

Fashion consumer segmentation through socio-lifestyles - Bangkok samples -

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to classify fashion consumers based on their attitudes, goals and values of life. It is to understand what drives human behaviors as well as to learn the various directions people live in society using Bangkok people as the samples. Online and on-site questionnaire survey is employed. Questions are designed to focus on 7 aspects of life, ranging from private life, professional life, social life, politics, culture and information interaction, household business and finance, and consumption of products and services in the main market. The research results can be used to classify consumers' lifestyles into 20 major and numerous minor groups of lifestyle. Lifestyles of male and female samples are compared to investigate their different patterns and directions. Fashion trend diagram is used to analyze the overlapped lifestyles of mass consumers. The lifestyle segmentations would benefit to designer and fashion branding team in understanding their target group deeper inside the background of their behaviors.

Keywords: socio-lifestyle, segmentation, fashion consumer

I. Introduction

Successful fashion branding necessitates putting together a precise picture of the target group. Regarding consumer identification, socio-demographic features such as age, gender, income or marital status, yield information about the basic conditions of life. However, these identifications tell little about the aims, motivations and attitudes of these people and the behavior resulting from these factors (Randall, 2000). Many fashion branding teams often got stuck in the following problems; what product features do people expect, which sale channels do individual target groups

prefer, which are rejected, and which communication models are matched to the brand. Most of the buying and merchandising teams who usually follow historical selling data of their brand would face over stock problem if they do not notice the change of their customers' lifestyle (Jackson & Shaw, 2001). All those who involve in the fashion business should aware that consumers are highly varied. Moreover, rough market segmentations may not fit to the present development of new emerging subdivided lifestyles. Some consumers find happiness in family life, some in leisure activities, and others in their work. Customer has special preferences and individual style (Patrick, 2000). Hence, understanding and knowing

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insight desires of customers' demand are the basic important.

II. Review of Literature

One of the most common brand problems is the brand does not really understand the customers, their needs and motivations. Moreover, many brands define the target too broadly. In general, a brand promises relevant differentiated benefits to a target consumer. By definition, a brand cannot be all things to all people. Increasingly, companies are focusing on brand usage over penetration in winning a larger portion of a smaller group's business by offering more products and services that deliver against the brand promise. This helps to build loyalty and is in lieu of trying to attract additional consumers to the brand. Many brands try to make too many points in the brand communication rather than focusing on the one or two most compelling points of difference. The effectiveness of brand communication diminishes in direct proportion to the number of points the brand attempt to make in the communication. Most of the answers to the common brand problems are the suggestion to undertake a customer research to investigate deeper inside their attitudes, values, goals of life and motivations in order to understand their desired lifestyle (Cholachatpinyo, Padgett, Crocker & Fletcher, 2002).

This study investigates consumers' lifestyle and categorizes people into 20 major groups based on the principles of socio-style and personal value statement. The socio-style principle focuses on the investigation of 7 personal aspects including private life, professional life, social life, politics, culture and information interaction, household business and finance, and consumption of products and services in the main market (Cathelat, 1993). Moreover, in this research the 8th aspect of clothing cue is added in order to get more information and precise consumers' preferences. Meanwhile, the principle of personal value statement provides guideline of 20 types of lifestyle (Plummer,

<Table 1> Personal value statements (Plummer, 2009)

Personal value statement	Attitude	Personal value statement	Attitude
Accomplishment	Aspiration, hard work, planning and systematic	Family	Traditional, functional, economize
Adventure	Risk, perilous, challenge	Faith	Optimism, understand of morality
Accuracy	Correct, rigorous, conservation	Fun	Utilitarianism, hedonism, freedom
Beauty	Nice, high quality, trendy	Global view	Personalities, adventure
Calm	Conscientious, mature, revolve	Harmony	Positive, attitude, leniency
Creative	Resourceful, active	Innovation	Inquisitive, modern, individual
Cleanliness	Neat, tidy, order	Money	Forthright, luxury, materialism, good quality
Community	Help society, charity	Power	Vision, egocentric, candid
Discovery	Meddlesome, curious, observant	Simplicity	No fuss, easy-going, natural, comfortable, casual
Excellence	Inquisitive, seeks what's	Variety	Bored easily, difference, assortment

2009). This study merges these two principles to clarify the complex and dynamic lifestyles.

III. Method

The study consists of primary data collection using quantitative research technique. Questionnaire survey is divided into online and on-site methods in order to get more access to the samples. Male and female, age 22-40 years old, living in Bangkok are the target samples. The questionnaire consists of 20 questions to investigate 8 important areas of lifestyle, derived from the principle of socio-style. Each question is designed to provide both possible optimistic and

pessimistic answer choices for a particular type of lifestyle. Therefore, each question contains 2 choices of a particular lifestyle group, in which each answer will gain 1 score. The most score from each sample's answers on particular slot of lifestyle is set to predict the samples' lifestyle segmentation. The questionnaire also includes some minor questions regarding personal information and preferences. The total 1,679 samples are the responses, consisting of 724 males and 955 female samples.

IV. Results

The first part of the questionnaire investigates personal data including; age, job, job position, and income. Age range is divided into 4 slots according to job stages in Thailand. First jobber is usually in 22-25 range and junior management is often in 26-30. While, middle management and senior management are expected to be in 31-35 and 36-40 ranges, respectively. <Table 2> shows data of age distribution of female and male samples.

<Table 3> presents details of job positions of both gender groups. Top 5 occupations of female samples are 47.99% staff management, 12.60% student, 9.75% staff management for state office, 6.78% entrepreneur and 5.51% executive management. While, the top 5 of male samples are 36.26% staff management, 14.74% students, 12.51% entrepreneur, 10.60% executive management and 7.54% staff management for state office. In this research, students are post-graduate.

<Table 4> shows in details of job types in separate female and male samples. The distribution is well

<Table 2> Samples' age distribution

Age range	Female (%)	Male (%)
22-25	12.46	14.77
26-30	16.61	15.68
31-35	13.16	9.58
36-40	9.30	7.21
	51.53	47.24

<Table 3> Job positions

Job positions	Female (%)	Male (%)
Company owner	4.14	4.80
Entrepreneur	6.78	12.51
Family business	3.78	6.82
Executive management	5.51	10.60
Staff management	47.99	36.26
Executive management for state office	3.88	3.44
Staff management for state office	9.75	7.54
Housewife	2.64	0.12
Unemployed	1.37	1.42
Student	12.60	14.74
Others	1.55	1.76
Total	100.00	100.00

scattered throughout the 25 types of job. Top 10 types of job for female samples are 10.78% accountant/finance, 8.87% marketing, 7.81% admin/secretary, 6.80% sale, 6.78% merchant/entrepreneur, 6.39% creative/art, 5.23% general service, 4.74% production, 4.40% medical/nurse and 3.98% housewife/family, respectively. Differently, top 10 types of job for male samples are 13.43% marketing, 10.47% creative/art, 9.01% general service, 7.93% merchant/entrepreneur, 7.58% sale, 6.30% teacher/academia, 4.77% scientist/researcher, 4.72% computer related, 4.47% accountant/finance and 3.36% PR, respectively.

The samples' answers from questionnaire are scored based on socio-style dimensions, then those scores are arranged into lifestyle categories according to Plummer's model. The classification is undertaken in 2 steps. Firstly, the highest scores of each sample indicate one of the 20 major lifestyle segmentations. Secondly, the second lower score of each sample can be used to classify as the minor lifestyle. In many cases, some samples gain equal score of major or minor lifestyles. These would create one or more new virtual samples such as different majors with the same minor lifestyle or same major but different

〈Table 4〉 Types of job

Type of job	Female (%)	Male (%)
Medical/nurse	4.40	0.70
Engineer	2.01	2.21
Scientist/researcher	3.29	4.77
Architect	0.20	2.86
Teacher/academia	3.64	6.30
Accountant/finance	10.78	4.47
Marketing	8.87	13.43
Human resource	2.11	2.54
Production	4.74	3.09
PR	3.71	3.36
Creative/art	6.39	10.47
Police/soldier	0.69	1.36
Sale	6.80	7.58
Admin/secretary	7.81	0.78
Actor/musician	0.34	1.08
Dancer/entertainer	0.22	0.38
Writer/journalist	0.44	0.85
Service/reception	0.76	2.41
Chef	0.29	0.48
Computer related	3.93	4.72
Hair/dress maker	0.37	0.90
Car service/maintenance	0.74	0.08
Merchant/entrepreneur	6.78	7.93
General service	5.23	9.01
Housewife/family	3.98	1.13
Others	11.47	7.13
Total	100.00	100.00

minor lifestyles. Therefore, there can be 7,236 virtual samples emerging from this system in which 3,461 and 3,775 are virtual male and female samples, respectively.

〈Table 5〉 shows percentages of major lifestyles of all, female and male samples from the first step of classification. It can be said that all data are scattered in all lifestyle categories. However, there are concentrations in some lifestyles and many lifestyles gain little proportions. The top 10 categories of all Bangkok

〈Table 5〉 Major lifestyles

Major lifestyles	Female (%)	Male (%)	Total (%)
Accomplishment	8.64	6.73	7.64
Adventure	10.43	6.89	8.58
Accuracy	8.84	9.96	9.43
Beauty	10.46	12.08	11.30
Calm	10.00	10.68	10.35
Creative	4.71	3.92	4.30
Cleanliness	5.43	6.89	6.19
Community	8.44	7.23	7.81
Discovery	3.32	2.12	2.69
Excellence	3.73	3.74	3.73
Family	3.29	8.13	5.82
Faith	2.66	2.75	2.71
Fun	6.99	3.76	5.31
Global view	1.76	3.34	2.58
Harmony	0.61	2.38	1.53
Innovation	0.72	0.85	0.79
Money	0.23	0.61	0.43
Power	1.33	0.21	0.75
Simplicity	7.05	6.70	6.87
Variety	1.36	1.03	1.19
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00

samples are including; 11.30% Beauty, 10.35% Calm, 9.43% accuracy, 8.58% adventure, 7.81% community, 7.64% accomplishment, 6.87% simplicity, 6.19% cleanliness, 5.82% family, and 5.31% fun, respectively. These results show that values of life of Bangkok people are towards aesthetic, neat and optimistic mindsets with less modernity. Meanwhile, the lifestyles in rank 11-20 with less population are including; creative, excellence, faith, discovery, global view, harmony, variety, innovation, power and money, respectively. It is found that top 5 of female major lifestyles indicates women's role in family. On the other hand, men are towards adventure and accomplishment lifestyles, in which these indicate men's attitudes are towards social role and responsibility in normal Thai culture. Bangkok samples show that they

are more conformity, less unique, less self expressive their money and power as well as less innovation.

Focusing on female samples, the total 955 actual samples generate 3,775 virtual samples. Moreover, female's Major with minor lifestyles can be classified into 359 lifestyle groups. <Table 6> shows the top 15 classifications from virtual female samples. The attitude towards beauty plus community lifestyle is the primary concept of Bangkok females. This implies

<Table 6> Top 15 of female's major with minor lifestyles

No	Major lifestyles	Minor lifestyles	%
1	Beauty	Community	1.51
2	Family	Accuracy	1.30
3	Calm	Accuracy	1.19
4	Accuracy	Calm	1.17
	Beauty	Calm	1.17
5	Beauty	Accuracy	1.14
	Calm	Simplicity	1.14
6	Calm	Cleanliness	1.09
7	Beauty	Adventure	1.03
8	Adventure	Fun	1.01
9	Community	Accuracy	0.98
10	Accuracy	Beauty	0.95
	Cleanliness	Accuracy	0.95
	Community	Beauty	0.95
11	Accuracy	Cleanliness	0.93
12	Accuracy	Adventure	0.90
	Beauty	Fun	0.90
	Simplicity	Calm	0.90
13	Beauty	Simplicity	0.87
	Calm	Adventure	0.87
14	Accomplishment	Accuracy	0.85
	Beauty	Cleanliness	0.85
	Beauty	Family	0.85
	Calm	Accomplishment	0.85
	Calm	Beauty	0.85
15	Accuracy	Community	0.82
	Accuracy	Family	0.82
	Calm	Community	0.82

that females are aware of their aesthetic as well as their social relationship. Their image is an ideal beautiful and generous women. While family oriented plus accuracy lifestyle is the second highest. It implies that females' social role is still important for this group.

From the top 15 ranks in <Table 6>, it can be said that female attitudes, goals and values of life are concentrated in a certain group of key lifestyles, including; beauty, community, calm, family accuracy, simplicity, fun and cleanliness. In comparison to the rest ranks, these top 15 lifestyles share 27.66%. In other words, these top 15 lifestyles engage more than one fourth of Bangkok females' lifestyles, in which the market is concentrated nowadays.

Focusing on male samples, the total 724 actual samples generate 3,461 virtual samples. Male's Major with minor lifestyles can be classified into 353 lifestyle groups. <Table 7> demonstrates the top 15 classifications from male samples. Adventure plus simplicity is the first rank, beauty plus community and fun are the second, while accomplish plus accuracy shares the third rank with beauty plus adventure. Top 15 lifestyles are combined by some key styles similar to females' results. However, there are new key words included in male top 15 lifestyles such as global view and discovery. Family role is not a primary mindset for Bangkok males. While, beauty is found in many ranks due to half of this research samples in male group are gay men, as indicated by the samples in the personal data section.

The male samples results are well illustrated the present market movements. Fashion styles for men in Bangkok shopping centers are mostly in city adventure theme for young professional, dressy look for gay men, while smart professional look is for executive and senior management targets. The rest of the results are shown in the same table.

Adventure, beauty and accomplishment as the major lifestyles engage most of the top 15 ranks with different minors. This implies that some Bangkok males

〈Table 7〉 Top 15 male's major with minor lifestyles

No	Major lifestyles	Minor lifestyles	%
1	Adventure	Simplicity	1.62
2	Beauty	Community	1.36
	Beauty	Fun	1.36
3	Accomplishment	Accuracy	1.21
	Beauty	Adventure	1.21
4	Adventure	Accuracy	1.18
5	Beauty	Cleanliness	1.13
6	Community	Family	1.01
7	Beauty	Accuracy	0.95
	Calm	Fun	0.95
8	Accuracy	Community	0.90
	Community	Fun	0.90
9	Adventure	Fun	0.87
	Community	Accuracy	0.87
10	Accomplishment	Fun	0.84
	Beauty	Accomplishment	0.84
	Simplicity	Accuracy	0.84
11	Adventure	Community	0.81
	Accuracy	Calm	0.81
	Calm	Accuracy	0.81
12	Accomplishment	Family	0.75
	Fun	Beauty	0.75
13	Accomplishment	Calm	0.72
	Adventure	Accomplishment	0.72
	Accuracy	Family	0.72
	Community	Adventure	0.72
	Fun	Cleanliness	0.72
	Simplicity	Cleanliness	0.72
14	Accomplishment	Adventure	0.69
	Adventure	Cleanliness	0.69
	Accuracy	Beauty	0.69
	Calm	Cleanliness	0.69
	Calm	Discovery	0.69
	Cleanliness	Accuracy	0.69
15	Cleanliness	Community	0.69
	Accomplishment	Beauty	0.66
	Accuracy	Fun	0.66
	Calm	Cleanliness	0.66
	Calm	Family	0.66
	Community	Gobal view	0.66
	Community	Simplicity	0.66

are more masculine, while some others are very feminine, and in some sense they are ambitious to achieve their goals of life. In comparison to the rest ranks, these top 15 lifestyles share 35.13%. In other words, these top 15 lifestyles engage more than one third of Bangkok males' lifestyles.

V. Analysis

In order to understand the current movement of lifestyles in Bangkok, the trend matrix suggested by NellyRodi Trend Book (2012) is used as a platform. Each axis represents the main direction of fashion trend, usually set up in the trend book. These directions categorized consumers into 4 different mindsets as following;

A. Conservative including; retrospective, tradition, history, regulation, rigorous, rigidity, formal, mature and success.

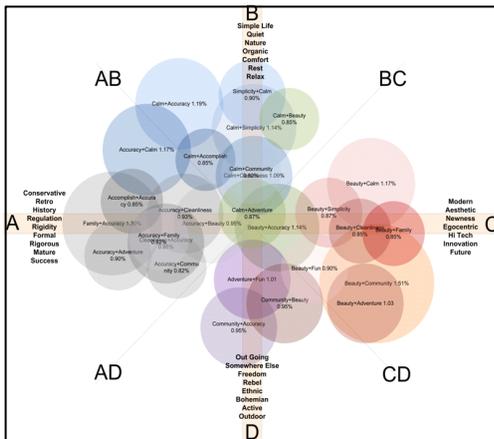
B. Simple Life including; nature lover, quiet, organic, comfort, rest and relax.

C. Modern & Technology including; aesthetic, newness, egocentric, hi-tech, innovation and future.

D. Ethnic & Travel including; out-going, somewhere else, freedom, rebellious, ethnic, bohemian, active and outdoor.

The mindset platform is illustrated the mapping of the top 15 lifestyles of female and male samples In 〈Fig. 1〉 and 〈Fig. 2〉, respectively. It is used to locate the results in proportion areas from the research finding in the way in which each major plus minor group is mapped onto relevant area of mindset on the platform.

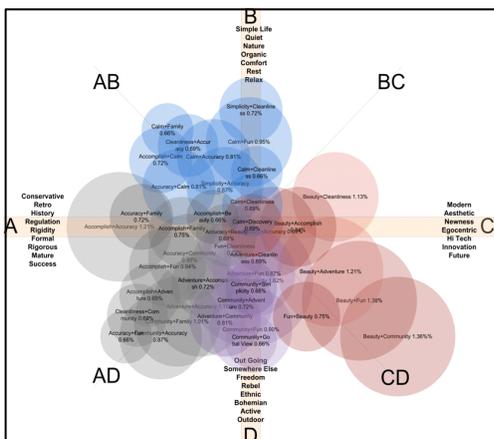
It can be seen that female lifestyles are crowded in the direction A, B, C, D, CD and AB. This implies that females conform to the general trend directions with some dynamic lifestyles in AB and CD, whereas, directions BC and AD are found less populations. Stylishly relax, fashionable eco-design,



<Fig. 1> Top 15 females' lifestyle mapping

comfortable chic and serious active styles in directions BC and AD are not the prime interests for Bangkok females. The results also clearly show that the females are unlikely to accept modern ethnic trend as there are less combination lifestyles between direction B and C.

The diagram in <Fig. 2> shows the mapping area of top 15 lifestyles of male samples. Males' lifestyles are mostly concentrated in direction D and AD, which are adventure, freedom and community. This lifestyle cluster implies the sense of masculinity. Direction CD is also crowded with large proportion, in which it



<Fig. 2> Top 15 males' lifestyle mapping

refers to feminine side of Bangkok males. While direction A, AB and B are to represent the conservative, mature, comfort, nature lover and quiet lifestyles. Similar to females' result, there is less population in the direction BC. Males do not directly present their lifestyles in the pure beauty direction.

VI. Conclusion

It can be concluded that the lifestyle segmentations found in this research are scattered in all slot of Plummer's personal value statements, however, they are focused in some certain groups of lifestyles. The results spread all over the major lifestyle segments, in which most of the top scores lifestyles include beauty, calm, accuracy, accomplishment, adventure and community. The finding after mapping all the results onto the consumer and fashion trend diagram implies that major markets for Bangkok female fashion consumers are scattered in all segments. However, there are less markets in the directions of modern relax, fashionable eco-design, comfortable chic and serious active styles. Similarly, Bangkok male consumers are unlikely to accept modern eco-design direction. There are strong sign that they are into active, adventure, beauty, mature, conservative and simplicity. It can be said there are 3 major mindsets for male consumers including; masculine, feminine and conservative. Therefore, urban adventure is one of the most popular theme in Thailand. Beauty mindset brings attractiveness to the ambitious look of accomplishment. The accomplishment character paves way to fashion preferences in a more structured silhouette with neat and firm material, balance design, classic and brand-oriented. Moreover, each minor lifestyle adjusts and adds on differing features. Accuracy and cleanliness mindset are both to reinforce the ambitious look with neat, sharp, clean, structural and firm style. Family plays important roles in female lifestyle. On the other hand, adventure is the ideal look to reinforce masculinity. Males prefer less involved in family roles.

The mapping diagrams above provide a clear picture of overall fashion market segmentations with proportion of populations and their mindsets towards the adoption of new fashion trends. The market congested in the diagram could be predicted as the mass market consumers. On the other hand, there are many less-population lifestyles that could be the so-called 'Blue Ocean' where those consumers are not well served.

The research results provide insightful information for designer, branding team, fashion merchandiser and marketer to understand the current movements of Bangkok fashion markets, the drives of consumers' behaviors, values and expectations. All these answers are hidden in consumers' attitudes, goals and values of life.

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