Impact of Female Consumer Self-Image on Pursued Fashion Style

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Keywords
self-image, pursued fashion style

Abstract
This study investigates the impact of female consumer self-image on pursued fashion style. A survey was carried out among 717 women between the ages of 20 and 60 living in Seoul, Incheon, and Gyeonggi. Analysis was conducted in the following manner: SPSS 18.0 was used to perform an Exploratory Factor Analysis (descriptive analysis, principal factor analysis, Pearson correlation analysis, frequency analysis, and reliability analysis) and AMOS 21.0 was used to carry out a Confirmatory Factor Analysis. Based on a Structure Equation Model, results show that ideal self-image and realistic self-image, which are factors derived from psychology, affect pursued fashion style. By contrast, social self-image - derived from social contexts - does not. Therefore, the female consumers' self-image influences pursued fashion style: this is opposed to the relationship between the realistic self-image and ideal self-image of women, which is more unconscious and self-satisfying. The presented results indicate that we should respond to changes in the fashion industry and develop a deeper understanding of consumer niches to discover the factors that predict purchasing behavior. This knowledge can then be applied to establish market strategies. This study contributes to the literature by producing preliminary data that can help support such strategy formulation in the fashion and clothing industry.
I. Introduction

New information distribution and sharing methods such as smartphones and SNS (Social Network Services) are changing consumption patterns. This is common in Korea as well as in other countries such as China, the United States, and Germany.

This dramatic change in the market implies that marketing strategies for the clothing industry must also change because as environments change, basic human cognitive and emotional systems change (Mark, 2010). To cope with such market changes effectively, clothing markets must execute a differentiation strategy for each group by categorizing the needs and characteristics of various and multifaceted consumers into similar groups. Therefore, existing clothing market strategies must be modified from unpredictable consumption patterns to predictable patterns by applying multifaceted criteria that reflect the psychological and behavioral aspects of the self-image variables that distinguish consumer tastes. Also, since it is difficult to identify certain consumption patterns from seemingly superficial phenomena, businesses must take a closer look at consumers’ unconscious thoughts or collective unconscious.

Based on this issue of consciousness, this study reviews self-image variables in the fashion market at the fundamental level. It examines and verifies the causal relationship between the common latent variables of self-image used as social-psychological variables of clothing—namely ideal self-image, realistic self-image, and social self-image and the fashion styles that consumers pursue, such as sophisticated style, bold style, and decorative style. By examining the correlation between self-image and pursued fashion style, this study analyzes self-image, the leading social-psychological criterion variable of clothing, from the modern psychoanalytical perspective that emphasizes the human unconsciousness.

This study conducts an empirical analysis of female consumers. The variables are established based on the sociological theories proposed by Mid (Schenk & Holman, 1980) and James (1980) and the psychoanalytical theories of Freud (Evans, 1996/2004) and Lacan (Evans, 1996/2004; Glowinski, Marks, & Murphy, 2001/2003), who emphasized the unconscious aspect of the human mind. It then uses a structural equation model to clarify the causal relationship between self-image (independent variable) and pursued fashion style (dependent variable). In particular, it measures ideal, realistic, and social self-images and identifies their effects on pursued sophisticated, bold, and decorative fashion styles.

There are, in general, many more than three self-image factors as well as pursued fashion styles. The three variables for self-image factors and the three variables for pursued fashion styles selected for this study were chosen due to relative strong mutual correlation. By examining the effect of the self-image of women on pursued fashion style, this study aims to provide a more effective strategy for unpredictable environmental changes in the clothing market. Further, this study can provide practical guidance for establishing a discriminative, yet efficient, marketing strategy by identifying the in-depth needs of various consumers.

II. Theoretical Background

1. Self-image: Comparing Actual and Ideal

   Self-image with Social Self-image

Self-image, which is a decisive factor or criteria of human behavior, is one’s holistic view or emotions about oneself (Rosenberg, 1979). Therefore, self-image affects one’s decision-making process when purchasing clothes. Self-image, which serves as a personal criterion, is expressed either consciously or unconsciously during the process of making clothing choices. The chosen clothes play an important role in realizing one’s ideal self-image (Compton, 1962). In other words, if one thinks of oneself as falling short of an ideal self-image, one may achieve the ideal self-image by purchasing clothes that can bridge the gap between self-image and the ideal self-image. Therefore, in addition to fulfilling its basic functions, clothing can compensate for or supplement
self-image that is not congruent to the ideal self-image (McCracken, 1998). There is thus a close relationship between self-image and clothes. James (1980) pointed out that one’s body is the most important factor of the material self, followed by clothing.

Because of the close relationship between self-image and clothing, the former has served as a major psychological variable. Moreover, considerable research has been undertaken on fashion from diverse perspectives since the first study in this area (Chung & Rhee, 1996), which states that self-image is crucial when it comes to making clothing choices. Subsequent studies of self-image have performed correlation analysis on self-image and a variety of questionnaire items such as clothing purchase behavior, brand image, pursued clothing image, clothing consumption value, fashion style and image, market segmentation, image in virtual space, and inclination to be a fashion leader (Yoon & Lee, 2015). Among studies related to self-image (Cho, 2003; Lee & Lim, 2003; Mun & Park, 2000), Mun and Park (2000) pointed out that self-image is a key variable that makes segmentation into consumer groups possible and that self-image is incongruent to the pursued clothing image depending on time, place, occasion, and consumer characteristics. Other studies have focused on introducing latent variables that form the constructs. According to Yeam and Kim (2004), consumers choose and wear clothes according to their self-image. However, there is a minor difference between pursued self-image and the actual image of the clothing that they wear. Shim (2006) found that self-image can change one’s evaluation of clothing image and influence preferred clothing style. According to Kim, Lee, and Lee (2012), male office workers’ preferred clothing image, pursued image, and image satisfaction vary depending on their Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI).

Diverse constructs of self-image have been discussed in previous studies, most of which, including those that used actual (realistic) and ideal self-image (Cho, 2003; Kim, Hahn, Hong, & Kim, 2014; Lee & Kim, 1997; Lim, 1998; Ryu & Hong, 2001; Yoon & Lee 2015), have employed self-image in their detailed factor analyses. For example, Yeam and Kim (2004) classified the self-image of female students in Seoul into five factors: sociable, glamorous, intelligent, girly, and mature. Kim and Kim (2014) studied middle-aged men and classified their self-image into seven positive and negative factors: luxurious, sophisticated, elegant, plain, common, neat, and poised.

It is important to note that self-image factors, or the measurement of self-image items, can be developed in a random and arbitrary fashion, as image is a subjective concept. For example, people who live in the modern world tend to change their personality to adjust to changing situations and have multiple identities as a result of being in complex relationships. This makes it difficult for consumers to understand their self-image or identity from a consistent or unified perspective (Lee, 2002).

To overcome the above problems, this study aims to examine self-image by establishing constructs based on a psychoanalysis method that focuses on the deep unconsciousness of consumers and on a sociological method that deals with conscious and apparent phenomena. Lacan, who is deemed to be a successor of Sigmund Freud, divided the structure of the psyche into three orders: the imaginary, symbolic, and real (Evans, 1996/2004). The imaginary is a stage before entering the symbolic, and the symbolic is the world where self is included in the world’s order. The real is the world that exists, but that is hard to describe through human language. According to this psychological topology, ideal ego, in the imaginary, forms an ideal self-image as a result of narcissistic self-identification. And ideal ego, in the symbolic, forms a realistic self-image defined by law, institutions, customs, ethics, rules, and linguistic systems (Yoon & Lee, 2015). Ideal and realistic self-images work deep down in human consciousness in the area of the unconsciousness. Social self-image can fully reflect the conscious and apparent characteristics of consumers who are different from consumers with ideal and realistic self-images. Social self-image was coined by Schenk and Holman (1980) to conceptualize situational self-image, which is how others view oneself. In other words, social
self-image is not a subject that expresses one’s image in the unconsciousness, but an object that is viewed and recognized by others. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the impact of ideal, realistic, and social self-images as leading variables on pursued fashion style.

2. Pursued Fashion Style

Fashion style is a unique form of style expressed differently depending on the type, color, and material of clothing and accessories. Pursued fashion style is pursued by consumers according to their preferences, tastes, and brand loyalty. It is a definite and concrete expression, and thus is different from the subjective image of a certain object. In other words, pursued fashion style is an objective and outward expression, while self-image is subjective.

While abstracting and classifying a variety of pursued fashion styles might be a subjective process, however, prior studies of pursued fashion style and image have tended to handle the two concepts comprehensively, rather than distinguishing them from each other. The pursued image of clothing is a result of a compromise between the realistic and ideal self. Consumers seek an image that is not too different from their self-image, while pursuing their ideal self-image (Lim, 2008). Pursued clothing image is the image that consumers want to have by wearing the clothes (Row & Park, 2008). It is a set of comprehensive feelings conveyed by the clothing that one wears (Kim et al., 2012).

The inclination to aspire to a particular fashion style was introduced by Wan, Youn, and Fang (2001). This inclination can serve as a construct for fashion consciousness (Park, 2013). Fashion style is a characteristic expressed by clothing and fashion accessories. It is a set of specific features of design that can distinguish a certain form from others (Kim & Kim, 2014), while fashion image is expressed as a combination of the color, material, and silhouette of clothes (Kim et al., 2014). Past research on clothing image has identified certain construct factors, and these have been used as adjective pairs to evaluate clothing image (Kim et al., 2012).

Many studies have examined pursued fashion style. Ryoo and Kim (2001) classified the clothing style of women into four factors: boldness, activeness, attractiveness, and evaluation. They found a significant difference in clothing style preference depending on consumers’ self-image. Each group of consumers’ chose clothing that fit their characteristics, which makes segmenting consumers possible. This result corresponds to the findings of Frank that clothing style preference is affected by personal factors (Ryoo & Kim, 2001).

Lee and Kim (2003) examined the impact of self-image and attitude, which are personal and psychological factors of consumers, toward clothing. They found a significant difference in the clothing evaluation criteria and preferred clothing styles of consumers and showed that these depended on their self-image and attitude toward clothing. This finding confirmed that self-image and attitude toward clothing are important variables that influence consumers’ evaluation of clothing products. Ahn, Hwang, and Jung (1999) found that in addition to cultural and social factors, personal factors such as personality and self-image and psychological factors such as belief and attitude affect the entire clothing purchase process.

Shim (2006) found that the preference for clothing style is influenced by personal factors. Specifically, the evaluation of image and preferred clothing style varies depending on the self-image of a consumer. The study analyzed preferred fashion styles and examined the characteristics of each style to identify the types and characteristics of fashion styles of contemporary men. It classified consumers’ fashion styles into three types, namely pursuing a conservative and classy style, pursuing a modern and refined style, and pursuing a bold and diverse style, and found differences in the conservative, indifferent to fashion, and self-conscious fashion-pursuing factors. However, the types who were open-minded and showed their personality as well as those who enjoyed bold and diverse fashion styles were self-conscious or enjoyed gaining the attention of others. These findings indicate that fashion styles that satisfy the realistic needs and lifestyle of men should be provided to them (Hong,
Kim, & Kim, 2015). Therefore, one can expect self-image to affect the sophisticated, bold, and decorative pursued fashion styles, as examined in this study.

III. Research Methodology

1. Research Model and Hypotheses

The objective of this study is to examine the constructs of self-image, and investigate the impact of self-image on a pursued fashion style. In our model, self-image has three variables: ideal, realistic, and social. Similarly, pursued fashion style also has three variables: sophisticated, bold, and decorative. A structural model was developed to examine the causal relationship between self-image and pursued fashion style. A structural equation modeling technique was then used to examine this research model. Previous research suggests that self-image affects pursued fashion style (Choi, 2010; Kim et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2014; Mun & Park, 2000; Shim 2006; Yeam & Kim, 2004). Also, based on previous research, one can assume that the relationship between self-image and the pursued fashion style may vary depending on the characteristics of female consumers. Hence, this study assumed that self-image would exert influence on the pursued fashion style. Hypotheses were, therefore, formulated and tested to examine the relationships between ideal, realistic, and social self-images and the sophisticated, bold, and decorative pursued fashion styles. The research model and hypotheses are shown in Figure 1.

![Figure 1. Research Model](image-url)
The hypotheses of this study are as follows:

H1-1: Ideal self-image has a positive impact on the sophisticated pursued fashion style.
H1-2: Ideal self-image has a positive impact on the bold pursued fashion style.
H1-3: Ideal self-image has a positive impact on the decorative pursued fashion style.
H2-1: Realistic self-image has a positive impact on the sophisticated pursued fashion style.
H2-2: Realistic self-image has a positive impact on the bold pursued fashion style.
H2-3: Realistic self-image has a positive impact on the decorative pursued fashion style.
H3-1: Social self-image has a positive impact on the sophisticated pursued fashion style.
H3-2: Social self-image has a positive impact on the bold pursued fashion style.
H3-3: Social self-image has a positive impact on the decorative pursued fashion style.

2. Measurement Instruments

Referring to previous studies, reliable and valid measurement instrument items for self-image and pursued fashion style were selected and modified for this study (Table 1). To measure self-image, this study used measurement items from a psychological analysis survey of the transactional analysis originally developed by Eric Berne as well as research based on Berne’s work, including Bae and Chung (2006), Cho (2003), Choi (2010), Chung and Rhee (1996), Hwang and Lee (2005), Kim (2014), Kim et al. (2012), Kim et al. (2014), Lee and Kim (1997), Lee and Kim (2003), Lee and Lim (2003), Lim (1998), Mun and Park (2000), Ryu and Hong (2001), Wee and Sohn (2001), Yoon (2007), Yoon and Lee (2015). Based on these studies, 50 items for self-image were used for this study.

In order to test reliability and validity, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), including reliability tests, was performed using SPSS. Next a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) which included factor loading analysis and reliability tests, was conducted to classify self-image into ideal self-image, realistic self-image, social self-image. After CFA, 13 items remained for self-image: six, four, and three items are for ideal self-image, realistic self-image, and social self-image, respectively. All the questionnaire items were rated by using a five-point Likert scale (1= not at all, 5= very true).


One way to measure the pursued fashion style is to employ semantic differential scales that use pairs of adjectives for conducting factor analysis. This study used a semantic differential method. An array of measurement items for variables that form pursued fashion style had been introduced in the studies cited above. For this study, 22 items for pursued fashion style were used. These items included sophisticated, urban, bold and sexy, colorful patterns, and gentle floral patterns. In order to test reliability and validity, an EFA, including reliability tests, was performed using SPSS. Next a CFA which including factor loading analysis and reliability tests, was conducted to classify pursued fashion styles into sophisticated, bold, and decorative. After CFA, 12 items remained for pursued fashion styles five, four, and three items are for sophisticated, bold, and decorative pursued fashion styles, respectively. Again, all the questionnaire items were rated by using a five-point Likert scale (1= not at all, 5= very true).

3. Data Collection and Analysis

The data for this study were collected from online surveys of female consumers in their 20s to 60s. The surveys were administered by Embrain, an academic research survey company, using female panelists from Seoul, Incheon, and Gyeonggi. Three preliminary surveys were conducted from March 16, 2012 to April 3, 2012.
to collect the basic data required to assess the convenience to respond to the survey, problems of the scale, measurement time, and reliability of the measurement instruments. Based on these three preliminary surveys, these initial surveys were revised to compose the final survey for this study. For the primary survey, 3,902 panelists were contacted and 772 panelists responded. Excluding incomplete responses, 717 responses were used for the analysis. The primary survey was conducted from 9 May 2012 to 18 May 2012.

The analysis methods for this study are as follows. To test reliability and validity, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), including descriptive analysis, principal factor analysis, Pearson correlation analysis, frequency analysis, and reliability analysis was conducted to identify the factors, using SPSS 18.0. Next, a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed using AMOS 21.0 to confirm the reliability and validity of the measurement model. To verify the research model, structural equation modeling was also conducted using AMOS 21.0. The maximum likelihood method was used for the model estimation.

In terms of the demographic characteristics of the sample, respondents were equally distributed across age groups owing to the convenience sampling approach used. More than 50 respondents belonged to each age group. Each group of women in their 20s (23.3%), 30s (23.7%), and 40s (24%) accounted for over 23% of the total population. There were 135 respondents in their 50s (18.8%) and 73 in their 60s (10.2%). In terms of marital status, 33 respondents (4.6%) were unmarried and 684 (95.4%) were married. In terms of occupation, 50.3% of respondents were housewives. The rest were in sales and service (5.9%), office administration (28.3%), professional engineering (6.3%), business administration (1.0%), specialized professions (2.9%), full-time education (2.2%), and other (3.1%). In total, 475 women (66.2%) had a Bachelor’s degree, 210 (29.3%) had a high school diploma, and 32 (4.5%) had a Master’s degree. Further, 327 women (45.6%) had an average monthly household income ranging between KRW 3 million and 5 million. The average monthly household income of 183 respondents (25.5%) was below KRW 3 million and that of 154 respondents (21.5%) was in the range of KRW 5 to 7 million. Only 53 respondents (7.4%) had an average monthly household income above KRW 7 million. The majority of respondents, 403 women (56.2%), lived in Seoul compared with 314 (43.8%) who lived in Incheon and Gyeonggi. Among those who lived in Seoul, 195 respondents (27.2%) lived in Gangnam and 208 (29.8%) lived in Gangbuk, which means that the sample sizes in the two areas were approximately the same.

IV. Results and Discussion

1. Testing the Reliability and Validity of the Constructs

As shown in Table 1, the fit indices of the measurement model were $\chi^2=745.287$ ($df=258$, $p=0.000$), TLI=0.902, RMR=0.035, GFI=0.925, CFI=0.916, NFI=0.877, and RMSEA=0.051, which indicated that the fitness of the model reached a satisfactory level. The Cronbach’s $\alpha$ coefficient was measured to evaluate the internal consistency of the constructs. The values were in the range of 0.585 and 0.864, which indicated high internal consistency. The factor loadings of all the measurement items were greater than 0.5 and all the $t$-values were significant at $p=0.000$. This finding satisfied the validity of each construct.

The absolute value of factor loading shows the degree of correlation between each variable and the underlying factor. If this value exceeds 0.4, the variable is deemed to be significant, and if it exceeds 0.5, the variable is important. Different significant factor loading levels should be applied depending on the sample size, which means that for larger sample sizes and a higher number of variables, lower consideration levels should be used (Kim, 2011). The sample size of this survey was 717, which was higher than the factor loading threshold.

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Further, as shown in Table 2, the Cronbach’s $\alpha$ and Construct Reliability (CR) values were large and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for the two factors were greater than the squares of the correlations coefficients. The CR of each latent variable was between
0.707 and 0.879, while the AVE, namely the average of the squares of the standardized factor loadings, was between 0.450 and 0.594, which is at an acceptable level. These results verified the convergent validity of the constructs of the measurement variables. To assess discriminant validity, bold and decorative styles were chosen because this pair had the highest correlation between their variables. The AVEs were compared with the squares of the correlation coefficients, finding that both were greater than these squares, which satisfied discriminant validity. In terms of the reliability of the measurement items, Cronbach’s $\alpha$ ranged between 0.585 and 0.864, indicating high reliability and thus internal consistency.

Table 1. Summary of the Measurement Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Factor loading</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Cronbach’s</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>AVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideal Self-Image</td>
<td>So respectful for rules that I don’t even.</td>
<td>0.556</td>
<td>_a</td>
<td>0.759</td>
<td>0.842</td>
<td>0.473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Think highly of and comply with social ethics, rules, and regulations.</td>
<td>0.646</td>
<td>12.067</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Right in position and not hasty.</td>
<td>0.684</td>
<td>12.449</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tend to make positive rather than negative remarks about other people.</td>
<td>0.553</td>
<td>10.951</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Try to have a kind, tender, and affectionate way of behaving and talking.</td>
<td>0.582</td>
<td>11.320</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fond of taking part in social voluntary activities.</td>
<td>0.527</td>
<td>10.586</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realistic Self-Image</td>
<td>Observe and analyze phenomena and make decisions.</td>
<td>0.760</td>
<td>_a</td>
<td>0.760</td>
<td>0.844</td>
<td>0.580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Handle things efficiently.</td>
<td>0.627</td>
<td>13.035</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Predict my future realistically and sharply and act.</td>
<td>0.547</td>
<td>11.830</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perceive things based on facts and data.</td>
<td>0.525</td>
<td>11.442</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Self-Image</td>
<td>Try not to fall short of others’ expectations.</td>
<td>0.518</td>
<td>_a</td>
<td>0.585</td>
<td>0.707</td>
<td>0.450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hard to say no to other people.</td>
<td>0.682</td>
<td>8.405</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mind someone because of human relationships.</td>
<td>0.513</td>
<td>8.236</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophisticated</td>
<td>Sophisticated.</td>
<td>0.667</td>
<td>_a</td>
<td>0.860</td>
<td>0.879</td>
<td>0.594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban and sophisticated.</td>
<td>0.654</td>
<td>20.309</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rich-looking.</td>
<td>0.827</td>
<td>17.851</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elegant and graceful.</td>
<td>0.761</td>
<td>16.948</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Luxurious materials that seem to be expensive.</td>
<td>0.717</td>
<td>16.192</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold</td>
<td>Irregular and uncommon silhouette.</td>
<td>0.674</td>
<td>_a</td>
<td>0.864</td>
<td>0.844</td>
<td>0.576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bold and sexy.</td>
<td>0.664</td>
<td>19.590</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bold and colorful patterns.</td>
<td>0.817</td>
<td>17.235</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visible and colorful.</td>
<td>0.790</td>
<td>17.012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decorative</td>
<td>Decorated with frills, lace, and ribbons.</td>
<td>0.651</td>
<td>_a</td>
<td>0.722</td>
<td>0.732</td>
<td>0.478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gentle floral prints.</td>
<td>0.652</td>
<td>12.684</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decorated with careful embroidery and beads.</td>
<td>0.772</td>
<td>13.607</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi-square=745.287 ($df=258$, $p=0.000$), CFI=0.916, TLI=0.902, GFI=0.925, AGFI=0.906, RMR=0.035, RMSEA=0.051

a: Unstandardized Estimates were Fixed by a Value of one, so the t-value was not Given.
Table 2. Squared Correlations and AVE of the Constructs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideal Self-Image</th>
<th>Realistic Self-Image</th>
<th>Social Self-Image</th>
<th>Sophisticated</th>
<th>Bold</th>
<th>Decorative</th>
<th>AVE</th>
<th>CR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideal Self-Image</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.473</td>
<td>0.842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realistic Self-Image</td>
<td>0.510</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.580</td>
<td>0.844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Self-Image</td>
<td>0.492</td>
<td>0.158</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.450</td>
<td>0.707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophisticated</td>
<td>0.366</td>
<td>0.335</td>
<td>0.160</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.594</td>
<td>0.879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>0.124</td>
<td>0.022</td>
<td>0.418</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.576</td>
<td>0.844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decorative</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>0.121</td>
<td>0.103</td>
<td>0.355</td>
<td>0.565</td>
<td>0.478</td>
<td>0.732</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Testing the hypotheses

The results of the structural equation model are shown in (Figure 2). The key fit indices were $\chi^2=910.242$ ($df=258$, $p=0.000$), TLI=0.869, CFI=0.887, NFI=0.850, RMSEA=0.059, RMR=0.072, GFI=0.909, and AGFI=0.885. Overall, the fitness of the model was satisfactory. The hypothesis test results are shown in (Figure 2).

Testing the hypotheses confirmed that the impact of self-image on pursued fashion style varies depending on the self-image variables. For H1, the results for H1-1 ($\beta = 0.356$, $p = .001$) and H1-3 ($\beta = 0.330$, $p < .001$) showed that ideal self-image had a positive impact on the sophisticated and decorative pursued fashion styles. However, H1-2 was rejected because it was not statistically significant. This finding corresponds with previous research results (Choi, 2010; Kim et al., 2012; Mun & Park, 2000).

Considering H2, H2-1 ($\beta = 0.166$, $p < .01$) was supported because the analysis showed that realistic self-image had a positive impact on the sophisticated pursued fashion style. However, H2-2 and H2-3, which suggested that realistic self-image affects the bold and decorative pursued fashion styles, respectively, were both rejected because they were not statistically significant. These results also agree with the literature (Choi, 2010; Kim et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2014; Mun & Park, 2000).

Finally, H3 claimed that social self-image has a positive impact on the sophisticated, bold, and decorative pursued fashion styles. Contrary to this prediction, the results indicated that social self-image had a negative impact. Hence, H3-1, H3-2, and H3-3 were all rejected. This finding suggests that a person with a higher social self-image pursues sophisticated, bold, and decorative fashion styles to a lower extent.

To summarize, H1-1, H1-3, and H2-1 were accepted. These results are consistent with those of previous research, which state that realistic consumers pursue a sophisticated clothing image in busy city environments and pursue decorative clothing when they are near their homes (Mun & Park, 2000). By examining the difference between the groups in terms of self-identity, this study found a significant difference in the decorative pursued fashion style. This finding supports the results of Choi (2010), who stated that target-oriented, self-accepting, and assertive groups have a positive correlation with the sophisticated pursued fashion style. The findings of this study also support the research results of Kim et al. (2012), who showed that image satisfaction, preferred clothing image, and pursued clothing image vary depending on the MBTI of consumers. Those authors also found that extroverted consumers pursue a sophisticated image compared with their introverted counterparts. Finally, the findings of this study are comparable to Kim et al. (2014), who categorized fashion image based on fashion style, preferred color, and self-image. According to Kim et al. (2014), realistic
self-image shares common components with the modern and personality-oriented fashion images. Furthermore, consumers who like modern and personality-oriented fashion, prefer the sophisticated fashion style and an urban self-image.

V. Conclusion

This study investigated the effect of women's self-image on pursued fashion style by establishing the unconscious in-depth factors of self-image based on modern psychoanalysis and the conscious superficial social factors of self-image based on a sociological methodology. To do this, a quantitative survey of 717 women in their 20s to 60s from Seoul, Incheon, and Gyeonggi was conducted. The results of the study are summarized as follows.

First, ideal self-image had a static effect on pursued fashion style. More specifically, its effect on the sophisticated and decorative pursued fashion styles was significant, implying that ideal self-image, which has strong self-satisfying characteristics based on the imaginary ideal ego, is closely related to pursued fashion styles and that it can be a major criterion variable.

Second, this study found that realistic self-image had a static effect on the sophisticated pursued fashion style, but that the effect was not significant for the bold and decorative pursued fashion styles. This result implies that realistic self-image, based on the reality principle of the symbolic system and ideal ego, has a limited effect as a

![Figure 2. Path Coefficients of the Structural Equation Model](image)
criterion variable. This result can be inferred from the fact that conscious and superficial psychological factors are involved in realistic self-image to some extent because it is closely related to reality principles such as laws, customs, ethics, and language systems.

Third, social self-image did not have a significant effect on pursued fashion style, suggesting that despite emphasizing the social aspects of self-image shown to others or established in relation to other people, it is unsuitable as a criterion variable to examine the clothing market and pursued fashion style.

The results of this study suggest that ideality, realism, and sociality, which have been treated as positive self-image types in prior research, can have different effects in ideal, realistic, and social situations. While ideal and realistic self-images have a definite relationship with pursued fashion style, social self-image did not show a causal relationship. The first interpretation of this result is that those factors related to pursued fashion style and self-image involved in the consumers’ process of clothing selection have stronger significant effects on the unconscious aspect than on the conscious. In this study, ideal and realistic self-images were extracted based on the psychoanalytical methodology, and both are closely related to the inner self of imaginary and symbolic systems. Therefore, they can be considered to be the result of a dominant unconscious aspect over the conscious aspect. The second interpretation is that even realistic self-image plays a considerable part in terms of the factors of unconscious oppression and resistance because it is closely related to laws, ethics, language systems, and symbols. Although Korea belongs to the Confucian culture, which emphasizes social aspects and relationships, the second interpretation indicates that self-satisfying characteristics based on the ideal ego are dominant in clothing choices.

The findings of this study suggest that a more scientific approach to the unconscious aspect is necessary, rather than the arbitrary, temporary, and superficial classification of clothing marketing strategies based on tastes and preferences. This highlights the value of this study and ultimately suggests the need to investigate the larger effect of unconscious factors relative to conscious factors. In addition, a qualitative analysis, such as story-telling, face-to-face interviews, and in-depth consumer interviews related to clothing fashion, could be conducted concurrently with quantitative analyses such as surveys to establish more precise criterion variables. Finally, to respond actively to modern consumer tastes that are becoming increasingly flexible and complicated, research to identify the unconscious code and focus on the ideal and realistic self-images embedded in the thoughts of fashion tastes and choices is necessary. This research direction must consider not only the relationship between self-image and pursued fashion style, but also the research conducted on the various criterion variables.

This study is limited by its lack of investigation of the correlations between self-image and pursued fashion style as well as of the criterion variable of self-image. Consequently, the research model for this study was established mainly based on a psychoanalytical methodology, self-image and self-identity factors, studies of personality type, and studies of pursued fashion style. Future research should aim to study brand purchase behavior extending from the effect of self-image and pursued fashion style in offer further clothing marketing strategies. For this, it would be important to select various demographic targets based on the latest analytical trends as well as apply AMOS and big data methods such as data mining and predictive analysis.

Future researchers should also aim to obtain samples from various social strata and other countries besides Korea, such as the United States, Germany, and China. Future studies must ensure international universality by strengthening the theoretical foundation through continuous research into the additional factors associated with various brand purchase behaviors. Furthermore, future studies would be more meaningful if multifaceted and multi-leveled follow-up research was conducted on the mediation effect of the consumption value because of the impact of female consumers’ self-image on clothing purchase behavior.
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