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Korean-American Consumer Attitude Toward Luxury Fashion Products

This study examines the influence of acculturation level and ethnic groups as a fashion reference group on Korean-American consumer attitude toward luxury fashion brands. Of interest is the role of Korean culture, which emphasizes luxury brand consumption due to the Confucion value of 'face', on Korean-American attitudes toward luxury brands. Data were collected from 108 young Korean-Americans living in the Pacific Northwest of the United States. Descriptive statistics, factor analysis, and multiple regressions were conducted for the analysis. In general, the respondents had relatively negative attitudes toward luxury fashion brands. Even though the acculturation level did not have a significant influence, attitudes toward luxury fashion brands were influenced by Korean reference groups. Age at immigration did not have a significant relationship with attitudes toward luxury brands. Korean-Americans who maintain ties with Korean culture are more likely to have a positive attitude towards luxury fashion, regardless of familarity with American culture.

The recent growth of the population size and buying power of Asian-Americans have attracted the attention of apparel marketers as a potentially lucrative market in the U.S. (Nguyen, 2006; Seckler,

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2005). The Asian-American population of 10 million as of 2000 is projected to become 14.1 million by 2009, with an expected buying power of $528 billion, which is approximately a 46% increase since 2004 (Lipke, 2005). Korean-Americans in particular, were among the largest 5 Asian-American ethnic groups in 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). This ethnic group with a population of over 1 million are known to be well-educated and economically stable (Hurh, 1998; Hurh & Kim, 1984; Kim & Naughton, 1993). A noted characteristics of Asian-Americans in general and Korean-Americans in particular, is the tendency to prefer well-known brands and be brand loyal (Lipke, 2005). There exists research findings that show Asian-Americans in general are brand-conscious and Korean-Americans in particular prefer national brands, and brand name products (Lee, 1989; Lee & Um, 1992).

The researchers who affirmed the brand consciousness of Korean-Americans (Lee, 1989; Lee & Um, 1992) have interpreted this tendency as a means of reducing uncertainty about what is expected by the host culture. According this hypothesis, new immigrants not familiar with the host culture use highly visible symbolic consumption (for example, clothing) as a visible manifestation of accepting the host culture. Conspicuous consumption of socially expressive name brand products or products from well-known companies may help the acculturating individuals visibly assert themselves as

American consumers (Lee & Um, 1992). As a result, new immigrants tend to rely on external cues (e.g. price or brands) in selecting fashion products.

Preference toward luxury brands is also prevalent among Asians who reside in Asia and Korean-American practices may also be linked to the Korean favoritism toward luxury products, not only to the lack of acculturation. Wong and Ahuvia (1998) assert that the strong preference of luxury products among East Asians may be related to certain cultural values (i.e. the concept of *face*, or the Confucian idea of interdependent self) which emphasize the social conformity in a materially focused, family-oriented, and hierarchical culture. This study investigates the influence of ethnic culture and acculturation level on Korean-American consumer attitude toward luxury fashion brands. Also of interest is how ethnic culture or ethnic groups influence ethnic individuals as a fashion reference group.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Luxury Brand Fashion Product Consumption

Luxury items are usually defined by rarity and scarcity (Nueno & Quelch, 1998). Through the Industrial Revolution, luxury items were made available to the masses and the meaning of luxury has changed. Luxury brands, as opposed to luxury objects, are defined by popularity and an association with a particular status. Phau and Prendergast (2001, as cited in Phau & Leng, 2007) proposed four central features of a luxury brand: perceived exclusivity, well recognized brand identity, high levels of brand awareness, strong sales, and customer patronage. Beverland (2004) suggested a model of a luxury branding and identified component dimensions related to the heritage of the brand (culture and history), product quality, product integrity, consumer endorsements, and brand image marketing. Consumer attitude toward luxury brand may be construed as the sum of the attitude toward each of these components.

Another aspect of luxury brands to consider is the negative aspect of luxury consumption. Even though Korean consumers are known for the

preference toward luxury goods, Korean scholars noted that certain guilt like feelings are strongly associated with luxury consumption among Koreans and that such feelings affect Korean attitudes toward prestige shopping (Choi, 2001; Kim *et al.*, 1994).

The consumption of luxury brands or luxury items is usually related to materialism in Western soceity. Materialism is a value that places importantance on the ownership of material possessions and a belief that possessions are the measures of success in life (Richins, 1994). Research findings indicate that high materialists are more likely to value prestigious items than low materialists (Richins, 1994). People purchase these luxury products because they believe they should possess prestigious items to be considered successful.

Wong and Ahuvia (1998), state that conspicuous consumption rather than materialism explained the Asian consumer preference toward luxury brands or luxury items. Even though conspicuous consumption and materialism are related concepts that are frequently treated as interchageable, they are actually distict from each other. Conspicuous consumption refers to the tendency of buying and using noticeable status symbols for social display and is distinct from materialism, which is a belief rather than a personality or a phenomenon. For Asians, according to Wong and Ahuvia, the concept of *face* plays an important role in shaping consumption behaviors, and the motive of maintaining face lead indivduals to engage in the social display of material wealth.

Acculturation and Luxury Consumption

Culture shapes and molds the behavioral and attitudinal patterns of the people who belong to it. For that reason, when individuals move from one culture to another, they learn about the norms and values of the new culture so as to try to adjust behavior and attitudes accordingly. This process of cultural learning process is called acculturation. Ethnic minority consumer purchasing behavior is closely related to the ethnic culture as well as the level of acculturation. Many consumer researchers have studied acculturation in relation to the shopping behavior of ethnic minorities (Kang & Kim, 1998; Lee & Um, 1992; Shim & Chen, 1996).

Acculturation needs to be considered in light of the relationship between immigrants, indigenous people, and culture (Berry, 2000; Ownbey & Horridge, 1998) as well as the duration of stay in the host culture (Shim & Chen, 1996). According to Berry (1990), acculturation at the individual level is reflected in behavior, identity, values, and attitudes. Therefore, measures of acculturation variables might assess the behaviors engaged in (e.g., consumption of food, movies, and clothing popular in another country) or attitudes, beliefs, or values. Values to which consumers subscribe are also related to the decision about what to buy and wear (Dickson & Littrell, 1996). It is reasonable to expect that the Korean-American consumers that strongly subscribe to collectivist Korean values to act and think in the way that most other Koreans do, and favor luxury brands in an attempt to display material wealth to others. The results of acculturation is a self identification as a member of the host group. Yet even after the acceptance of the American culture, Korean-Americans may maintain Korean values through a constant contact with Korean media or Korean people. The following hypotheses were posited in relation to this reasoning.

H_1: The degree to which individuals identify as Americans influence attitudes toward luxury fashion brands.

H_2: The degree to which they socialize with Koreans influences attitudes toward luxury fashion brands.

Some behavioral patterns may also appear in relation to the uncertainty that individuals experience in the process of acculturation. For example, Lee and Um (1992) suggested that some immigrants may adopt well-known brands when they are unsure about what is considered accepted in the new culture. Therefore, the context of acculturation has to be considered in order to obtain a better understanding of the process of acculturation and influence (Kang & Kim, 1998; Shim & Chen, 1996). The Asian American preference toward luxury items and luxury brands may be a result of an uncertainty about the host culture.

The acculturation process is a very stressful process for individuals; the interaction with others and the level of acculturation will influece the self esteem of immigrants (Rhee, Chang & Rhee, 2003). New immigrants with a high degree of uncertainty of the host culture may experience cultural conflicts or alienation with a consequently low self-esteem and high depressive feelings (Kuo, 1984; Rhee *et al.*, 2003).

The use of luxury brands may provide a means of compensating for the anxiety and buttressing the sense of self. For a better adjustment to the new culture, they could adopt well-known, visible, and materialistic status symbols as a way of showing the acceptance of a new culture and cultural values. Clothing or fashion accessories are the objects frequently used for this purpose due to the high social visibility.

New immigrants to the U.S. may feel high levels of uncertainty that may be particularly high if they moved into the new culture as adults. Children tend to be more flexible and receive greater in-depth exposure to the host culture through school education. The younger the age at immigration, the less immigrants may experience uncertainty to the host culture. Therefore, the age at immigration can be a good indicator to the uncertainty level. The following hypothesis was made.

H_3: The level of uncertainty to the host culture (as measured by the age at immigration) influences the attitude toward luxury fashion brands.

Fashion Reference Group Influence

Fashion reference groups are the group of people that individuals refer to or rely on in order to collect information on fashion. Fashion reference groups influence individual attitudes toward luxury fashion brands in a direct manner. One way that the level of acculturation affects the consumption behavior may be through the fashion reference group influence. Korean Americans may seek fashion information from family, friends, or from celebrities, and these fashion reference groups may be composed of Koreans or Americans. Depending on the levels of acculturation, Korean Americans will choose either Korean or American styles as fashion reference

groups, the influence of fashion reference groups of Korean Americans will have some covariation with the levels of acculturation and familiarity to the host culture as well as with the attitude toward luxury fashion brands.

H₄: Fashion reference groups influence attitudes toward luxury brands.

RESEARCH METHOD

A survey was conducted with a convenient sample of Korean-American consumers. The survey instrument was based on existing literature on ethnic identity, acculturation, and fashion-related behavior (Beverland, 2004; Cheng, 2000; Kang & Kim, 1998; Phau & Leng, 2007; Suinn *et al.*, 1992). The questionnaire was approved by an Institutional Human Subject Review Board of Seattle Pacific University in Seattle, Washington. The questionnaire included questions related to the acculturation level, attitude toward presitgious fashion brands, and fashion reference groups, as well as demographic gender, occupation, marital status, education, and household income. All questions were asked in English.

Questions were included that measure the association with American culture and Korean culture to determine the acculturation level of the respondents. Based on previous research (Cheng, 2000; Kang & Kim, 1998; Suinn *et al.*, 1992), two acculturation factors considered important were chosen: ethnic group identification and socialization with Koreans. For the ethnic group identification, the respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they identify themselves as American on a 7-point scale (7 = 100% American, 1 = 0% American). For the measurement of socialization with Koreans, respondents were asked to indicate what percentage of people they socialize with are Korean. The questionnaire also included a measure of attitude toward luxury brands developed by the authors based on previous research (Beverland, 2004). This measure consists of 19 items designed to ask the attitude of respondents toward different aspects of luxury brands. Respondents were asked to indicate

how much they agree to each of the statements on a 5-point scale.

For the fashion reference groups, respondents were asked, "Where do you get your fashion related information?" and 13 alternative groups were presented. The reference groups were composed of family, friends, coworkers, and celebrities; each of these groups were broken down into 3 groups based on ethnicity (Koreans, Non-Korean Asians & Non-Asians). In addition, "Others" category was added for all other people not included in the 12 groups. Respondents were to indicate the extend to which they influenced each of these groups on a 6-point Likert scale rated from "very much" to "not at all".

Most of the data were collected through Korean-American organizations based in Seattle Washington in January through May, 2003. Various data collection methods such as email survey, survey on the Web, as well as print-version questionnaires were utilized. Some participants were contacted through the acquaintances of the authors or by a snowballing method. Respondents received a gift valued at about $3.00 for participation. Out of the 115 questionnaires returned, five unusable questionnaires were excluded, resulting in a final sample size of 108.

Table 1 shows the demographic information of the sample. In order to control for the age and cohort effects, the ages of the respondents was limited to under 40. The age ranged from 18 to 39, and the mean was 24.4. Approximately 60% of the respondents were undergraduate or graduate students and another 25% had professional jobs such as doctors, dentists, teachers, attorneys, and engineers. The respondents were either first- or second-generation Americans. An SPSS version 10.1 was used for the data analysis. Factor analysis and multiple regressions were conducted for data analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Factor Analysis of Attitudes Toward Luxury Fashion Brands

A factor analysis with a direct oblimin rotation with 19 items of attitude toward luxury brand measure.

TABLE 1. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE (N = 108)

Demographic Variables	Valid %	Demographic Variables	Valid %
Age		Education level	
Under 20	32.4	completed high school	27.1
21-25	29.5	completed college degree	44.9
26-30	21.9	some graduate school	11.2
31-35	11.4	completed graduate school	14.0
35 and above	4.8		
Gender		Annual household income ($)	
Female	37.0	20,000 - 29,999	21.3
Male	63.0	30,000 - 39,999	16.0
Occupation		40,000 - 49,999	10.6
Undergrad Students	40.2	50,000 - 59,999	8.5
Graduate students	22.3	60,000 - 69,999	7.4
Professionals	26.0	70,000 and above	36.2
Homemakers	4.8		
Other	6.7	Religion	
Marital Status		Christian - Protestant	85.0
Single (Never married)	67.0	Christain - Catholic	9.3
Single parent	2.8	Buddhism	2.8
Married	30.2	None	2.8

Direct oblimin rotation was used because this method allows the study to assume correlations among factors. Five items with factor loadings lower than .4 on all the factors were excluded from the analysis. As a result, four factors were identified: Pride/Recognition, Snobbishness, Aspiration, and Knowledge (Table 2).

Factor one, "Pride/Recognition", explained 46.5% of the total variance and included items such as "I buy replicas of luxury brands," "I think wearing luxury brand products shows the refined tastes of the wearer," or "wearing products from luxury brands is important for me."

Factor two, "Snobbishness" included items that are related to negative attitude toward luxury brands such as "I think those who wear luxury brands are snobs," "I believe most of the cost of luxury brands is only for the brand name itself." This factor accounted for 9.8% of the total variance.

Factor three was named "Aspiration," and explained 6.3% of the total variance. The factor included three items, "I believe it is good to have at least one or two good articles of fashion items," "I would buy products of luxury brands if I can afford them," and "I go to stores that sell luxury brands from time to time to check out the new products."

Factor four was named "Knowledge". This factor included three items "I even know some luxury brands that not many people are familiar with," "I am familiar with luxury brands," and "Although luxury brands are expensive, the price is acceptable considering the quality." Factor four explained 6.2% of the total variance. These factors altogether explained 68.8% of the total variance.

Table 3 shows the relationships among the factors. Even though there were significant positive relations among Pride/Recognition, Aspiration, and Knowledge, Snobbishness did not have any relationships with other factors.

For further analysis, the average scores of the items loaded in respective factor were calculated. The means and standard deviations of the resulting variables are also shown in Table 2. The average score of factor 1, Aspiration/Recognition was smaller than 3 on a 5-point scale, which indicates the respondents had relatively low motives to purchase luxury fashion items out of aspiration or for recognition by others. The relatively low average score of factor 2, which was 2.81, indicates that respondents somewhat acknowledge that luxury products have some values for the price.

Hypotheses Testing: Multiple Regressions

For each of the four factors, a separate stepwise multiple regression analysis was conducted on demographics, acculturation-related variables (H_1 &

TABLE 2. FACTOR ANALYSIS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD LUXURY FASHION BRANDS

Factors & Items	Factor Loading
Factor 1: Pride/Recognition	
- I buy replicas of luxury brands.	.812
- I think wearing luxury brand products shows the refined tastes of the wearer.	.719
- Wearing products from luxury brands is important for me.	.704
- When I see my friends or colleagues wearing luxury brand products, I want to buy the products, too.	.657
- I am proud of wearing luxury brands.	.633
- If you truly understand what quality product is, then you would be willing to pay for luxury brands.	.608

Eigenvalue:	5.78
% Variance Explained:	46.54
Cronbach's α:	.90
Mean(s.d.):	2.41 (.99)

Factor 2: Snobbishness	
- I think those who wear luxury brands are snobs.	.846
- I believe most of the cost of luxury brands is only for the brand name itself.	.827

Eigenvalue:	1.57
% Variance Explained:	9.78
Cronbach's α:	.61
Mean(s.d.):	2.81 (.98)

Factor 3: Aspiration	
- I believe it is good to have at least one or two good articles of fashion items.	.906
- I would buy products of luxury brands if I can afford them.	.657
- I go to stores that sell luxury brands from time to time to check out their new products.	.525

Eigenvalue:	1.01
% Variance Explained:	6.29
Cronbach's α:	.76
Mean(s.d.):	3.07 (1.09)

Factor 4: Knowledge	
- I even know some luxury brands that not many people are familiar with.	-.950
- I am familiar with luxury brands.	-.855
- Although luxury brands are expensive, the price is acceptable considering their quality.	-.597

Eigenvalue:	.99
% Variance Explained:	6.20
Cronbach's α:	.82
Mean(s.d.):	3.37 (1.05)

H_2), age at immigration (H_3), and fashion-related reference groups influences (H_4). Demographic variables, although not a part of hypotheses, were included in the regression models for the purpose of controlling for their effects. Here, gender, occupation, and marital status were coded as dummy variables. The regression analyses were conducted in two steps in order to explore the acculturation influence remains with and without the reference group influence controlled for. The reference groups variables were expected to have more direct effect on consumer attitudes and also have correlations to other demographics and acculturation variables, and could have concealed the influence of these variables.

TABLE 3. CORRELATIONS AMONG ATTITUDE TOWARD LUXURY FASHION BRAND FACTORS

	Pride/Recognition	Snobbishness	Aspiration
Snobbishness	.044		
Aspiration	.639***	.167	
Knowledge	.678***	.009	.565***

The multiple regression results for the first factor, Pride/Recognition is shown in Table 3. The first regression model with demographics and ethnic identity only was not significant ($F = 1.87$, $p = .073$), but the second model with reference groups influences was significant ($F = 2.61$, $p < .01$). Among the 10 reference groups (H_5), Korean friends ($b = .311$), Korean co-workers ($b = .283$), Korean

TABLE 4. MULTIPLE REGRESSION (DV: PRIDE/RECOGNITION)

Model	Independent Variables	β	t	
1	(Constant)		2.111*	$F = 1.87$
	Homemaker	-.288	-2.266*	$R^2 = .118$
2	(Constant)		2.410*	
	Age	-.478	-2.363*	
	Income	.394	3.065**	$F = 2.61**$
	Friends – Korean	.489	2.971**	$R^2 = .339$
	Coworkers: Korean	.554	2.117*	Adj $R^2 = .060$
	Celebrities: Korean	.603	3.027**	
	Celebrities: Non-Korean Asian	-.626	-2.596*	

Note. Predictors in Model 1: demographic variables (age, age at immigration, gender, income, occupation & marital status) and ethnic identity variables (identification as American & socialization with Koreans)
Predictors in Model 2: demographic variables, ethnic identity variables, 10 fashion reference groups

TABLE 5. MULTIPLE REGRESSION (DV: SNOBBISHNESS)

Model	Independent Variables	β	t	
1	(Constant)		1.713	$F = .969$
	Income	.297	2.250*	$R^2 = .118$

Note. Predictors in Model 1: demographic variables (age, age at immigration, gender, income, occupation & marital status) and ethnic identity variables (identification as American & socialization with Koreans)
Predictors in Model 2: demographic variables, ethnic identity variables, 10 fashion reference groups

celebrities ($b = .326$), and non-Korean Asians celebrities ($b = -.336$) had significant relationship along with age ($b = .008$) and income ($b = .197$) at the significance level of $p = .05$.

For the second factor, Snobbishness, neither of the regression models was significant ($F = .962$, $p = .463$; $F = 1.21$, $p = .277$). Income was the only significant predictor when reference groups influences were excluded. When reference groups influence entered the model, none of the predictors was found significant.

The multiple regression results for the third factor, Aspiration is shown in Table 5. Both the first regression model with demographics and ethnic identity only ($F = 2.36$, $p < .05$) and the second model with reference groups influences was found significant ($F = 2.39$, $p < .01$). In the first model, occupation (homemaker) had a significantly negative relationship with aspirations to luxury

brands. Those who are homemakers were less likely to aspire luxury brand products. The tendency of socializing with Koreans (H_4) had positive effects on the Aspiration factor. These two variables became insignificant when the reference groups influence entered and implies that these variables have some mutual influence with the fashion reference groups on Aspiration. In the second model, income ($\beta = .378$, $t = 2.876$, $p < .001$) and Korean friends ($\beta = .355$), Korean co-workers ($\beta = .631$), and other American celebrities ($\beta = .471$), and non-American celebrities ($\beta = -.503$) had significant relationship with Aspiration factor at p = .05 level.

For Knowledge, neither of the regression models was significant ($F = .983$, $p = .467$; $F = .977$, $p = .508$). None of the predictors in the first model was found significant. Only income was found significant in the second model ($\beta = .398$).

TABLE 6. MULTIPLE REGRESSION (DV: ASPIRATION)

Model	Independent Variables	β	t	
1	(Constant)		2.111*	$F = 2.36*$
	Occupation(Homemaker)	-.280	-2.260*	$R^2 = .246$
	Socializing with Koreans	.339	2.684**	Adj $R^2 = .141$
2	(Constant)		2.410*	
	Age	-.478	-2.363*	
	Income	.394	3.065**	$F = 2.39**$
	Friends: Korean	.489	2.971**	$R^2 = .502$
	Coworkers: Korean	.554	2.117*	Adj $R^2 = .292$
	Celebrities: Other American	.603	3.027**	
	Celebrities: Non-American	-.626	-2.596*	

Note. Predictors in Model 1: demographic variables (age, age at immigration, gender, income, occupation & marital status) and ethnic identity variables (identification as American & socialization with Koreans)
Predictors in Model 2: demographic variables, ethnic identity variables, 10 fashion reference groups

TABLE 7. MULTIPLE REGRESSION (DV: KNOWLEDGE)

Model	Independent Variables	β	t	
2	(Constant)		1.713	$F = .969$
	Income	.398	2.252*	$R^2 = .133$

Note. Predictors in Model 1: demographic variables (age, age at immigration, gender, income, occupation & marital status) and ethnic identity variables (identification as American & socialization with Koreans)
Predictors in Model 2: demographic variables, ethnic identity variables, 10 fashion reference groups

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study examined the attitude of Korean-American consumers toward luxury brands in relation to the levels of acculturation and fashion reference groups. The attitudes toward luxury brands were factor analyzed and four factors were identified: Pride/Recognition, Snobbishness, Aspiration, and Knowledge. Multiple regression analyses were conducted with these four factors in order to identify variables that influence Korean-American consumer attitude toward luxury brands. In general, the variables included in the models, especially the reference groups variable were quite effective in explaining the positive attitude of Korean-Americans toward luxury brands, but not the negative attitude or knowledge factors.

For Pride/Recognition, homemakers were found less likely to relate to pride or seek recognition from others with luxury brand consumption. When reference groups influence was controlled for, age, income, and reference groups, the influence was found to have a significant relationship with the Pride/Recognition factor. Those who are younger or with higher income were more likely to seek pride/recognition luxury brands. Also, those who consider Korean friends or coworkers, or Korean or Asian celebrities as fashion reference groups were more likely to take pride in the possession of luxury fashion brands. Similar relations were found for the Aspiration factor, except for age. Consumers with higher income or who consider Korean friends and coworkers, yet celebrities of other ethnicity as their fashion reference groups were more likely to aspire to luxury goods. None of the predictors except for income was found significant for Snobbishness or Knowledge factors: interestingly, income had a positive relationship with both snobbishness and knowledge. The higher the income, the more likely individuals were to think luxury brands were for

snobs, yet at the same time it was also likely that they aspire for luxury goods.

To summarize the results in relation to the hypotheses, the age of respondents at the time of immigration, identification as American, Korean media consumption, and socialization with Koreans were not significantly related to any of the factors of attitude toward luxury brands. Therefore hypotheses 1 through 4 were not supported, while hypothesis 5 was supported. Those whose reference groups were Koreans thought luxury brands would give them pride or social recognition and aspired for those brands. According to the results, Korean-Americans that were influenced more by Korean reference groups in terms of fashion tend to have positive attitudes toward the fashion items of luxury brands regardless of familiarity to American culture. No matter how long they lived in the US or who they identify themselves to be, these groups favored luxury brands if they cared about the opinions of other Koreans in fashion. This implies that the positive attitude of Korean-Americans toward luxury brands is due to the cultural differences, not to the uncertainty of US culture. Luxury brand items are associated with pride, recognition, and something aspired to among Korean-Americans in general. This information may be helpful for retailers and marketers who are interested in serving this market.

The implication of the results are that some Korean-Americans (in so far as they maintain ties with Korean culture) will continue to be interested in luxury fashion items. This finding challenges the interpretation of some scholars (Kang & Kim, 1998; Lee & Um, 1992) that Korean-American favoritism toward luxury products is attributable to the uncertainty about American culture. Rather, the account of Wong and Ahuvia (1998) of preferences for luxury brands as a means of social display of wealth seems more relevant. Another interesting result of this study is the positive influence of income on all 4 factors of attitudes toward luxury fashion brands. This indicates the importance of "materialism" not only conspicuous consumption among Korean-American consumers, which may be indicative of American influence for Wong and Ahuvia (1998).

A limitation of this research is that three out of the four factors of Attitude toward luxury brands (which were used as dependent variables) explained less than 10 percent of the total variance, which may raise a validity issue. Also the sample size was relatively small due to the difficulties in locating Korean American consumers. Also the use of a convenience sampling limits the application of the findings.

This study suggests to identify the specific cultural differences that contribute to the difference in brand attitudes for future research. Also, identifying the predictors for negative attitudes toward luxury brands may also be of interest. A comparison of the influence of acculturation level with other ethnic groups might also generate interesting and significant results related to the cultural influence on consumption.

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