

The Study on the Influence of Chinese Consumers on the Intent to Purchase Character Products in the Development of Korea

Analysis Based on the SPSS 21.0 AMOS program

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Abstract— This study aims to analyze in detail the character industry, a type of cultural content industry different from traditional industries in the past, and to understand the purchase intention of Chinese consumers, focusing on products to build global brands that provide characters as products. The subject of this study is to understand the consumption value of consumers in their 20s and 30s in China who have experienced Kakao Friends and Line products, and to find out the level of consumption value. Identify the relationship between consumption value, brand attitude, and purchase intention. In the case of character characteristics, reliability, attractiveness, and dynamics, which are sub-factors, were found to have a positive effect on consumers' purchase intentions, and the mediating effect of brand attitude was also verified. Therefore, this study aims to examine the characteristics of consumers who select and purchase character products in terms of Chinese consumers, and to provide practical implications in terms of character industry and business in the future. We took a survey including 150 Chinese consumers to empirically identify the statistical significance on our hypothetical assumption above, using SPSS 21.0 AMOS program. We found three important industrial implications. The first one is for the contents industry that marketing strategy such as story-telling or emphasizing the meaning of the character will elicit the emotion which is the brand and the consumer relate to. The second one is for contents corporation to intensify the positive brand attitude by harmonizing the image of the character and of the company. The last one is also for the companies that today's young people want to consume the value. It means that the companies need to understand young generations' needs and what value they have and want to pursue.

Keywords: Character characteristics, consumer value, brand attitude, consumer purchase intention, Chinese consumers, and content industry.

1. INTRODUCTION

Character characteristics.

The cultural content industry is an industry that combines cultural exchange and industrial trade and creates high added value. Currently, these character industries are growing remarkably due

to the rapid growth of digital technology and communication media and various challenges of venture companies. They seek to maximize profits through content development to enter the character market. In the first place, character products were considered simply a tool for generating profits, but now numerous Chinese consumers are promoting market expansion as they are showing great interest not only in the character industry but also in related industries. To maximize the competitiveness of Korean character companies and industries such as Kakao Talk and Line, it is necessary to accurately grasp consumers' demands and needs and open and strategic thinking to respond quickly to changes in needs.

This study will analyze in detail the character industry, a type of cultural content industry that shows characteristics differentiated from traditional industries in the past. In addition, as companies are entering various overseas countries to build global brands by providing characters as products, we would like to understand Chinese consumers' purchase intentions, focusing on overseas products, so that they can provide implications for the character industry and corporate practice.

2. THEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Factors influencing consumers in the character industry.

2.1.1 Characteristics.

The ultimate goal of character products is to make the character more familiar to consumers to increase brand awareness and instill the character's own brand identity in customers. Accordingly, companies promote strategies to create high synergy effects for these cultural content products by creating values that can increase sales and value of products and selecting and producing higher-quality content. Fournier (1998) stated that brand characters induce people's likes and intimacy because they have a human-like appearance and properties.

There are three main characteristics of these characters: reliability, attractiveness, and dynamics. First, reliability is the most important factor in persuasion [18]. Reliability is mainly composed of reliability and expertise, and reliability means honesty, truth, and faith in the model, and expertise means the degree of perception of the validity of the delivery person's opinion.

Attractiveness is a concept used in many studies. Depending on the character's design, the character's attractiveness is sensibly and empirically formed by visible appearance characteristics. According to Lee Ji-hoon (2017), attractiveness is determined by several complex factors, among which the representative determinants are the intimacy, similarity, and extroverted attractiveness that consumers feel about the brand. Rossiter & Percy (1980) considered that attractiveness occurs when consumers feel real or emotionally identified emotions or need self-satisfaction through their characters.

Dynamics refers to the property of moving vigorously and actively. There are not many existing studies related to cultural content or character industry that can explain the concept of character dynamics, so we decided to refer to the concept of pictorial dynamics. Dynamics can be defined as vitality as being alive and attributes [2]. In a study by Kim Un-han (2007), it was mentioned that the description of movement with a sense of movement, thick texture, and intense color are the main factors that can express a sense of dynamism.

Hypothesis 1: Character characteristics will have a positive effect on purchase intention.

2.2.2 Consumer value.

The brand proposes value to consumers, defining it as a functional, emotional, and self-expression benefit that the brand provides to consumers. Efficient value propositions, mainly occurring in stores, user interfaces, delivery, and order services, help build a relationship between brands and customers. It also has the effect of facilitating customers' purchase decisions. In deciding on a purchase, consumers make decisions about the purchase through coordination of price, quality, and symbolism.

Hypothesis 2: Consumer value will have a positive effect on purchase intention.

2.2.3 Brand attitude.

Brand refers to a kind of bond between a company and a customer. Simply exposing companies to consumer memories increases the likelihood that consumers will remember and recognize brands. Companies or brands that are constantly exposed form a specific value, which means a specific identity of whether the brand will be remembered. The identity and brand maintained in this way act as a deep connection with customers, further embodying the company's identity and giving it completeness that represents the core values and concepts of brands that transcend time. If there is an extended identity consisting of these factors, customers expect satisfactory products and services from the company, and the company can acquire what each other wants as it secures a continuous and stable consumer base.

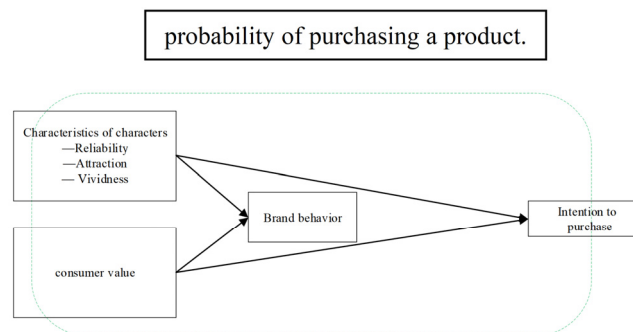
Brand attitude is defined as the consumer's overall evaluation of the brand [6]. Brand attitude, along with brand selection, becomes the basis for consumers' behavior and can be said to be an important factor in understanding and predicting consumers' purchasing behavior [17]. Yoon Hoon-hyun (2005) defined consumer beliefs, knowledge, and brand-related behaviors as brand attitudes in a study on specific products and brands. This brand attitude means that consumers use a specific product or service and consistently evaluate it friendly or unfavorable without changing in the evaluation of the brand. Ultimately, it was found that this acts as an oral effect even among consumers and affects future purchase intentions.

Hypothesis 3-1: Brand attitude will positively mediate the relationship between consumer value and purchase intention.

Hypothesis 3-2: Brand attitude will positively mediate the relationship between character characteristics and purchase intention.

2.2.4 Purchase intention.

Purchase intention is a planned action that consumers may implement in the future about a product or service, and refers to the probability that beliefs and attitudes will be transferred to actual action. In marketing studies, purchase intention and purchase behavior usually have a positive correlation. Angel & Blackwell (1982) defined the probability that individuals' beliefs and attitudes toward plans for future actions will be transferred to actual actions, and argued that if consumers switch to purchasing products with purchase intentions, the correlation with purchase intentions is closely related.



Picture.1 Research model

Ajzen & Fishbein (1980) said that purchase intention is a factor that directly affects purchase behavior, so it is possible to predict actual purchase behavior. In this study, the relationship between attitude and behavior is also conducted, and most studies point to attitude change as a leading factor in behavior change. Based on the cognitive learning theory, consumers' attitudes are formed by beliefs about product attributes, and their attitudes affect whether they are purchased or not. In addition, in the theory of rational behavior, the more favorable the attitude toward the attitude object, the more positive the consumer's purchase intention, and the higher the

3. MEASUREMENT OF DATA AND VARIABLES.

3.1 Samples and data.

For this study, a survey was conducted to find out the effects of Kakao Friends characteristics, consumer value, brand attitude, and repurchase intention on consumers who have purchased Kakao Friends products in the last three months and have visited the pop-up store. The subjects of the survey for empirical research were consumers in China, and the questionnaire items were redesigned to suit the purpose of the study by referring to the existing literature. Data collection for this study was conducted online for three months from June 1 to August 31, 2021, and a total of 250 questionnaires were distributed and 178 copies were collected, of which 150 were analyzed, excluding 28 unresponsive or insincere answers.

According to the summary of the sample, men accounted for 40% with 60, women with 90, and age was 23 (15.3%), 104 people in their 20s (69.3%), 7 people in their 30s (4.6%), 16 people in their 40s (10.8%), 3 people under middle school (2%), 10 high school (56%), and 53 graduate schools (35.4%). As for the presence or absence of marriage, 22 married (14.6%) and 128 unmarried (85.4%). In the case of income, 92 people (61.3%) with less than 3,000 yuan, 33 people (22%) with less than 3,000-5000 yuan, 10 people with less than 5,000-8000 yuan (6.6%), 8 people with less than 8,000-10000 yuan (5.3%), and 7 people with more than 10,000 yuan (4.8%). In the case of monthly expenditure, 2 people (1.3%) under 500 yuan, 12 people (8%) under 500-1000 yuan, 76 people (50.6%) under 1000-2000 yuan, 52 people (34.6%) under 2000-3000 yuan, and 8 people (5.5%) over 3,000 yuan.

3.2 Measuring tools.

This study was conducted through statistical analysis, and the SPSS Statistics 21.0 program was used for statistical analysis. In this study, a survey was conducted on 150 Chinese consumers, and individual variables of respondents were set as gender, age, education, monthly income, and expenditure, and frequency analysis and descriptive statistics analysis (average, standard deviation) of the variables were conducted. In addition, exploratory factor analysis was confirmed to verify the validity of the variable, and reliability verification was confirmed using Cronbach's coefficient. The purpose of this study was to examine the correlation between variables such as Kakao Friends character characteristics (reliability, attractiveness, dynamics), consumer value of Kakao Friends products, Kakao Friends brand attitude, and purchase intention, as well as the influence and brand attitude of Kakao Friends characters.

4. MEASUREMENT OF DATA AND VARIABLES.

4.1 Reliability and Feasibility Analysis

Statistical analysis will be conducted using the statistical program SPSS21.0, AMOS program. Before empirical analysis, the relationship between each variable and sub-variables will be examined through validity and reliability verification and correlation analysis.

First, based on the surveyed survey data, exploratory factor analysis will be conducted to verify the validity of each variable, and whether each factor is representative of a specific concept or grouped into the same factor as the researcher's intention. In this case, in general, when Varimax is used, since the separation of the relationship between each factor can be more clearly confirmed, [3], a right angle rotation method will be performed. As a result of exploratory factor analysis, factors with a factor load lower than 0.4 will be excluded, and when the remaining items are grouped, they are considered to be highly correlated with each other and viewed as one factor (14). Based on these criteria, this study will also conduct exploratory factor analysis.

In addition, Cronbach's value for each variable will be measured to verify the reliability of consistent results even if the same concept is repeatedly measured through similar measurement tools or the same tool. In the case of reliability, 0.8 or higher is generally considered an ideal value [9]. The correlation will be conducted centering on variables whose reliability and validity have been verified to examine the relationship between each other. After the correlation analysis is completed, additional analysis will be conducted to examine the influence between variables.

As a result of exploratory factor analysis through the remaining variables except for independence and control variables, question 5 of brand attitude with a factor loading value lower than 0.4 was deleted.

The independent variable characteristic component consisted of two reliability items, two attractiveness items, and two dynamism items. As a result of verifying the reliability of the survey using internal consistency reliability, the Cronbach value of all sub-factors was 0.802 to 0.884, showing high reliability.

In addition, the remaining variables consisted of 8 items of consumer value, 5 items of brand attitude, and 4 items of purchase intention. The Cronbacha value of all variables showed very high reliability with consumer value of 0.972, brand attitude of 0.906, and purchase intention of 0.952.

4.2 Correlation analysis between variables.

Correlation analysis between variables was conducted to examine the relationship between the variables to be analyzed in this study. As a result, the relationship between all variables except some control variables was significant ($p < 0.001$).

4.3 Hypothesis test.

The hypothesis was established based on the theoretical background to examine the character characteristics and the effect of consumer value perceived by Chinese consumers on consumers' brand attitudes and their purchase intentions, and the influence was confirmed through regression analysis.

According to the results of correlation analysis, the control variables were set as gender, education, marital status, income, and monthly expenditure, and the influence between the remaining major variables was reported. As a result of the empirical analysis, it was confirmed that all sub-factors of character characteristics had a positively significant ($p < 0.001$) effect on brand attitude and purchase intention.

In addition, bootstrapping was conducted using Hayes's (2013) Process Macro to determine whether consumers' brand attitudes mediate Kakao Friends character characteristics and consumer value as a kind of mechanism in the process of leading to purchase intention, respectively. The results are shown in Table 7.

If '0' is not included in the 95% confidence interval (Boot LLCI to Boot ULCI) as shown in <Table 7>, it means that the mediating effect is significant. Accordingly, as a result of empirical analysis of the mediating effect, it was found that '0' was not included in the 95% confidence interval in all processes, so the brand attitude had a positively significant ($p < 0.001$) mediating effect in the process of leading to purchase intention.

5. CONCLUSION.

5.1 Research results.

The character characteristics, the first research purpose, had a positive effect on consumers' purchase intention. In the hypothesis, reliability, attractiveness, and dynamism factors had a positive (+) significant effect, and hypothesis 1 was adopted. Among the characteristic factors, it was concluded that the degree of attractiveness and trust of the product to the consumer and the influence of dynamics reflecting the characteristics of the content industry influence the consumer's purchase intention.

The second research purpose, character characteristics, had a positive effect on consumers' brand attitude, and hypothesis 2 was adopted as reliability, attractiveness, and dynamism factors

all had a positive (+) significant effect. It was concluded that all characteristic factors influence the brand attitude of Chinese consumers.

The third research purpose, consumer value, had a positive (+) significant effect on the consumer's purchase intention hypothesis, and hypothesis 3 was adopted. This shows that the unique value of consumers directly affects the consumer's intention to purchase products, and these values are formed over a long period and do not change easily, so this value formation has a very important effect.

The fourth research purpose, consumer value, had a positive (+) significant effect on the consumer's brand attitude, and hypothesis 3 was adopted. It was concluded that the value of consumers existing affects the formation of brand attitudes toward their products, which affects their attachment to specific products, future reuse intentions, and purchase intentions.

5.2 Implications and limitations.

Based on the hypothesis test of this study, character characteristics had a positive effect on consumers' purchase intention through consumers' brand attitude, and consumer value also confirmed a positive effect on consumers' purchase intention through consumers' brand attitude.

The implications of the research results of this study are as follows.

First, by verifying the effect of character characteristics that have a positive effect on consumers' purchase intentions, it was confirmed the importance that the character can obtain marketing effects by leading consumers' sensitivity through basic meaning or storytelling. Accordingly, at the corporate level, due to the nature of the content industry, more storytelling is applied to a product called a character to further improve consumers' attachment and preference to the product, and strategies are needed to revitalize various products and services.

Second, as character characteristics verify the mediating effect of brand attitude in consumer purchase intention, a plan to strengthen brand attitude should be sought. First of all, it requires a lot of preliminary effort and publicity to form a consumer's brand attitude. It is difficult to form a brand attitude of consumers, but once formed, it does not change easily, and this brand attitude can act as customer loyalty and strengthen the intention to continuously purchase and use in the future. Therefore, it is expected that consumers' brand attitudes will be combined based on the characteristics of the characters, which will have a greater impact on their purchasing power.

Third, as consumer value verifies the effect of positively affecting consumers' purchase intentions, consumer value has various characteristics as a value that young people in recent years seek. These values vary greatly depending on individual background variables, and these values form different brand attitudes, and their purchase intentions differ according to their values, confirming the importance of obtaining personal effects. Accordingly, at the corporate level, it is necessary to pay special attention to the recent needs of young people and their pursuit, which is expected to be more helpful in the development of corporate products in the future.

The limitation of this study is that first, it relies on a self-response questionnaire for data collection in this study. This is bound to be analyzed based on the subjective judgment of

respondents, and accordingly, it will be necessary to increase the objectivity of the study by adding data such as objective response selection in future studies.

Second, there is a possibility that an error may occur in the convenience of the same method in that the same respondent responded to all items to the survey conducted during the data collection process. Accordingly, in future studies, it is necessary to find ways to increase the objectivity of data by measuring through external personnel and selecting more regions.

Third, a more objective analysis is expected if it is possible to compare consumers in Asia to which regional differences between the variables measured in this study are applied. This currently varies from country to country, and it is necessary to examine the demand, values, and attitudes of consumers in countries such as China, Japan, and Korea, which can be used more objectively to examine the effectiveness of preceding factors and to derive strategies to improve performance in terms of business.

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