

Individual Differences, Motivations, and Willingness to Use Co-Design of Fashion Products

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Co-design is a mass customization option (Pine, 1993) where a product's design is based on the customer's selections from a range of design feature offerings. Co-design may increase value for the customer through the development of differentiated, unique products and services. In line with Pine and Gilmore's (1999) concept of the Experience Economy, we propose that co-design process for fashion products may also offer memorable experiences that entice the customer. To help ensure successful marketing efforts for co-designed fashion products, the contribution of the good, service, and experience to the consumer should be reconciled. In addition, individual differences of the consumer that may delineate characteristics of the market segment for co-designed fashion products and reasons for using co-design should be identified. Individuals who desire a high level of stimulation from the environment, defined as having a high Optimum Stimulation Level (OSL) (Raju, 1980), may value not only the unique product design but also the engaging experience derived from co-design. Level of Clothing Interest (Creekmore, 1971) may further delineate consumers who value co-design of fashion products and reasons for engaging in co-design of these products.

To tap co-design variables, we adapted Motivations for Using Mass Customization and Willingness to Use Mass Customization scales found in Fiore, Lee, Kunz, and Campbell (2001). We also used the Arousal Seeking Tendency Scale (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974) to measure OSL and two factors (Experimenting with Appearance [EA] and Enhancement of Individuality [EI]) from Creekmore's (1971) Clothing Interest Scale. Principle component analyses determined factor structures of multi-item measures and Cronbach alpha reliability measures ensured all scales were reliable. A model comprised of relationships between individual differences, motivations for using co-design, and willingness to use co-design was proposed and statistically tested using 521 university subjects from different regions of the United States and the analysis of moment structures (AMOS) statistic. As hypothesized, OSL predicted two Clothing Interest factors, EA and EI. As proposed, OSL and EA predicted the two motivations, trying co-design as an exciting experience and using co-design to create a unique product, whereas EI only predicted using co-design to create a unique product. Both motives were mediating variables between individual differences and willingness to use co-design, but using co-design to create a unique product had a stronger effect. Theoretical and marketing implications were discussed.