Cross-Cultural Comparison between US and China on Perception of Time, Creative Attitudes, and Adoption of Fashion Innovations

Seung-Hee Lee, Southern Illinois University
Purpose of the study

- Various relationships may exist between different levels of innovation adoption groups and creative attitudes or time perception.

- There is no research that has examined the relationships among these variables.

- To examine how earlier (vs later) adopters of innovation differ in time perception and creative attitudes, comparing Chinese and U.S. college students.
Adoption of innovations & time perception

- Time is central to many consumer behavior issues.
- Many products are time-bound, especially fashion products.
- Time perceptions are a blend of individually, socially, and culturally created traits that affect consumer behaviors.
 Consumers' variables affected by time

- Earlier (vs later) adopters of fashion:
  Spend more time seeking information about fashion (e.g., shopping trips, attend fashion shows, read more fashion advertising/magazines, watch more TV dealing with fashion styles)

  ⇒ Earlier adopters are expected to differ from later adopters in time perception.
Hypothesis 1

H1a-g: Earlier (vs. later) adopters of innovations will differ in time perceptions.

(a) economic time
(b) non-organized time
(c) orientation toward the past
(d) orientation toward the future
(e) time anxiety
(f) tenacity
(g) preference for quick return
(h) time submissiveness
Culture affects time perceptions

- Time-laden activities (e.g., fashion shopping) display cultural, situational and individual variability.

- According to *Theory of Cultural Dimensions* (Hofstede, 1980):
  - China: 87 on long-term orientation indicating an ability to adapt traditions to changing conditions.
  - US: 26 indicating a society whose members prefer to preserve time-honored customs and are suspicious of changes in society.

=> *Chinese participants are expected to differ from US participants in time perceptions.*
Hypothesis 2

H2 a-g: Chinese and U.S. participants will differ in time perceptions.

(a) economic time
(b) non-organized time
(c) orientation toward the past
(d) orientation toward the future
(e) time anxiety
(f) tenacity
(g) preference for quick return
Creative attitudes and time of adoption

- Traits of creative people: achievement motivation, openness to new experiences, self-confidence, or impulsivity.

- Earlier adopters of fashion display many attitudes related to creativity, e.g., greater need for variety, higher sensation seeking, less susceptible to boredom, and more innovative

=> Earlier adopters are expected to differ from later adopters in creative attitudes.
Hypothesis 3

H3 a-d: Earlier (vs. later) adopters of innovations will differ in creative attitudes

(a) general creative attitudes
(b) creative capacity
(c) creative collaboration
(d) creative risk-taking
Creative attitudes and culture

- Creativity is culturally bound--not just a mental process (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999)
- Compared to other cultures, US was high in self-acceptance, achievement motivation, openness to experience, nonconformity, self-confidence, impulsiveness
- US (vs Chinese) students were higher on divergent thinking --fluency, originality, elaboration, and titles.

=> Chinese participants are expected to differ from US participants in creative attitudes.
Hypothesis 4

H4 a-d: Chinese and U.S. participants will differ in creative attitudes

(a) general creative attitudes
(b) creative capacity
(c) creative collaboration
(d) creative risk-taking
Culture & time of adoption

- China is collectivist while US is individualist.
- In countries with collectivist values (e.g., China), a relatively smaller group of fashion consumers may be willing to purchase products early in the life cycle.
- Conversely, in countries with individualist values (e.g., U.S.), relatively more consumers may be willing to purchase products early in the life cycle.
Hypotheses 5 & 6

- Lee and Workman (2013) found that a smaller percentage of fashion consumers were early adopters in Korea (a collectivist culture) than in the US (an individualist culture).

- H5: Chinese and U.S. participants will differ in time of adoption of innovations.

- H6: A smaller percentage of consumers will be early adopters in China than in the US.
Research Model

**Time of Adoption of Innovation**
- Fashion change agents
- Early adopters
- Later adopters
- Reluctant adopters

**Time Perceptions**

**Culture**
- China
- US

**Creative Attitudes**

H1, H2, H3, H4, H5 & H6
**Procedure**

- Data were collected in large lecture classes from US and Chinese university students.

- The questionnaire contained demographic items and measures of:
  - Time perception
  - Creative attitudes
  - Fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership
Scales

- **Time Perception Scale** (Usunier & Valette-Florence, 2007)

- **Creative Attitudes Scale** (Serrat, 2009)

- **Fashion Innovativeness and Opinion Leadership** (Hirschman & Adcock, 1978)
Data Analysis

- Descriptive statistics
  - Culture: 209 US; 193 Chinese university students
  - Age: M = 21.13 (17-32)
  - Gender: male = 215; female = 185

- Cronbach’s alpha reliability: acceptable ranging from .60 to .90.
- MANOVA/ANOVA
- Pearson’s Chi-square
MANOVA

Time-of-adoption & time perceptions

- MANOVA was conducted with time-of-adoption groups and culture as independent variables; 7 sub-dimensions of time perception as dependent variables
- Significant effects for time-of-adoption groups [F(8, 387) = 4.39, p < .000] and
- culture [F(8, 385) = 20.79, p < .000] on the dependent variables
ANOVA

Time-of-adoption & time perceptions

- Significant effects for time-of-adoption group on 3 of 7 time variables: economic time, future orientation, and time anxiety.
- Earlier adopters scored higher on economic time and future time orientation, but later adopters scored higher on time anxiety.

- H1a, d, and e were supported
ANOVA

Time-of-adoption & culture

- Significant effects for *culture* on 5 of 7 time variables: economic time, non-organized time, past orientation, future orientation, and time anxiety.

- US participants scored higher on economic time and future orientation.

- Chinese participants higher on non-organized time, past orientation, and time anxiety.

- H 2a, b, c, d, and e were supported.
MANOVA

Time-of-adoption & creative attitudes

- MANOVA was conducted with time-of-adoption groups and culture as independent variables; four creative attitudes as dependent variables.
- Significant effects for time-of-adoption group [F(4, 391) = 4.32, p < .002] and
- for culture [F(4, 389) = 6.15, p < .000] on the dependent variables.
ANOVA

Time-of-adoption & creative attitudes

- Significant effects for time-of-adoption group on all four creative attitude variables.
- Earlier adopters higher on general creativity, creative capacity, creative collaboration, and creative risk-taking than later adopters.

- H3 a-d were supported.
ANOVA
Culture & creative attitudes

- Significant effects for culture on creative capacity and creative collaboration.
- US participants scored lower than Chinese on creative capacity and creative collaboration.

- Hypothesis 4 b and c were supported.
ANOVA

Time-of-adoption & culture

- ANOVA revealed no significant effect for culture 
  \[ F(1, 399) = 1.14, \ p < .286 \] on time-of-adoption:

- **H5 was not supported.**
Chi-square test
Time-of-adoption & culture

- Chi-square test was not significant (df = 3; Pearson Chi-Square = 1.033; p < .793).
- Consumer change agents US (19.7%); Chinese (16.1%)
- Early adopters US (32.7%); Chinese (35.8%)
- Late adopters US (28.8%) Chinese (29.5%)
- Reluctant adopters US (18.8%); Chinese (18.7%).

- H6 was not supported.
Discussion

- Differences were found in time perception and creative attitudes among earlier (vs later) adopters of innovation and between Chinese and US students.

- Based on the results, cultural values seem to be a definitive force among Chinese students in terms of time perception and creative attitudes.

⇒ A better understanding of consumers in a variety of cultures is called for if international corporations or marketers want to succeed.
Implications

➢ From academic perspective,
  ➢ Adds a new perspective to the literature about relationships among time of adoption, time perception, creative attitudes, and cultural values

➢ From a practitioner perspective
  ➢ Provides information for fashion marketers or retailers that will help them understand earlier adopters’ consumption behavior.

  ➢ Help international marketers to adapt their new brand marketing strategies for different cultures.
Further study

- Extend to other cultures
- Extend to other industry contexts
  - ✔ Mobile phone
  - ✔ Automotive
- Extend to adult population
- Use other measures of creativity or time-of-adoption
- Add other variables, e.g., attitudes toward technology
For further information contact:
Dr. Seung-Hee Lee
shlee@siu.edu