The Effects of Consumers' Values, Environment Self-identity, and Injunctive Norms on Enjoyment-based Intrinsic Motivation and Eco-friendly Apparel Purchasing Behavior

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The Effects of Consumers’ Values, Environment Self-identity, and Injunctive Norms on Enjoyment-based Intrinsic Motivation and Eco-friendly Apparel Purchasing Behavior

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The negative effects on the environment created by textiles and apparel products are considerably significant (Thøgersen, 2014). Thus, sustainable apparel design development, production, retailing, and consumption are becoming more important in both academic research and industrial practices (Golden, Subramanian, & Zimmerman, 2011). The majority of literature on pro-environmental behaviors, especially those studies guided by the Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) theory, have focused on obligation-based intrinsic motivation or personal norms to explain consumers’ environmental behavior. The reasoning for this approach is that pro-environmental behavior is related to costs in terms of money, time, effort, discomfort, and boringness (van der Werff & Steg, 2015). However, some people perform pro-environmental behaviors because the individuals enjoying doing it (Ryan & Deci, 2000) and perceive those as providing stimulation, comfort, and behavioral conformation by self and others (Bly, Gwozd & Reisch, 2015). Especially, sustainable fashion pioneers purchase eco-friendly apparel because it is enjoyable to do so (Szmigin & Carrigan, 2006). There is clear evidence that both descriptive and injunctive norms make distinctive contributions to pro-environmental behaviors, but little attention has been given to how both descriptive and injunctive norms differently influence people’s environmentally friendly apparel consumption behavior (Kim, Lee & Hur, 2012). Therefore, the aim of this study was to analyze how the individual’s values, environment self-identity, and descriptive norms, and injunctive norms influence enjoyment-based intrinsic motivation and eco-friendly apparel purchasing behavior.

Researchers conducted a paper-based survey from three universities in Korea. The sample for this research consisted of 353 college students comprising 39.7% male students (n = 140) and 60.3% female students (n = 213). The first set of multiple regression analyses was conducted to assess the effects of biospheric-altruistic values and egoistic values on consumers’ environmental self-identity in eco-friendly apparel purchasing behavior. Results indicated environmental self-identity was significantly influenced by both biospheric-altruistic (β = -.36, p < .001) and egoistic values (β = -.17, p = .001). In the second multiple regression analysis, we examined how strongly environmental self-identity, descriptive norms, and injunctive norms explained consumers’ enjoyment-based intrinsic motivation in eco-friendly apparel purchasing behavior. The variables explained 56% of the total variance in consumers’ enjoyment-based intrinsic motivation. Enjoyment-based intrinsic motivation was significantly influenced by environmental self-identity (β = .54, p < .001) and injunctive norms (β = .31, p < .001) but not significantly by descriptive norms. In the next regression analysis, college students’ eco-friendly
apparel purchasing behavior was regressed on enjoyment-based intrinsic motivation. Eco-friendly apparel purchasing behavior was significantly predicted by enjoyment-based intrinsic motivation ($\beta = .41, p < .001$).

Biospheric-altruistic values are positively related to environmental self-identity, but egoistic values had statistically significant influence on environmental self-identity in negative direction. Also, enjoyment-based intrinsic motivation to purchase eco-friendly apparel was strengthened by environmental self-identity and injunctive norms, while no significant influence by descriptive norms on enjoyment-based intrinsic motivation was found. The findings in this study suggest that college students with a strong environmental self-identity strengthened by biospheric-altruistic values enjoy purchasing eco-friendly apparel because enjoyment-based motivation is strongly related to the self-concept or connected with an individual’s self-expectations and conformity and self-realization are strongly related to eudaimonia. In addition, injunctive norm was internalized via enjoyment-based motivation for college student to purchase eco-friendly apparel. When injunctive norms become internalized through enjoyment-based intrinsic motivation, college students may not require an external sanction mechanism and thus focus attention on themselves rather than on external influences or information such as descriptive norms, and that internalized social approval contributes for college students to feel eudaimonia to purchase eco-friendly apparel purchase. Therefore, it is recommended that practitioners of eco-friendly apparel companies or non-profit environmental organizations develop meaningful messages for the customers and general publics, stimulating them to choose eco-friendly apparel of their own free will. That would increase people’s welling-being and form a positive link between eco-friendly purchasing and eudaimonia.

References


