, attitude toward brand, and purchase intention among female consumers in the Korean market, based on the logic provided by GMS theory.

Methodology

The study site

The data for this study were collected in Seoul, Korea. One reason for selecting Korea as the site for the study is that it is a well-developed nation of 48 million potential consumers with an average estimated per capita GDP in 2005 of over US\$20,000; thus, many consumers are able to afford fashion-based goods (*World Fact Book*, 2005). In addition, Korea's consumption of imported products has rapidly increased in various categories, and its consumers have widespread familiarity with global fashion brands (Chung and Pysarchik, 2000). An additional advantage of collecting the data in the

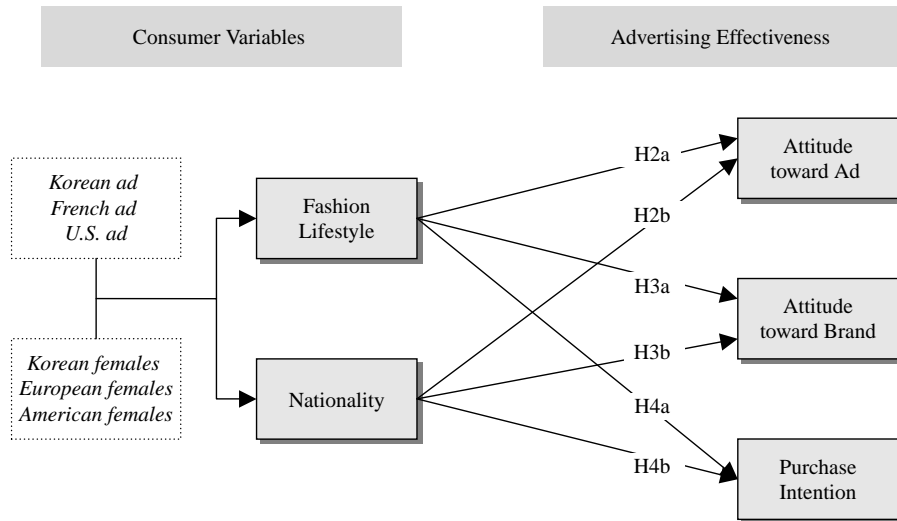


Figure 2.
Research model for global advertising effectiveness

cosmopolitan city of Seoul is that a number of residents of other countries who were either studying or working there temporarily were available to be surveyed.

Advertising stimuli

The advertising stimuli used in the study were three ads for Chanel from the same ad campaign that appeared in the Korean, French, and US versions of *Vogue* magazine. Chanel was selected as the global brand because it operates in the global fashion market and is widely distributed in European, North American, and Asian markets (ACNielsen, 2006). Its ads were selected because of the high-brand awareness among female consumers across the developed world and, again, because they appeared in all three home country editions of *Vogue* in September 2005 (Appendix 1). The French version of the ad also appeared in other European editions of *Vogue* and was judged to be an appropriate “European” ad. The selected print ads were colorful two-page ads that contained no copy (other than a storefront sign with the brand name and a background sign in one of the ads) and were part of Chanel’s global advertising campaign.

As defined here, a global advertising campaign refers to a campaign in a standardized advertising strategy across all markets. Standardization has traditionally been conceptualized at three levels: strategy, execution, and language (Taylor, 2005). Because standardization of language is rare across diverse markets, researchers have found that, in practice, strategy and execution are the relevant levels of standardization (Okazaki *et al.*, 2006). What empirical studies have found is a trend toward more standardization of strategy, while local execution is often adapted (Harris, 1994; Duncan and Ramaprasad, 1995).

In this study, the advertising stimuli followed the same advertising strategy and involved only very minor variations in execution. The first page of each ad contained the brand logo positioned on an attractive sign, whereas the second showed an attractive model walking across a street in a cosmopolitan city. The three ads were part of the same campaign, so they were similar in the respects described above, but different in terms of the specific sign and streets shown, with the model wearing different Chanel clothing in each ad.

A brand of clothing associated with fashion was chosen because, compared with other products, clothing has frequently been cited as a product category likely to induce high involvement (Bloch, 1986; Goldsmith and Emmert, 1991; Kim, 2005; Park *et al.*, 2006). Our sample was skewed toward younger, female consumers, so it is likely that the level of involvement was generally high and does not have a moderating effect on our dependent variables. However, in interpreting the findings of the study, it should be remembered that fashion apparel merchandise is a high-involvement product category.

Measures

A self-administered questionnaire was drawn from the literature review and included four main variables: recognition of advertisements and the brand, advertising effectiveness (e.g. attitude toward ad., attitude toward brand, and purchase intention), fashion lifestyle, and nationality. For advertisements and brand awareness, three items pertaining to brand-related experience were included as a control: prior exposure to ads for the brand, recognition of the brand, and purchase of the brand (Ko *et al.*, 2005; Pae *et al.*, 2002). For measuring advertising effectiveness, a total of 19 items were developed

based on the literature and related to three underlying constructs: attitude toward the ad., attitude toward the brand, and purchase intention (Kim and Lim, 1996; Ko and Mok, 2001; Pae *et al.*, 2002). These constructs have been found by prior research to be important measures of advertising effectiveness (Brown and Stayman, 1992; dePelsmacker and Geuens, 1998; MacKenzie and Lutz, 1989; Pae *et al.*, 2002).

Attitude toward ad. was measured using 11 items on a seven-point evaluative scale (unattractive-attractive, dislike-like, uninteresting-interesting, etc.). Attitude toward brand was adopted from Pae *et al.* (2002) and consisted of six seven-point evaluative items (e.g. unfavorable-favorable, poor quality-high quality, not reliable-reliable, low price-high price). Purchase intention toward the brand was measured by a two-item seven-point bipolar scale (not likely to buy-very likely to buy, not likely to recommend to others-very likely to recommend to others).

About 14 items were used to measure fashion lifestyle, as shown in Table I. Additionally, the demographic variables measured included age, education, household income, marital status, occupation, and ethnicity.

Advertising effectiveness

Because advertising can involve varying objectives depending on situational factors, there are many different means of measuring its effectiveness. In this study, we employed three measures that have been widely used in academic research. Two of them, attitude toward the advertisement (A-Ad.) and attitude toward the brand

Item	Factor loadings	Eigenvalue	Percentage of variance	Reliability
<i>Brand consciousness/prestige</i>				
Accessories must be expensive to have class	0.814	2.34	18.07 (18.07)	0.89
I believe that wearing famous brands helps me to be acknowledged by others	0.735			
I believe that expensive clothes are good	0.699			
<i>Sensational</i>				
I have good taste in coordinating colors and designs of clothes	0.882	2.30	17.69 (35.76)	0.79
I have a good eye for selecting clothes	0.872			
I tend to consider overall coordination of clothes	0.567			
<i>Practical</i>				
When selecting clothes I look for their function rather than their color or design	0.759	2.09	16.04 (51.80)	0.86
I usually wear clothes that are comfortable	0.756			
I make purchases only when there is a need	0.736			
<i>Informational</i>				
I go shopping to get ideas even though I have no intention to buy	0.802	1.88	14.47 (66.28)	0.76
I like to shop in many different stores	0.650			
I am the first to try new fashions	0.555			
I often read fashion-related books and magazines	0.482			

Table I.
Fashion lifestyle factors

(A-Brand), are attitudinal; the third, purchase intention, is behavioral. Prior research has established that both A-Ad and A-Brand can have a significant effect on purchase intention (Lutz, 1975; Mitchell and Olson, 1981; Lutz *et al.*, 1982; MacKenzie *et al.*, 1986). Regarding the behavioral component of advertising effects, purchase intention might reflect the ultimate goal of advertising in communication, purchase decision, and sales (Ko and Mok, 2002; Shim and Park, 2004; Shin and Lee, 2003).

Such an issue also is more significantly concerned with addressing differences in the effects of global advertising strategies (e.g. standardized or localized) on consumers' brand perceptions and attitudes toward ads from a cross-cultural perspective. Several attempts at cross-cultural analysis have been made to compare advertising effectiveness in terms of A-Ad., A-Brand, and purchase intention across cultures (Pae *et al.*, 2002; Koudelova and Whitelock, 2001; dePelsmacker and Geuens, 1998).

Attitude toward ad. Attitude refers to the consistent tendency to respond favorably or unfavorably to a specific object, implying an overall evaluation ranging from extremely positive to extremely negative (Engel *et al.*, 1995). In the context of advertising exposure, attitude toward ad means advertisement receivers' predisposition, namely, their favorable or unfavorable response to a certain advertising stimulus in a specific situation of exposure (Choi, 2004; Kim and Lim, 1996; MacKenzie *et al.*, 1986). Perhaps, attitude toward global ads produced in different countries may differ by nationality because cultural values are reflected both in advertising themes and in the execution. For instance, Giges (1992) found that European consumers were more favorable to local ads, whereas a similar pattern was observed among Asian consumers. According to Pae *et al.* (2002), consumers in Hong Kong generally preferred locally produced to foreign-sourced commercials, irrespective of brand origin, and they had a more favorable attitude toward foreign ads, standardized commercials in situations involving greater brand familiarity. This implies that global advertising effectiveness can be predicted by attitude toward ads, but should be considered to be particularly reflective of cultures or nations.

Attitude toward brand. As another attitudinal component, attitude toward brand contains practical elements rising from cognitive responses and sensuous elements involving attitude toward advertisements (Batra and Ray, 1986). Pae *et al.* (2002) found that, for foreign brands (e.g. USA and European brands), locally produced commercials resulted in a significantly higher attitude toward the brands in Hong Kong. According to dePelsmacker and Geuens (1998), affective response to advertising plays an important role in inducing a more positive attitude toward brand. The effects of affective response on attitudes toward ad. and the brand were different between Poland and Belgium. For instance, erotic ads in Poland led to more positive effects, such as higher ad and brand recognition, and more positive attitudes toward ads and brands than in Belgium. Previous research suggests a strong relationship between these two attitude, which in turn leads to purchasing behavior (MacKenzie *et al.*, 1986; MacKenzie and Lutz, 1989).

Purchase intention. Purchase intention is critical for indicating advertising effects or communication effects because it may be linked to market sales. Purchase intention is the consumer behavioral component of advertising effect, and can be assessed by consumers' subjective intention to buy a specific brand based on advertisements. Although consumers may have a variety of attitudes toward brands, their purchase

intention relates to a cognitive and emotional response to the brand or advertising. Particularly for unfamiliar brands (i.e. foreign brands), the cognitive response (e.g. perceived quality) is an important predictor of purchase intention toward the brand (Hoyer and Brown, 1990; Na *et al.*, 1999; Yoo *et al.*, 2000). For example, among Korean and US consumers, Steenkamp *et al.* (2003) found a significant positive relationship between positive attitudes toward a brand with a prestigious image and the intention to purchase. On the other hand, an emotional response to a brand is a strong predictor of purchase intention (Morris *et al.*, 2002) and accounts for more than twice the variance of cognition. Consumers are inundated with commercial messages about brands and ads that evoke emotional responses and significantly affect purchase intention (Morris *et al.*, 2002; dePelsmacker and Geuens, 1998).

Sampling and data collection

A convenience sample of 210 female consumers who were either residents of or visitors to Seoul was used for this study. The participants were selected and interviewed at major universities and business and shopping districts in Seoul (i.e. Myung Dong, Samsung Dong, Insadong, and Apgujeongdong). The European and US subjects were screened to determine that their stay in the country was no more than six months; this was to ensure that long-term exposure to the Korean culture did not bias results. The sample included 104 Korean, 65 US, and 41 European subjects.

The majority of the respondents (77 percent) were 20 to 36 years old, most (91 percent) were single, 45 percent were university students, and 22 percent had a bachelor's degree. Approximately, 50 percent reported an annual household income of US\$20,000-40,000. In terms of nationality distribution, 49 percent of the respondents were Korean, followed by Americans (31 percent) and Europeans (20 percent). For descriptive analysis of brand and ad. awareness, overall, 94.8 percent of the respondents had been exposed to advertising for the brand, and 99.5 percent of respondents had recognized the brand. In terms of previous purchase experience, 39.5 percent of respondents had purchased the brand.

Results and discussion

Fashion lifestyle segments

In order to examine whether cross-national segments exist, we conducted a preliminary factor analysis followed by a cluster analysis. Initially, principal component factor analysis and varimax rotation were employed to identify underlying dimensions of the 13 fashion lifestyle items. The 13 items resulted in four factors with eigenvalues of 1.0 or higher, accounting for 66.3 percent of the total variance in fashion lifestyle (Table I). The fashion lifestyle consisted of four factors: brand prestige, personality, practicality, and information/fashion. The factor loadings ranged from 0.48 to 0.88, and Cronbach's α s of the factors ranged from 0.76 to 0.89 (Table I).

Cluster analysis using the *K*-means method was conducted to determine whether consumers could be segmented into distinct groups based on fashion lifestyle factors. The clustering was undertaken by way of minimizing similarity and redundancy among clusters and dividing respondents into clusters. As a result, a four-cluster solution emerged. Factor scores and standard deviations of the lifestyle factors sought by clusters are presented in Table II. The four-cluster solution was then validated using ANOVA, resulting in significant differences among four clusters in all fashion

lifestyle factors. These results support the notion that there are, indeed, fashion lifestyle segments that cut across cultures. Thus, *H1* was supported. The segments are described below.

Segment 1 is labeled the “information seekers” (26.6 percent of the sample). This group showed a strong information orientation with respect to shopping, putting considerable effort into researching fashions, both in terms of consulting books and magazines and shopping at a variety of stores, even with no immediate intention of making a purchase. Notably, the information seekers want information in order to keep up with cutting-edge fashion. They also indicated that they are among the first to try new fashions. On the other hand, they are less concerned about product performance than those in other segments. Thus, they appear to be women who enjoy spending time learning about fashions and trying new things, but have little concern for actual product performance and are not particularly utilitarian.

Segment 2 is labeled “sensation seekers.” This group, which accounted for 29.5 percent of the sample, clearly values aesthetic elements in clothing. Sensation seekers are especially interested in color coordination and believe they have good taste in choosing clothing products. They put a high priority on aesthetic aspects of clothing (e.g. taste, color, design, coordinating) and weigh this heavily in making purchase decisions.

The third segment accounted for 25.2 percent of the sample and is labeled “utilitarian consumers.” Members of this segment are highly concerned about utilitarian issues such as the comfort and functionality of the clothing. They also indicated that they primarily choose clothing because it is a necessity, and they are not prone to make purchases on a whim. In general, these consumers think in utilitarian terms and weigh value and functionality higher than the other segments.

The fourth segment consists of “conspicuous consumers,” who comprise 18.5 percent of the sample and who have a strong belief in the value of prestige or high-priced brands and products. They value clothing that is of high quality and is associated with high social status. And they purchase high-priced, high-prestige brands because of the acknowledgement it brings from others.

In general, the existence of stable segments across these countries suggests that global appeals emphasizing the benefit desired by consumers in each segment have the potential to be highly effective, both in terms of appealing to the target market and saving costs.

Fashion lifestyle factors	Cluster 1 Information seekers (<i>n</i> = 56)	Cluster 2 Sensation seekers (<i>n</i> = 62)	Cluster 3 Utilitarian consumers (<i>n</i> = 53)	Cluster 4 Conspicuous consumers (<i>n</i> = 39)	<i>F</i> -values
Brand					
conscious/prestige	0.23	0.19	- 1.13	0.90	70.47*
Sensational	- 0.34	1.13	- 0.49	- 0.75	86.74*
Practical	- 0.85	0.06	0.42	0.56	29.81*
Informational	0.68	- 0.03	- 0.14	- 0.90	26.51*

Note: **p* < 0.001

Table II.
Results of fashion
lifestyle cluster analysis

For example, firms targeting the conspicuous consumer segment may want to run advertising that emphasizes the prestige and elegance of the brand, while not making reference to prices or utilitarian aspects of the clothing. By running a standardized campaign, at least in terms of standardized strategy, our results suggest that firms can establish a uniform brand image that can, in turn, build brand equity. Moreover, the advertiser can likely save costs as a result of not having to develop ads for many different markets. While minor adaptations may well be necessary to adapt to local markets, they are much less costly than developing separate campaigns for different markets.

Advertising effectiveness by fashion lifestyle segments and nationality

H2-H4 generally examine whether exposure to three ads from a global ad. campaign are appealing to the four cross-national segments and whether the fashion lifestyle segment is a more important driver of reactions than nationality. For testing hypotheses, two-way ANOVAs were used. Overall, the effects of fashion lifestyle segments on advertising effectiveness (e.g. attitude toward ad., attitude toward brand, purchase intention) were significant for the Korean, French, and USA ads.

Attitude toward ad. by fashion lifestyle and nationality

As illustrated in Table III, the main effects of fashion lifestyle on attitudes toward advertising were significant for Korean ads ($F = 6.15, p < 0.001$), French ads ($F = 4.72, p < 0.01$), and US ads ($F = 12.17, p < 0.001$). Clearly, reactions to these ads varied by segment, thereby supporting *H2a*. Table III shows the specific differences among the various segments.

With respect to nationality, there was a significant effect on attitudes toward the Korean ad ($F = 3.03, p < 0.05$), the French ad ($F = 3.65, p < 0.05$), and the US ad. ($F = 3.30, p < 0.05$), providing support for *H2b*. However, *H2c* was also supported, as the effect size for the fashion segment is stronger than that of nationality. Notably, however, there does appear to be some evidence of consumers preferring the ad that ran in their home country. For example, attitude toward the US ad. was rated most highly by the US consumers ($M_{US} = 4.64$), followed by Korean and European consumers ($M_{Korea} = 4.53, M_{Europe} = 4.34$, respectively).

There were some significant interaction effects on attitude toward the Korean and the US ads by fashion lifestyle and nationality (Figure 3). For example, European sensational seekers had a stronger attitude toward the Korean ad. than other segments, whereas European conspicuous consumers had a weaker attitude toward the Korean ad than US conspicuous consumers. In the sensation seeker segment, Americans and Europeans were more likely to favor the Korean ad. than were Koreans. However, in the conspicuous consumer segment, Americans were more likely to have a positive attitude toward the US ad. than Europeans. As shown in Figure 3, however, the raw magnitude of these differences is relatively small, particularly in comparison to the main effect of fashion lifestyle.

Attitude toward brand by fashion lifestyle and nationality

Table IV shows the effects of fashion lifestyle and nationality on attitude toward brand. As predicted, fashion lifestyle had a significantly strong effect on attitude toward brand in the Korean ad ($F_{(3,207)} = 7.87, p < 0.001$), French ad ($F_{(3,207)} = 10.02, p < 0.001$), and US ad. ($F_{(3,207)} = 13.27, p < 0.001$), supporting *H3a*. Notably, there was no significant effect of nationality or interaction effect on the attitude toward

Attitudes toward the ad.	Source	SS	df	MS	F	p-values
A _{ad} -KOR	Fashion lifestyle	18.01	3	6.00	6.15***	0.001
	Nationality	5.92	2	2.96	3.03*	0.050
	FL × NAT	24.52	5	4.90	5.03***	0.000
A _{ad} -FRA	Fashion lifestyle	14.16	3	4.72	4.28**	0.006
	Nationality	8.04	2	4.02	3.65*	0.028
	FL × NAT	7.66	5	1.53	1.40	0.229
A _{ad} -US	Fashion lifestyle	42.03	3	14.01	12.17***	0.000
	Nationality	7.58	2	3.80	3.30*	0.039
	FL × NAT	13.55	5	2.71	2.36*	0.042
	Information seekers					
	Sensation seekers					
	Fashion lifestyle segments					
	Utilitarian consumers					
	Conspicuous consumers					
	<i>Mean</i>					
A _{ad} -KOR	3.93	4.24	3.99	4.03		
A _{ad} -FRA	4.82	4.75	4.53	4.52		
A _{ad} -US	4.98	4.66	4.15	4.15		

Notes: $p^* < 0.05$; $p^{**} < 0.01$; $p^{***} < 0.001$

Table III.
Attitudes toward the ad.
by fashion lifestyle and
nationality

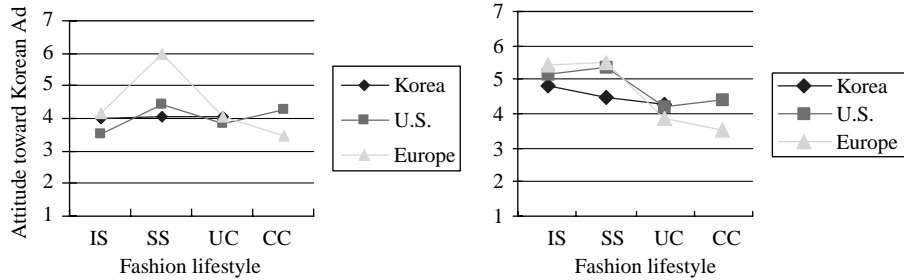


Figure 3.
Interaction effects on attitudes toward ads

IS: Information Seeker; SS: Sensation Seeker; UC: Utilitarian Consumer; CC: Conspicuous Consumer

advertised brand, leading to the rejection of *H3b*, but strong support for *H3c*, which predicted a stronger effect for fashion lifestyle.

Purchase intention by fashion lifestyle and nationality

As presented in Table V, fashion lifestyle had a significant effect on purchase intention toward brand in advertising for each country ($p < 0.001$ for all three ads). Sensation seekers and information seekers tended to have higher purchase intentions than utilitarian and conspicuous consumers. Therefore, *H4a* was supported.

There was a significantly strong effect for nationality for the Korean ad ($F_{(3,207)} = 5.30, p < 0.01$), but there was no such effect for the French and US ads. Thus, *H4b* was not supported, while *H4c* was supported, as the main effect for fashion lifestyle is stronger.

Attitudes toward the brand	Source	SS	df	MS	F	p-values
A_{br-KOR}	Fashion lifestyle	25.57	3	8.52	7.87*	0.000
	Nationality	4.32	2	2.16	1.99	0.139
	FL × NAT	10.75	5	2.15	1.98	0.082
A_{br-FRA}	Fashion lifestyle	31.38	3	10.46	10.02*	0.000
	Nationality	0.39	2	0.20	0.19	0.83
	FL × NAT	7.9	5	1.58	1.51	0.19
A_{br-US}	Fashion lifestyle	49.25	3	16.42	13.27*	0.000
	Nationality	0.09	2	0.05	0.04	0.963
	FL × NAT	5.5	5	1.12	0.90	0.485
		Fashion lifestyle segments				
	Information seekers	Sensation seekers	Utilitarian consumers	Conspicuous consumers		
		<i>Mean</i>				
A_{br-KOR}	5.07	5.43	4.57	4.34		
A_{br-FRA}	5.34	5.37	4.54	4.48		
A_{br-US}	5.30	4.88	4.20	3.98		

Table IV.
Attitudes toward a fashion brand by fashion lifestyle and nationality

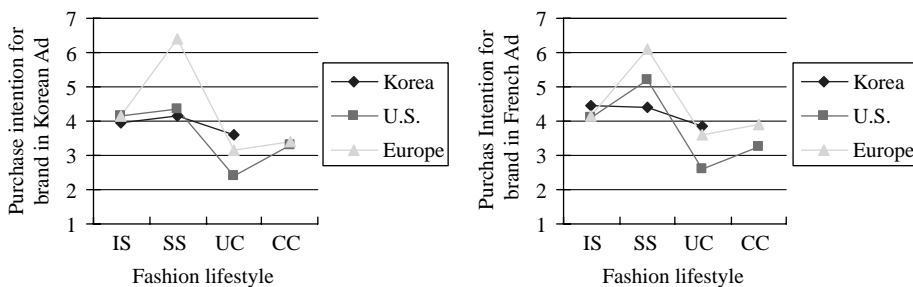
Note: * $p < 0.001$

Purchase intention	Source	SS	Df	MS	F	p-values
PI _{br} -KOR	Fashion lifestyle	66.48	3	22.16	11.46 ^{***}	0.000
	Nationality	20.50	2	10.25	5.30 ^{**}	0.006
	FL × NAT	30.03	5	6.01	3.11 [*]	0.010
PI _{br} -FRA	Fashion lifestyle	68.47	3	22.82	10.10 ^{***}	0.000
	Nationality	9.06	2	4.528	2.00	0.138
	FL × NAT	28.13	5	5.63	2.49 [*]	0.033
PI _{br} -US	Fashion lifestyle	47.48	3	22.49	10.75 ^{***}	0.000
	Nationality	7.00	2	3.50	1.67	0.190
	FL × NAT	23.00	5	2.09	2.20	0.056
Fashion lifestyle segments						
	Information seekers	Sensation seekers	Utilitarian	Conspicuous consumers		
	<i>Mean</i>					
PI _{br} -KOR	3.80	4.35	3.09	3.29		
PI _{br} -FRA	4.31	4.65	3.38	3.44		
PI _{br} -US	4.32	4.15	3.17	2.64		

Notes: ^{*}*p* < 0.05, ^{**}*p* < 0.01, ^{***}*p* < 0.001

Table V.
Purchase intentions for advertised brand by fashion lifestyle and nationality

As shown in Figure 4, for the Korean ads there was a significant interaction effect between fashion segment and nationality for purchase intention toward a brand ($F_{(5,205)} = 3.11$, $p < 0.01$). Purchase intention in the Korean ad. differed by nationality, especially among sensation seekers and utilitarian seekers. Specifically, European sensation seekers had a higher intention to purchase the brand in the Korean ad. than their counterparts in other segments. There was also a significant interaction effect on purchase intention for brand in the French ad. ($F = 2.49$, $p < 0.05$), differing by nationality in the sensation seeker segment. That is, European subjects had the highest intention to purchase the brand, followed by Americans and Koreans among sensation seekers. However, in the utilitarian consumer segment, Korean purchase intention for the French ad. was similar to European purchase intention. Again, the effect sizes of the interaction are generally smaller than the main effect of the fashion lifestyle segment.



Notes: IS: Information Seeker; SS: Sensation Seeker; UC: Utilitarian Consumer; CC: Conspicuous Consumer

Figure 4.
Interaction effect on purchase intention for brand in advertisements

Conclusions and implications

With accelerating globalization and advances in information technology, the recent issues regarding globalized marketing have highlighted the need to examine whether marketers can identify and target cross-national market segments. This study looked for cross-national segments in the fashion industry and examined whether three ads appearing as part of a global advertising campaign had equal appeal to the segments. Our results provide striking evidence that:

- there do appear to be cross-national fashion segments for consumers, at least in the countries examined in these studies, and;
- in a global advertising campaign, targeting the cross-market segment may be more effective than designing an ad. to appeal to consumers of only one nationality.

The study also suggests that there are sometimes interactions between fashion lifestyle segment and nationality, which might suggest that minor tweaks to a campaign are appropriate in some cases. However, the main effect of fashion lifestyle was the primary driver of the results in this study, which focused on a very well-known global brand.

The four lifestyle segments identified are the “information seekers,” “sensation seekers,” “utilitarian consumers,” and “conspicuous consumers.” The fashion lifestyle segments were consistent with apparel consumer segments suggested by Shim and Bickle (1994), but not previously verified in a cross-national study. These segments were significantly different for attitude toward ad., attitude toward brand, and purchase intention for the brand. For example, the information seekers and sensation seekers tended to have more favorable attitudes toward the French and US versions of the ad. compared to the other segments, and they liked the Korean ad. less than the French or US ad. In addition to attitude toward ad. and brand, purchase intention for the brand differed significantly by fashion lifestyle segment. The existence of these segments supports the notion that there is a trend toward a global consumer culture, at least in the context of the marketing of fashion products. Thus, it appears that, for the case of segmenting fashion markets, global consumer culture is a stronger influence than cross-national differences.

Given the strength of the main effects for the fashion segments, the results imply that global fashion marketers should consider the motivations of the segment they are trying appeal to across markets. These segments have distinct patterns in terms of information search, factors that are more heavily weighed in making purchase decisions, and brand name importance. Thus, our results suggest the ability to build brand equity in the fashion industry by using promotional strategies to appeal to global market segments rather than national consumers or uniquely local segments.

In general, our findings imply that in the fashion industry, firms using global appeals may have an advantage in increasing brand equity. Apparently, building a uniform brand image that appeals to one or more of the fashion segments across cultures can be an effective strategy.

A related point is that global media (e.g. different editions of *Vogue* or *MTV*) may be an effective tool for reaching cross-national segments, since these segments are likely to have similar media habits. The use of promotional techniques such as using VMDs in retail stores in various countries with messages that target a specific segment may also be useful in building brand equity. Additionally, geographic distance may not be a barrier for global advertising via advanced information technology (e.g. internet, SMS, MMS). It would appear to be viable to target fashion lifestyle segments using a limited

number of promotional messages transmitted via the internet across nations. The adoption of more e-advertising strategies may well improve global advertising effectiveness and help build brand equity.

At a theoretical level, our findings are consistent with the GMS framework proposed by Zou and Cavusgil (2002). In an increasingly global economy, it should not come as a major surprise that there are at least some segments for some types of goods and services that cut across national boundaries. The GMS framework would suggest offering standardized products for each cross-national segment and then using a unique but standardized advertising program to appeal to each (i.e. if there were four cross-national segments, this would require a unique strategy to appeal to each of the four segments). While our study does not provide a full test of all the prongs of GMS theory, our findings do suggest that, as with GMS, the use of appeals to global segments will be effective. On average, the cross-national fashion lifestyle segment a consumer belongs to is actually more fundamental in the consumer's reaction to an advertisement than is the consumer's nationality.

Because our study has limitations, and because it is clear that more research is needed on cross-market segmentation, our results should be interpreted with some caution. While great care was taken to ensure that the USA and European consumers included in the study were in Korea for only a short-term stay, the sample was collected from only one geographic location. Further, validation with samples collected in multiple countries would be worthwhile. In examining the reactions to ads, the study examined just three ads with subtle differences from a single advertising campaign. Still, the fact that the segments reacted differently to these ads, as opposed to ads with more striking differences, would appear to further support the finding that the fashion lifestyle segments prefer different types of advertising. A good topic for future research would be to examine whether ads with substantially different themes and creative strategies would produce even more differences in reactions from the market segments. In general, additional research on cross-national segmentation in a variety of product and service categories is needed. Finally, because only one high-involvement product category was examined here, there are clear limitations on the generalizability of our study to other product categories. More research is needed to further examine the feasibility of cross-market segmentation in other contexts.

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Appendix 1. Advertising stimuli



Cross-national
market
segmentation

649

Plate A1.
Advertisement from
Korean Vogue magazine



Plate A2.
Advertisement from
French Vogue magazine

IMR
24,5

650

Plate A3.
Advertisement from *US Vogue* magazine



Appendix 2. Proposed constructs: scale items used

Attitude toward ad. scale (seven-point semantic differential scales)

- (1) Not pleasant/pleasant.
- (2) Not attractive/attractive.
- (3) Not interesting/interesting.
- (4) Difficult to understand the advertisement/easy to understand the advertisement.
- (5) Fails to reflect trends/clearly reflects trends.
- (6) Conservative/stimulating.
- (7) Curious about the product/not curious about the product.
- (8) I dislike this advertisement/I like this advertisement.
- (9) Not helpful in making a purchasing decision about this product/helpful in making a purchase decision about this product.
- (10) Makes the product less desirable/makes the product more desirable.
- (11) The product and advertisement are irrelevant/the product and advertisement are relevant.

Attitude toward brand scale (seven-point semantic differential scales)

- (1) Not favorable/favorable.
- (2) Overall, this brand is lacking compared to competing brands/overall, this brand excels compared to competing brands.
- (3) The product does not seem like one I can rely on/the product seems like one I can rely on.

-
- (4) The product seems to be cheap compared to other brands/the product seems to be expensive compared to other brands.
 - (5) I do not prefer the advertised brand/I prefer the advertised brand.
 - (6) The value of the advertised product is not convincing/the value of the advertised product is convincing.

Purchase intention scale (seven-point semantic differential scale)

- (1) I will not purchase this brand/I will purchase this brand's product.
- (2) I will not recommend this brand to others/I will recommend this brand to others.

Fourteen-item attitude to fashion lifestyle scale

Seven-point Likert type scale: strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7):

- (1) I tend to consider the overall coordination of clothes.
- (2) I read fashion-related books and magazines often.
- (3) I believe that expensive clothes are good.
- (4) I have good taste in coordinating the colors and designs of clothes.
- (5) I am not likely to purchase clothes that are hard to maintain even though I favor them.
- (6) I make a purchase only when there is a need to do so.
- (7) I usually wear clothes that are comfortable.
- (8) I like to shop in many different stores.
- (9) I have a good eye for selecting clothes.
- (10) Accessories must be expensive to have class.
- (11) I am among the first to try new fashion.
- (12) I believe that wearing famous brands helps me to be acknowledged by others.
- (13) When selecting clothes I look for their function rather than their color or design.
- (14) I go shopping to get ideas even though I have no intention to buy.

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