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Consumer's Aesthetic Perceptions on Products in Chinese Cultural Context:
Main Issues and Research Propositions

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摘要

消費者的美感知覺是近來重要的研究議題，因為其主宰了消費者的購買意圖。本研究在跨文化的基礎上試圖比較東西方的消費者美感知覺之差異。在回顧了美學消費與華人文化之相關文獻後，本研究提出了五項華人消費者對於產品外觀之美感知覺命題：(1)華人崇尚節儉之態度影響其對產品之美學知覺；(2)華人的集體主義傾向使其有從眾的審美知覺；(3)華人消費者的美感趨向往往以社會認可的角度為出發點；(4)華人在物品消費上較偏好外型簡樸之物；(5)華人消費者往往憑藉感覺與內在詮釋來鑑賞產品。綜合上述，就價值來說，華人消費者對於產品之美感知覺，受到實用性與價格影響，並且較為從眾及保守，另一方面，精神層面也讓他們愛好樸素與具有容易依靠感覺與詮釋的傾向。

關鍵詞：華人消費者、美感知覺、價值觀

ABSTRACT

Consumer aesthetic perception of products has been highlighted in recent years, because it determines consumers' purchasing intention and behaviors. The study attempts to compare consumer aesthetic features between the Western culture and Chinese culture. After reviewing previous studies in aesthetic consumption and Chinese culture, This paper offers five Chinese consumer aesthetic propositions: (1) Chinese value "saving" brings Chinese consumers to appreciate cheap and utilitarian products; (2) Under the collectivist atmosphere, Chinese consumer holds the aesthetic tastes with conformity; (3) Chinese consumer tends to appreciate "social acceptable" style; (4) Chinese consumer prefers products with plain style; (5) Chinese consumer highlights on feeling and interpretation as they appreciate products.

Keywords : Chinese consumer, products appearance, aesthetic perceptions, value

I. Introduction

Due to the living standard improved, consumers concerned about product functions but also appearance gradually (Eckman & Wagner, 1995). The phenomenon that consumers prefer hedonic products in the postmodern society represents their intention to show their personalities or pursuit of exciting experiences (Lagier & Godey, 2007). The importance of product design increases in markets nowadays, since consumer behavior is driven by product appearance (Veryzer, 1995). We consider products as artworks, so that from noting, appreciating, moving, analyzing to purchasing a product, the process could be attributed to aesthetic experiences. Most consumer researches about aesthetics are

from the West; however, the paper intends to review some literatures of aesthetics and consumption, and then find the aesthetic propositions under the Chinese cultural context. After all, just as He and Chen (2005) emphasized the necessity of investigating the consumer's ethnic background, since "as consumption values are known to be context-dependent (e.g. Long & Schiffman, 2000; Phinney, 1992; Rokeach, 1973)."

II. The Importance of Product Appearance

As applying the concept of "aesthetics" to consumption, scholars have no consensus yet: some believe that beauty only comes from "artistic" or "cultural" products, some consider that consumers themselves have the rights to determine if a product is aesthetic or not (Veryzer, 1999). He suggested that the latter is more practical for consumer research because the subjects in the field of "aesthetics" should not be so limited as before.

Bloch (1995) noted that one of the functions of product design is able to elicit consumer aesthetic experience just as they are appreciating artworks. Such experience attracts consumers may because they bring emotional and affective pleasure. Eckman and Wagner (1995) mentioned that consumers are delighted to get in touch beautiful commodities, where they can seek to symbolic meanings and have emotional comforts. It corresponds to Bell's concept of "significant form," which refers to the function of visual art. Many scholars (e.g. Bamossy, Scammon & Johnston, 1983) agree for products cause consumer's pleasure and affection in conscious or unconscious ways (Veryzer, 1993).

III. The History of Consumer Researches on Aesthetic Approach

In 1995, Veryzer tracked consumer studies about aesthetics. He found that from around 30 years ago, many consumer researches had started to have interests in aesthetics, such as Holbrook (1980), Olson (1981), Sewall (1978) and so on. They were eager to figure out consumer aesthetic responses. An argument among these researches is the legitimacy of aesthetics in consumer field, since aesthetics originally was applied to works in art or cultural sense. However, most consumer scholars argued that product is qualified for discussing with aesthetic view due to its aesthetic elements. Historically, the scope of aesthetics just actually expended its initial range, which centered on the creative process, beauty judgments and taste on fine arts or natural objects, such as landscape or human body primarily. After the 19th century, aesthetic subjects took in everyday objects further (Eckman & Wagner, 1995). For instance, Mary Stokrocki (2001), the professor of art in Arizona State University, encouraged high school students to explore their aesthetic experiences in the consumption fields, such as shopping mall, because these places are full of "arts, goods, and entertainment."

IV. The Definition of Aesthetics and Aesthetic Experience

1. The Definition of Aesthetics

According to Oxford English dictionary (2008), the term “aesthetics” is defined as “a set of principles concerned with the nature of beauty, especially in art”, and “the branch of philosophy which deals with questions of beauty and artistic taste.”

There are various disciplines have discussed “aesthetics,” such as philosophy, art history, art criticism, psychology, anthropology, and so on (Veryzer, 1995). Most studies in “aesthetics” are both philosophical and psychological (Ogden, 1933); hence, it is considered as “philosophy of art” (Veryzer, 1993).

The notion about “aesthetics” started from Plato and Aristotle (Eckman & Wagner, 1995). However, the term “aesthetics” does not become a subject, until the 18th century, when a German philosopher, named Alexander Baumgarten, adopted from the Greek word *aisthetika* and *aislhanesthai*. The former referred to “things perceivable through the senses,” and the latter means “to perceive or feel” (Heid, 2005). Both of them are unlike reasoning analysis (Veryzer, 1993), since they rely on feeling so much (Ogden, 1933). From then on, “aesthetics” became a discipline of investigating beauty and art, including the sense of art, taste, wonderful and deep experiences, and also art appreciation (Heid, 2005).

A long-running argument in the aesthetics field is the sources of beauty: whether beauty exists in object itself, or depends on the perceived viewers. There are three related perspectives: (1) subjectivism focuses on the viewer’s perspective on the works; (2) objectivism highlights on the works’ features reversely; (3) relativism lies in the relationship between them (Beardsley, 1958). In other words, there is no consensus on the root of aesthetic experience yet (Veryzer, 1995).

2. Aesthetic Experience

Not only the perspectives on aesthetic sources are multiple, the components of aesthetic experience are not determined yet. For instance, according to Augustine and Zoss (2006), Baumgarten viewed aesthetics from Cartesian dualism, which means that once a viewer perceives an object with his mind, the aesthetic relationship between the subject and object is established. However, Eisner believes that body, emotion and intelligence should be taken into consideration altogether in the relationship. In short, aesthetic experiences involve several aspects: (1) affection; (2) emotion; (3) cognition.

The function of human’s perceptions is to integrate senses reflect external information (Levine, 1981). Senses like sight, taste, sound, odor and touch, take charge of receiving external stimulus, then

bodies and affections are influenced. All of these construct aesthetic experience (Heid, 2005). Visual perception system allows us to see colors, shapes and forms (Schiffman, 1982). In other words, during the process, we can experience the variety of the world, no wonder sensing beauty would be “aesthetic” (Isaacs, 2000).

The visual perception paved the way for aesthetic experience, like Isaacs' (2000) clear description: sensory perceive objects at first, and then cognitive mechanisms give the viewer meaning, association and also knowledge. Later, evaluation is involved, and judgment follows in the end. Similarly, in Kovach's *Philosophy of Beauty* (1974), he noted that visual sense guides the aesthetic experience initially, and physiology and psychology synchronize and cause such visual experience. In the physiological level, perceptual attention come first, then cognition or knowing, and aesthetic knowledge, taste, are formed in the end. As for the psychological level, *expectation* appears at first, will to *please sense* comes later, and finally is the emergence of *delight*. Such pleasure makes the *aesthetic experiences*, and then *enriched life* in emotion appears eventually.

If the visual experience causes positive affection, the condition will last and benefits mental health (Ulrich, 1979). No wonder people like to purchase beautiful commodities, such as dressings and decorations, and spend hours in gardens, forests, or anywhere with pleasing visual sensory (Alexander, 1977). The experience becomes another driving force to seek visual pleasure in turn. As Susanne Langer (1951, 1962) pointed out information input in senses and emotions plays a main role in aesthetic experiences, since sensory feelings create symbols, and then meanings are followed as well (Heid, 2005).

The above description implies the reasons that why people like to view beautiful objects may because their emotion and affection could be satisfied, and they even catch some meanings for their life through their aesthetic experience. As we take aesthetics in consumption field, it is not difficult to understand the process of viewing product design is as a kind of aesthetic experience.

V. The Propositions of Chinese Consumer Aesthetic Perceptions

1. The Importance of Understanding Local Aesthetics

After reviewing the literatures in aesthetics and consumption, we cannot help but ask if the content in Chinese culture is the same as the West or not. After all, culture may change people's aesthetic views. Blocker (2001) reflected in *Non-western aesthetics as a colonial invention*, warning the Western people that, “we need to ask ourselves whether Western forms of knowledge are appropriate for understanding non-Western forms of culture; in particular, whether Western aesthetics is appropriate for understanding and appreciating non-Western art.” Actually, a single vision on aesthetics is doubtful. Cultural differences should be considered in aesthetic researches. He also

argued that the term and the concept of “aesthetics” may not apply to non-Western cultures, such as Chinese, Indian, African, and other countries. Understanding local aesthetics is necessary in consequence, and we are able to develop advanced consumer researches based on the concepts.

2. Cultural Impact on the Aesthetic Perception

The definitions of culture are numerous in anthropology and sociology (Keegan & Green, 2003). Kluckhohn (1951) considered “the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values.” Herskovits (1955) regarded “culture” as artificial things made by human in an environment. Keesing (1958) argued that culture is like learned and socialized behavior. Hoebel (1960) also agreed that culture is the behavior learned from a group in a society. Furthermore, Hofstede (1980) believed that the function of culture is to distinct members of different groups since people have the same culture will think collectively. Also, according to the findings from Harris and Moran (1991), culture impacts sense of self, dress and appearance, values and norms, beliefs and attitudes, and mental process and learning as well.

Based on the above comments, we may find that culture is delivered by people’s surrounded groups, regions, and periods, and it brings the impacts of value, beliefs, attitude, and behaviors therefore, culture is characterized as discriminating groups.

Cultural impact is able to change one’s own personal preference. As Kim and Markus (1999) argued that human’s preference is depending on his cultural background rather than “an authentic, private, and personal event.” Therefore, “what to feel and how to feel” in a culture value bring to one’s choice. They describe well, “No manifestation of culture is more real to a person than the anxiety (often experienced in *East* Asian cultural contexts) or the excitement (often experienced in American cultural contexts) of standing out among others, and nothing is better than these feelings in reinforcing and perpetuating the cultural values.”

As mentioned above, we can find that culture strongly forms individual’s view. It is crucial to notice that one’s aesthetic developing context. For instance, Furnham and Alibhai (1983) have indicated that people tend to confirm the social group’s view on ideal physical beauty. Also, there are differences aesthetics perspectives on artworks and fashion between American and Chinese consumers (Rowland, 1964; Sullivan, 1989).

Value should be viewed as a core in cross-cultural research since it directs society (Berrien, 1966; Zavalloni, 1980). The issue on value is worthy to discuss, and it is a critical aspect in cross-cultural studies (Lin, 2001). The definition of customer value is “a customer’s perceived preference for an evaluation of those product attributes, attribute performances, and consequences arising from use that facilitate achieving the customer’s goals and purposes in use situations” (Woodruff, 1997). According

to above description, values cover the notions of “needs,” “belief,” and “self-conception,” which are mixed in human cultural experiences. The three above values form various aesthetic perceptions gradually.

3. The Propositions of Chinese Consumer Aesthetic Perceptions

3.1 Price-Oriented and Utilitarian –Oriented Aesthetics

Proposition 1: Chinese value “saving” brings Chinese consumer to appreciate cheap and utilitarian products.

Veryzer (1995) once indicated that a satisfactory product design shall not only offer the utilitarian and hedonic efficiency for consumers, but they also have to satisfy consumer’s value. DeLong et al. (1986) demonstrated that holistic and affective are dominated factors on evaluating products, since hedonic consumption brings “fun, novelty, and sensory gratifications.” They also find that consumer’s evaluation weights on “holistic appraisal” rather than an attribute-by-attribute analysis in an examination.

With the living standard arises and the global marketing promotes strongly, such as advertising promotions, Chinese consumer start to seek to products, which not only satisfy their functional needs, but also hedonistic needs (Wang, 1999; He & Chen, 2005). However, the authors hold the idea that Chinese consumer aesthetic perception is functional oriented mostly, because of their ethnic tradition value: saving. As He and Chen indicated that such virtue is fostered because Chinese have lived in poor society for a long time. Since incomes and education formulated people’s desires to obtain products, people in low social status pursuit basic material satisfaction. It may be the reason why Chinese care for functional production prior to hedonic production. For example, Leek and Kun (2006) suggested that Chinese consumer incline to spend more time to seek budget and to make purchasing decision, and keep the budget carefully for the reason. Unlike consumers in the Western countries, they do not regard budget as important as Chinese, since the budget-obtained action are just the prelude of other purchasing behaviors.

Dhar and Wertenbroch (2000) mentioned that hedonic products elicit affection and desire, so that they are what consumers “want.” On the other hand, utilitarian goods satisfy what consumer “should” have. Pan, Chaffee, Chu and Ju (1994) compared Chinese cultures to American cultures and suggested that Chinese value highlights the history, while American look for future. In this way, Chinese consumers are not far from traditional value “saving,” and consider utilitarian rather than hedonic consumption, even though in the new era, when global marketing is universal. In other words, Chinese consumer may have intentions to buy holistic products, but their value of “saving” causes them prefer functional products.

Interestingly, “face (mianzi)” is also an important issue in the Chinese culture, and the concept is associated with Chinese inclination to interpersonal relationship (guanxi). Hu (1944) explains that, face represents success and vanity in one’s life. Also, as Chan, Zhang, and Wang (2006) stated, “[...] the value of face will encourage the owning of the same material goods that other people have.” It is not difficult to know that Chinese is characterized with possessing material and performance in public, while they have “saving” habit. In this way, maybe the contradiction just reflects how Chinese focus on social relationship, which means that they are willing to shift their original value “saving” to “luxury,” because of others. In other words, Chinese consumer aesthetic perceptions may depend on their desires to perform as well. Here, we just focus on their value of “saving.”

3.2 Aesthetics of Conformity

Proposition 2: Chinese like to appreciate passing fad as others.

Cheng (2000) noted that compared to European arts and products, which focus on external shapes and forms, Chinese care for moral and ethics and modesty in art and fashion works. Featherstone (1991) pointed out the function of consumption is showing oneself, and Falk (1994) also notes that the self cannot separate from modern consumption.

Human being is a social animal, and social culture impacts aesthetic perceptions inevitably. Therefore, visual experience may be altered by other’s presence, since group leads attention and evaluation in different ways under the social expectations (Taylor, 1994). It is common in the most collective countries especially, such as China.

Markus and Kitayama (1991) divided concepts of self into two categories: independent and interdependent views of self, because each of them is derived from individualistic and collectivistic cultures. In other words, the “self-perception” are different under the two cultural contexts (Kim & Markus, 1999) In the Western culture, the concept of self tend to be independent, self-contained, and autonomous entity relatively. Conversely, under the Eastern cultural context, individual’s concept of self is attached to the surrounded relationships, including family members, relatives, and colleagues.

In Western individualist societies, the linkages between each person are weak. The concept of self is based on each one’s own features, such as traits and abilities. They believe everyone is independent from others, anyone’s choices and successes are his own sake. On the contrary, in Eastern collectivist societies, people’s self is tied to groups, such as one’s own family, social position, etc. People care for others’ opinions. Their relationship is interdependent, and the concept of self in such societies follows the value of harmony, corporation-oriented, moderation, keeping away greed, self- indulgency, and self- aggrandizement.

According to an analysis of Chinese value (Antoniou & Whitman, 1998), using Allport, Vernon, and Lindzey's (1960) value system, which adopted Spranger's six value types, which include theoretical, economic, aesthetic, social, political, and religious classes¹, Chinese primary value is aesthetics. They explained Chinese's Confucian tradition stresses harmony principle, which highlights "conflict-free, group-based system of social relation" and also social consensus, which are the aesthetic source.

Kim and Markus (1999) demonstrate how social value dominates individual preferences by comparing American cultural context in East Asian cultural context. They found that East Asians have tendency to conformity, unlike Americans prefer uniqueness. One of their experiments, in which participants had to choose one pen from a set of five pens, shows the cultural influence individual aesthetic judgment:

East Asians may have perceived the unique color of the pen as a disruption to the unity of the set of pens, and this perception affected their aesthetic judgment so that the unique color did not look as attractive or desirable as the common color. However, Americans perhaps paid more attention to the individual pens than to the commonality of the set, and thus they perceived the unique pen as more attractive.

On the other hand, Keegan and Green (2003) suggested global marketers should note the attribution of the target countries is individualistic or collectivistic, because it impacts the promoting ways. For example, advertisements needs to focuses on "person" in the formal countries, and "groups" should be stressed in the latter countries. After all, any created advertising images have to present the "good" side from the aspect of national values (Kim & Markus, 1999). It is important for a successful appeal strategy.

Since Chinese consumer weight other's opinions so much, they may consider product aesthetic "in social ways" gradually. When facing products, most of Chinese may not judge the beauty from their own points, they depend on what they have known from others, including their friends, family, or even advertising instead. When Chinese group's aesthetic paradigm shift, most of Chinese follows as well. Therefore, sometimes, what Chinese consumer chases is just a passing fad. Such phenomenon reflects a

¹ The theoretical type focus on truth, and is empirical, critical and rational; the economic type is interested in practical things; the aesthetic type likes grace, symmetry, or fitness; the social type concerns love in relationships; the political type pursuits of competition and power; the religious type cares for unity and "imminent mystics."

confirmatory performance.

3.3 Conservative Aesthetics

Proposition 3: Chinese consumer tends to appreciate style of “social acceptable”

Chinese’s value contains harmony everywhere in all their lives. For instance, the notion of harmony shows in Chinese characters and ink paintings. The harmony is composed by the concept of “yin and yang,” the opposite strengths, the former with the “female, moon, shade, water, and the winter aspects of Nature” and the latter shows “male, sun, light, fire, and summer aspects”. Therefore, substance and abstraction, motion and stillness, decisiveness and uncertainty exist in the same time on brushworks (Chung, 2006).

Just as previous discussion, an important essential in Chinese thoughts concept of “chi,” Huan and Rose (2001) also relate the point to the crowds, “expressing social conditions such as harmony and making peace with others.” The concept may be also linked to Confucian doctrines, such as social consciousness, moderation, and moral self-control (Lin, 2001). In this way, social group context is prior to Chinese own aesthetic view in the culture, where harmony is the core value from internal to external aspects. Just as Pan et al. (1994) noted, “American culture uses an open view to see the world. It focuses on changes and movements. Conversely, Chinese culture uses a closed view, such as stability, and harmony.” Therefore, as appreciating products, Chinese consumer may prefer products, which are acceptable generally in the society, because they do not like to be striking. We may view the point is a kind of Chinese aesthetic preference, as for the other one, is discussed in next section.

3.4 Plain Aesthetics

Proposition 4: Chinese consumers prefer products with plain style.

Chinese aesthetic preferences not only involve general and social approved style as above mentions, but also plain style. Take artwork as example, “According to the East Asian idea of simplicity in aesthetics, a painting without a sophisticated composition or detailed rendering can still be considered inspiring” (Chung, 2006).

As Chinese Daoism classic *Dao-De Jing* mentioned:

Too much color blinds the eye,
Too much music deafens the ear.

What the passage suggests is a simple life (Lam & Hung, 2005) Therefore, elaborated aesthetics

may not fit Chinese, since they believe the truth lives in simplicity (Chung, 2006).

Also, Zen leads Chinese to appreciate notion of “less is more.” Chinese opera and classical poetry, and ink paintings are examples (Suzuki, 1957). Another source of the simple concept comes from Buddhism, where focus on people should not possess materials and should not make too much effort on earning money. Consequently, Chinese consumers may not agree with material presentation; in other words, they appreciate products with plain style rather delicate style usually. Of course, products with special attribution (e.g. ritual function) or with strong symbolic meanings (e.g. jewelry) would be another issue.

3.5. Aesthetics with Feeling and Interpretation

Proposition 5: Chinese consumer’s aesthetic perception highlights on feeling and interpretation.

Spirit is one of features of Chinese aesthetics, and practiced in Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. The definition of “Chi” refers to a vital life energy comes from the universe, and conducts everyone for leading anything in the world in order. Thus, the term also represents “the way” in Taoism, since everything is on its own path in a systemic way. In Chinese artworks, Chi is an important expression, such as brushworks (calligraphy and ink paintings) (Chung, 2006). Chen (2000) also gave portraits and costumes as examples, she suggested that Chinese prefer to express “‘chi’, harmony and liveliness,” unlike European drawers use lines and shapes, which are “concrete” representation.

On the other hand, Chinese tradition of suggestiveness leads an interpretive space for them on products. Gu (2003) illustrated the relationship between Tao and suggestiveness, “The Tao, or the natural law of the universe, and aesthetic suggestiveness (暗示) belongs to two different categories of inquiry, but in the Chinese tradition the latter is firmly predicated on the epistemological perception of the former.” Suggestiveness is one essence in Chinese visual aesthetics, and the word refers to “to show something by indirectly hinting at it.” Under the principle, there are many deeper meanings for audiences to seek further, such as xiangwai zhi xiang (象外之象) (images beyond the image) hanxu (含蓄) (subtle reserve). Just like Chinese great thinker Zhuangzi stated, “When one looks, he sees indistinction; when he listens, he hears no sound. Only in the midst of indistinction, he sees brightness; only in the midst of no sound, he hears harmonious sound.” The passage implies the boundary between sensory inputs and the information is ambiguous. Gu gave an explanation about the tradition of suggestiveness in Chinese, “In their efforts to make art adequately representative of observed reality and imaginative thought, Chinese artists found in suggestiveness an effective way to represent unlimited life with limited artistic means. This discovery set Chinese thinkers on a journey of inquiry into the rationale and techniques of suggestiveness, a journey lasting all the way from high antiquity to

modern times.”

In sum, Chinese care inner life, and seek to meaning and feeling (Pan et al., 1994). Their pursuit of spirit, such as emotion and experience, goes beyond the form of objects. Blocker (2001) described, “Chinese aestheticians frequently say that while Western art is slavishly concerned with imitating the external, physical surface of reality, Chinese artists seek to reveal the underlying, essential inner nature or spirit of a thing, that while Western art is more interested in the material object, Chinese art is more concerned with feeling.” Accordingly, in the consumption context, Chinese are able to interpret on their own as they appreciate product’s appearance for their habit of spirit (chi) and suggestiveness approach. In other words, the invisible “chi” and suggestiveness both are Chinese unique aesthetic ways, and they are applied on the ways of appreciating products as well.

VI. Conclusion

The study attempts to understand Chinese consumer aesthetic perceptions on products. After reviewing and analyzing literatures in aesthetic consumptions and the Chinese cultural context, we found that consumer aesthetic perception and preference are related to their cultural values. Finally, we built five consumer aesthetic propositions in the study: (1) Chinese consumers appreciate cheap and utilitarian products because of their value of “saving; (2) Chinese like to appreciate passing fad as others; (3) Chinese consumer holds conservative attitude; therefore, their aesthetics tend to appreciate style of “social acceptable;” (4) Chinese consumer prefers products with plain style; (5) Chinese consumer aesthetic perceptions are full of feeling and interpretation on their own. Our findings showed that Chinese aesthetic perceptions are deeply influenced by its unique cultural background and also provide strong evidence to support some Western scholars’ arguments. Just as Blocker (2001) doubted that Western aesthetic terms such as “art,” “art criticism,” and “aesthetic experience” illustrate non-Western aesthetics precisely, since each culture may have different ways to describe and viewing arts, so that the concepts do not always correspond to others. Kim and Markus (1999) also argued that individual’s choices and actions all represent culture of their own. In this way, culture shapes one’s aesthetic judgment undoubtedly.

Furthermore, just as many scholars have agreed that product design determines consumer’s responses (e.g. Veryzer, 1995). Bloch (1995) offered a model of consumer responses to product from with consumer minds and behaviors to the product design. In the psychological process, consumers may experience aesthetic responses as appreciating artworks, and such responds are even deeper than general affective responds, such as liking. Undoubtedly, consumer responses, including purchasing intention and purchase behavior, depend on their liking during the aesthetic experience with products. In the further research, we may discuss and analyze Chinese consumer psychological mechanisms on aesthetic products.

For the suggestions of further studies, here are two points. First is the research method, the current study is qualitative, yet it is worthy of conducting empirical studies for aesthetics to make study visions and insights broader. In an explanation of a study called *A Scale for Measuring Aesthetic Style in the Field of Luxury and Arts Products*, the authors Lagier and Godey (2007) showed the different ways of viewing aesthetic in the consumption studies. They said, “In the experiential aesthetic approach, the range of effects carries much more weight than in the traditional consuming process study perspective, which considers only a handful of the phenomenological aspects of consumption: feelings of attraction, of reputation, desires, fears, ecstasy and disillusionment. This experiential perspective allows for the expected emotion to appear as an impulsive, subjective phenomenon, a source of motivation, interacting with the information treatment process.” In short, in additional humanistic research tracks, empirical studies should be encouraged, such as developing a Chinese consumer aesthetic perception scale.

Second is the current fashion trend may change young generation’s aesthetic tastes. For instance, with the media communication, the youth have more chances to have creative appreciation on their own, which may differ from the olds, who tend to be traditional. In Piron’s (2006) study of Chinese favorite things, he found that “China’s contemporary culture is rapidly changing, somehow breaking away from traditions, yet retaining core values and reshaping them with modern, sometimes alien inputs.” For another instance, we could see the phenomenon of some young people is fascinated with luxury products, which indicates that their consumption values are developing to a new field (Yang, 2005).

Finally, in global marketing field, consumer’s aesthetic perceptions on colors, shapes, labels and packages of a product, is the essence at target. Take color as an example, “there is nothing inherently ‘good’ or ‘bad’ about any color of the spectrum; all associations and perceptions regarding color arise from culture” (Keegan & Green, 2003). Based on these opinions, we may know the basic assumption is different in culture by culture. In this way, it is necessary for further studies to investigate Chinese consumer values and acumen on product appearances.

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