

## MASTER'S THESIS

### Consumer decision-making styles and the segmentation of the apparel market: a Chinese case

Hui, Shuk Yin

*Date of Award:*  
1999

[Link to publication](#)

#### General rights

Copyright and intellectual property rights for the publications made accessible in HKBU Scholars are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners. In addition to the restrictions prescribed by the Copyright Ordinance of Hong Kong, all users and readers must also observe the following terms of use:

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from HKBU Scholars for the purpose of private study or research
- Users cannot further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- To share publications in HKBU Scholars with others, users are welcome to freely distribute the permanent URL assigned to the publication

5634139

TH  
M. PHIL  
1999HC

**Consumer Decision-Making Styles and  
The Segmentation of The Apparel Market:  
A Chinese Case**

**HUI Shuk Yin**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
Master of Philosophy**

**June 1999**

**Hong Kong Baptist University**

## ABSTRACT

This study focuses on applying a widely-used Scale – Consumer Style Inventory – to measure the decision-making styles of the Chinese consumers with particular reference to the apparel market. It is significant to study the Chinese consumer behavior because of the giant consumer market in China. However, it is necessary for researchers to examine the cross-cultural differences when any Western theories are applied to the Oriental context. Based on the above argument, two objectives are defined in the research: first, to examine the cross-cultural validity of the US-based Consumer Style Inventory in the Chinese culture; second, to test the applicability of the Inventory to the Chinese consumers in the apparel market.

Two stages of the study are carried out to achieve the objectives. The first part of the study examines the psychometric properties of the Inventory based on a sample of undergraduate students in Guangzhou, China. When comparing the result with the US-based Inventory, it is found that the Inventory is applicable to the Chinese population. The second part of the study deals with the application of the Inventory in the China's apparel market. The examination of the factor structure of the Inventory shows that it is appropriate for segmenting the real consumers. Therefore, the hybrid segmentation, combining demographic and decision-making styles, is adopted to segment the Chinese consumers. The result shows that older consumers are more quality conscious, fashion conscious, brand conscious, brand loyal and impulsive. Female consumers tend to be recreational and confused-by-overchoice, while males describe themselves as brand loyalers and impulsive shoppers. Married consumers tend to be more quality conscious, confused-by-overchoice, brand conscious, brand loyal and impulsive. Such demographic profiles are significant to marketers which can help to develop appropriate marketing strategies in the apparel business in China.

In conclusion, this research has contributions for both marketing theory and business practice. It is confirmed that the Consumer Style Inventory can apply to the Chinese culture with a focus on the apparel consumers. The Inventory is a suitable device to be used in understanding the Chinese consumer behavior and is a meaningful basis for market segmentation when combined with demographic variables.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Declaration.....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>List of Tables.....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>Chapter 1. Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1.    Significance of Studying Consumer Behavior in China.....	1
1.2.    The Importance of Conducting a Study in the Apparel Market.....	3
1.3.    Objectives of the Study.....	6
1.4.    Limitations of the Study.....	7
1.5.    Structure of the Thesis.....	8
<b>Chapter 2. Literature Review.....</b>	<b>10</b>
2.1.    Introduction.....	10
2.2.    Research on Shopping Orientations.....	10
2.3.    Consumer Decision-Making Styles.....	11
2.3.1.    Consumer Style Inventory.....	12
2.3.2.    Studies on Consumer Style Inventory.....	15
2.3.3.    How can Previous Research be Built On?.....	18
2.4.    Research on Hybrid (Psychographic/Demographic) Segmentation.....	19
2.4.1.    Age and Shopping Orientations.....	19
2.4.2.    Gender and Shopping Orientations.....	22
2.4.3.    Marital Status and Shopping Orientations.....	23
2.4.4.    Education Level and Shopping Orientations.....	25
2.4.5.    Occupation and Shopping Orientations.....	26
2.4.6.    Income Level and Shopping Orientations.....	27
2.4.7.    Summary.....	29
2.5.    Conclusion.....	29
<b>Chapter 3. Research Methodology.....</b>	<b>31</b>

3.1.	Introduction .....	31
3.2.	Research Design .....	31
3.2.1.	Descriptive Research.....	31
3.2.2.	Data Collection Methods.....	32
3.3.	Samples .....	32
3.3.1.	The Population and the Sampling Frame .....	33
3.3.2.	Data Collection Techniques.....	35
3.3.3.	The Determination of the Sampling Method and Sample Size .....	36
3.3.4.	Summary.....	38
3.4.	Instruments .....	39
3.5.	Procedures .....	40
3.6.	Data Analysis.....	41
3.6.1.	Cross-cultural Validation.....	41
3.6.2.	Business Application.....	43
3.7.	Conclusion.....	45
<b>Chapter 4. Data Analysis and Results.....</b>		<b>47</b>
4.1.	Introduction .....	47
4.2.	Survey Responses .....	47
4.2.1.	Survey Responses for the Cross-cultural Validation Sample.....	47
4.2.2.	Survey Responses for the Application Sample.....	47
4.2.2.1.	Response Analysis.....	48
4.2.2.2.	Characteristics of the Sample.....	49
4.3.	Results of Cross-cultural Validation.....	50
4.3.1.	Results of Factor Analysis.....	50
4.3.1.1.	Scale Purification and Factors Derivation .....	51
4.3.1.2.	Factors Interpretation.....	52
4.3.2.	Scale Reliability .....	56
4.3.2.1.	Reliability Levels of Eight Decision-Making Styles.....	56
4.3.2.2.	Reliability Level of Consumer Style Inventory .....	57
4.3.3.	Summary.....	57
4.4.	Results of Application Study.....	58
4.4.1.	Results of Factor Analysis.....	58
4.4.1.1.	Assumptions in Factor Analysis.....	58
4.4.1.2.	Deriving Factors and Assessing Overall Fit .....	59

4.4.1.3.	Interpreting the Factors.....	59
4.4.2.	Scale Reliability.....	63
4.4.2.1.	Reliability Level of Consumer Style Inventory .....	63
4.4.2.2.	Reliability Levels of Eight Decision-Making Styles.....	63
4.4.3.	Results of MANOVA.....	64
4.4.3.1.	Assumptions in MANOVA.....	65
4.4.3.2.	Estimation of the MANOVA Model and Assessing Overall Fit .....	67
4.4.3.3.	Interpretation of the Results.....	67
4.4.3.4.	Summary.....	72
4.4.4.	Results of Cross-tabulations with Chi-square Test.....	74
4.4.4.1.	Age by Fashion Sources .....	76
4.4.4.2.	Gender by Fashion Sources .....	77
4.4.4.3.	Marital Status by Fashion Sources .....	78
4.4.4.4.	Education Level by Fashion Sources .....	79
4.4.4.5.	Occupation by Fashion Sources.....	81
4.4.4.6.	Income Level by Fashion Sources .....	81
4.4.4.7.	Spending Level by Fashion Sources .....	82
4.4.4.8.	Shopping Frequency by Fashion Sources.....	83
4.4.4.9.	Summary.....	84
4.5.	Conclusion.....	85
<b>Chapter 5. Conclusions and Implications.....</b>		<b>87</b>
5.1.	Objectives of the Research.....	87
5.2.	Summary and Interpretation of the Findings.....	88
5.2.1.	Cross-cultural Validation Study.....	88
5.2.2.	Application Study .....	89
5.2.2.1.	Psychometric Properties of the Inventory.....	89
5.2.2.2.	Hybrid Segmentation.....	89
5.2.2.3.	Implementation of Promotion Strategies .....	93
5.3.	Contributions of the Research .....	93
5.3.1.	Theory .....	93
5.3.2.	Practice .....	94
5.4.	Suggestions for Future Research.....	97
5.5.	Concluding Remarks.....	99

<b>Chapter 6. References</b> .....	<b>100</b>
<b>Chapter 7. Appendices</b> .....	<b>108</b>
7.1.    Appendix A: Questionnaires (The First Survey).....	108
7.2.    Appendix B: Questionnaires (The Second Survey).....	114
<b>Chapter 8. Curriculum Vitae</b> .....	<b>121</b>