AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF MEN'S INTERPRETATION

AND CHOICES OF MALE LOOKS

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Ou Zhang

Certificate of Approval:

_____   _____

Wi Suk Kwon   Michael R. Solomon, Chair
Assistant Professor   Professor
Consumer Affairs   Consumer Affairs

_____   _____

David M. Shannon   George T. Flowers
Professor   Interim Dean
Educational Foundations,   Graduate School
Leadership & Technology

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF MEN'S INTERPRETATION

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Ou Zhang

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Ou Zhang

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Signature of Author

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Date of Graduation

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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Ou Zhang

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Men's shifting self-identities and masculinities result in changes in men's clothing and shopping behavior. In fashion diffusion process, the fashion opinion leader plays a crucial role in approving or disapproving any new trend and look. While, nonleaders seek information and guide from those fashion opinion leaders. Understanding both opinion leaders' and nonleaders' clothing behavior changes will close the gap between industry offerings and consumers' needs. The purpose of this study was to: (1) explore and examine how male consumers with a different degree of fashion opinion leadership interpret the same male looks by using a photo sorting methodology; (2) investigate the

differences in male consumers' tendency to accept a variety of looks depending on their fashion leadership; (3) investigate how the variances in the interpretation and acceptance of male looks are related to information sources used.

A sample of male students at Auburn University was used. Content analyses revealed that men distinguished male looks by using both clothing and non-clothing cues. Associations between male looks and some cues proved previous researchers' propositions that masculinity has been fragmented and changed by subcultures and media influences. Furthermore, the findings showed that men's interpretations of male looks were different from person to person to some extent. Results from correlation analyses showed that the male consumer's fashion leadership was positively related to the frequency of using impersonal information sources, the variety of information sources used, and the variety of male looks accepted. Furthermore, impersonal information sources and the variety of male looks men accepted for themselves were also positively related.

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Journal of Consumer Research style was used.

MS Word was used.

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INTRODUCTION

Following the lead set by metrosexual icons such as David Beckham, who is worshiped by not only women but also men for his appearance, grooming, and clothing styles; men, especially young men, are more aware of their looks. A recent study (Bakewell, Mitchell, and Rothwell 2006) conducted in the UK found relatively high levels of fashion consciousness among the male generation Ys. Men's emerging heightened aesthetic sense on personal appearance is encouraged by mass media, such as the TV program Queer Eye for the Straight Guy. They are "reinforcing the message that men can make an effort with their appearance without compromising their sexuality" (Gray 2004, p. 28). Furthermore, men's overall shopping motive is changing. Most recent survey results released at the Advertising Age and Maxim 'Man Conference' indicate that "58% of men polled spend more money than they make each month and that more men view shopping as a pleasurable leisure-time activity -- an attitude previously much more associated with females" (Advertising Age 2006).

While men are becoming more engaged in managing their looks, they suffer from a tension between their sexuality and fashionability. Comparing men's shifting values and behaviors with what used to be and characterize male identity, role anxiety arises (Datamonitor 2005). "Men are less certain of their roles, their careers and their relationships to family as they reconcile effeminate values with older-fashioned 'macho'

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themes" (Datamonitor 2005, p. 11). This research tries to explore what men's perceptions of masculinity are in the context of clothing, that is to say how men's contemporary perceptions of masculinity are reflected in their interpretation of men's looks as well as their acceptance of male looks for themselves.

Furthermore, this research examined what men's masculinities appear across male fashion opinion leaders and non-opinion leaders. In the diffusion process, innovators make new ideas and innovations aware among their peers, and then opinion leaders serve as role-models for others and speed the diffusion process by approving or disapproving those new ideas and innovations (Rogers 1962). Research (Brannon 2000) on the process of fashion diffusion showed that innovators wear new fashions and make others aware of the new looks, while opinion leaders endorse a style and guide those who seek further information.

Being interpersonal information transmitters, innovators and opinion leaders have a greater influence than others in their social systems (Darden and Reynolds 1972). So, understanding male opinion leaders' clothing behavior and how their masculinity has changed is crucial for industrial decision making in fashion design and marketing. In this study, we explored what men's contemporary identities appear in the context of clothing in order to give industry insiders an insight into their consumers' evolving needs for clothing. Secondly, we examined the variance in men's contemporary masculinities in the context of clothing on a continuum of fashion opinion leadership. At last, we examined how those variations in men's masculinities are related to information sources used. We hope to provide new academic evidence for men's apparel industry on developing appealing products to their target consumers and being able to get products diffused in the market by

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not only targeting those influential individuals with high fashion opinion leadership, but also employing the right information channel to reach both fashion opinion leaders and nonleaders.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to: (1) explore and examine how male consumers with a different degree of fashion opinion leadership interpret the same male looks by using a photo sorting methodology; (2) investigate the differences in male consumers' tendency to accept a variety of looks depending on their fashion opinion leadership; (3) investigate how the variances in the interpretation and acceptance of male looks are related to information sources used. The findings are expected to provide men's fashion industry with updated knowledge about their target consumers and help enhance the synchronicity between consumers' and industrial perspectives.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

More than one third of U.S. apparel purchases are in the menswear category and the American menswear market totaled $72.9 billion in 2002. There is a huge market for menswear. The needs are still growing due to the increasing popularity of male grooming products and the rise in men's interest in fashion. The volume of worldwide consumption of men's apparel and accessories has been approximately equal to the consumption of women's apparel and accessories. A survey conducted by Datamonitor (2005) showed that

more European and US men (73%) than women (72%) felt that spending time on personal appearance was "important" or "very important". In addition, 47% of male respondents across all countries indicated that they spent more time on their personal appearance in the period from 2003 to 2004, compared with the 51% of females. Furthermore, men are more responsible to their own shopping rather than relying on females. Men are also "buying out of want rather than need" (Walker 2000, p. W.1). They are no longer satisfied by the basic functions of clothing, but also seek for fashion which is not necessary but aesthetically pleasing (Kinley, Conrad, and Brown 2000).

The shift in masculine identity not only produces a considerable market value, but also leads to an increase of choices that calls for an increase in the variety of offerings. However, few studies have been conducted to understand men's clothing behavior, especially how they think about fashion and how their masculinity has shifted and evolved in the context of clothing. There might be a gap between male consumers' and the menswear industry's perspectives on menswear and a gap between what the industry provides and what consumers want. An up-to-date understanding of this new trend among male consumers may help adjusting existing product development processes in the menswear industry to the emerging consumer needs. As Balestri and Ricchetti (2000) described, "the work involved in designing a new line of men's clothing…is based on the subtle variations that need to be made on the overall silhouette in order to comply with the trends of the coming season, by lengthening or shortening the jacket or the cuffs, an incense or reduction of the padding in the shoulders, moving the buttons up or down, and so on" (pp. 56-57). The design process for men's clothing focuses more on wearability, but ignores men's diversified needs for styles. These gaps will also mislead marketers in their

communication strategies. So, this research intends to contribute both to the men's fashion industry and the academic literature of men's fashion.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Shifting Masculinity and Clothing Behavior

The shift in men's masculinity has been noticed and studied by many scholars. Thus, our study is built up on a solid ground of previous scholars' work and will further investigate men's shifting masculinity in fashion area. In this part, we will introduce and summarize how men's masculinity has been shifted from previous social researchers' studies.

Fashion phenomenon has been studied by many researchers as a means to investigate social and cultural changes. Clothing is an excellent field for studying people's interpretation of a specific culture, since it is one of the most visible forms of consumption and plays a major role in the social construction of identity (Crane 2000). Due to this inseparable relationship, once cultural and social systems vacillate, clothing choices will also be influenced and altered. Particularly in this postmodern era, contemporary cultures and societies allow more fluidity but fewer constraints in either cultural roles or social structures (Crane 2000). Shifts in men's masculinity are suggested by some researchers as a consequence of social and cultural changes.

This change probably can be traced back to the nineteenth century when clothing was democratized and all social classes adopted similar types of clothing (Steele 1989). It

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undermined former rigid boundaries of social strata. Then in the twentieth century, numerous expansions of ready-made clothing at prices affordable by different classes allowed people to create their personal styles that express their identities (Crane 2000). Some scholars (Bell 1976; Giddens 1991) propose that people have more freedom to construct their identities due to the emergence of a variety of lifestyle choices and more leisure time. Consumption of cultural goods, such as fashionable clothing, is becoming more and more important in the construction of personal identity (Crane 2000). As Bocock (1993, p. 81) states "Style, enjoyment, excitement, escape from boredom at work or at play, being attractive to self and others, these become central life-concerns, and affect patterns of consumption in post-modernity." Fashion is employed to define social identities (Davis 1992; Thompson and Haytko 1997); however, it continually redefines our social distinctions and also expresses those distinctions in new styles (Crane 2000). Gender is one of the most important social identities, and is socially determined. According to Butler (1990), gender itself is not masculine or feminine, but is communicated through social performances, such as the adoption of certain styles of dress and types of accessories and makeup. In other words, gender is conveyed by behaviors that are expected from a female or a male by society. Research on psychological androgyny posits that an individual can be both masculine and feminine. Based on these theories, gender identity is fluid and fluctuates with social and cultural changes, and this fluidity is revealed by the change in clothing choices.

Some researchers have examined the changes in men's masculine identity and attribute them to fragmented subcultures and lifestyles, changes in workplace, women's

increasing power, as well as celebrity and media influences. We will review each of their propositions here.

Crane (2000) argues that ideals of hegemonic masculinity are actually translated in very different ways in clothing in the fragmented society. Subcultures break down, reinterpret, and redefine primarily unified meanings. Gay subcultures challenged the existing definition of masculinity and redefined it in their own way (Segal 1990). Youth subcultures and street styles such as "zooties, bikers, hipsters, teddy boys, mods, rockabillies, surfers, rude boys, psychedelics, hippies, skinheads, glam rockers, rastas, headbangers, skaters, punks, new romantics, Goths, B boys -- all more significant for their effect on male than female style" (Polhemus 2000, p. 47). In addition, males could wear long hair and wear bright colors (Polhemus 2000). Steele (2000) also noted that the rise of various street styles that are associated with music, such as hip hop, fragmented masculinity.

On the other hand, in the workplace, men's clothing norms are no longer as rigid as before. Less formal business dress code, such as casual Friday, contributed to shape and change men's lifestyles (Balestri and Ricchetti 2000; Crane 2000). Given a greater freedom, fashion facilitates a tendency to pay more attention to aesthetic values than to the functional qualities, which is slowly placing an influence on men's wear (Balestri and Ricchetti 2000). In contrast, more women entered the workplace and are playing more powerful social and family roles than in the past, masculinity is no longer limited to males; thus, the division between men and women is becoming blurry (Shugaar 2000).

Furthermore, influences of celebrities and the media are an undeniable impetus in changing masculine identity. The example of the length of men's hair showed by the

Beatles redefined masculine style in public (Malossi 2000). With the help of the media, new masculine styles and changes could be exposed to a larger number of audiences and rapidly disseminated. The media also accentuate differences between lifestyles by segmenting itself (Turow 1997), associate prominent meanings with specific types of garments, and then accelerate the process of diffusion downward or upward (Crane 2000). Moreover, advertising has gradually persuaded heterosexual males to look as good as their homosexual counterparts (Sharkey 2000). When gay markets were growing large, advertisers started to target gay individuals by using advertisements with specific cues recognizable by gay people but often unrecognized by the straight (Clark 1993).

These theories developed by previous researchers provide a clear picture of what happened to change men's masculinity and explained how men's identity has shifted. But, we also need to recognize that although the distinction between women and men is blurring, the boundaries still exist (Shugaar 2000); although fashion change in men's clothing is much slower than change in women's clothing, it is changing (Kinley, Conrad, and Brown 2000).

Variation in Interpretation and Acceptance of Male Looks

While masculinity is changing, men's acceptance of male looks is not identical from individual to individual due to variances in their mental interpretation of meanings delivered by those looks.

Importing ideas from Gestalt psychology (Koffka 1935; Lewin 1951; Wertheimer 1945) and grounded in the work in the area of social learning (Miller and Dollard 1941),

social cognition research has been focusing on the person's subjective perception of reality. There are several steps that occur before one's behavioral response: encoding, storing in memory, making inferences and judgments (or decisions) that guides one's behavioral response (Bless, Fiedler, and Strack 2004). Prior knowledge that the person brings to the situation plays an important role throughout this process (Bless, Fiedler, and Strack 2004, Fiske and Taylor 1991). Thus, people encode, interpret, make decisions, and behave differently. In the step of encoding and interpretation, the target stimulus is categorized into a category.

Early studies on products' symbolic meanings (Levy 1959, 1964, 1980; Zaltman and Wallendorf 1979) suggested that consumption of goods may depend more on their social meaning than their functional utility. The notion that symbolic qualities of products are often determinants of product evaluation and adoption was supported by studies in self-image and product-image congruence (Birdwell 1968; Dolich 1969; Gardner and Levy 1955; Grubb and Hupp 1968; Landon 1974), the role of products in impression formation and communication (Belk 1978; Holman 1981a, 1981b; Rosenfeld and Plax 1977), and symbolic consumption (Bagozzi 1975; Hirschman 1981; Hirschman and Holbrook 1981; Levy, Czepiel, and Rook 1980). Products are often employed to communicate social information, such as personality traits, lifestyles, social roles, and so on (Belk 1978; Holman 1981b; Rosenfeld and Plax 1977; Sapir 1934; Solomon 1983). Those cues are not only noted in the number or the type of goods consumed, but also in their style, color, uniqueness, condition, and brand name (Belk 1978). As a highly symbolic product, clothing connotes various information of the wearer in the way it is consumed in different styles or colors, as well as the combinations. A study conducted by Holman (1976) using

photographs of a woman dressed in different clothing ensembles found a number of differences in the inferred traits of the woman.

Furthermore, when perceiving products' attributes, consumers tend to assign them to categories and organize information about product or person associations by resembling other types of cognitive categorization (Solomon 1988). In many cases, they may purchase particular products to label themselves as members of a particular desired category or avoid other purchases that resemble categories they try to distance themselves from. Those categories can be personality traits, status, occupations, lifestyles, and subcultures. Consumers also employ certain products to enable themselves to be members of their reference groups or look like their role models. As it was hypothesized in a study of self-definition in the business world, MBA students with a lower chance of career success would be more likely to display symbols of belonging to the business community (Wicklund et al. 1981). However, the meaning perceived might be different from person to person. Since symbols acquire meaning through the socialization process, the history of individuals' enculturation to a large extent determines the similarity in their interpretation of symbolic meanings (Solomon 1983).

So, it is reasonable to propose that male consumers interpret male looks in terms of assigning them to different categories, and the perceived meanings or labels of those categories will differ from individual to individual due to differences in personal socialization experience. As a result, male consumers' interpretation of the same male look varies from one to another.

Similar studies were conducted in women's clothing and appearances. By using a photo sorting methodology, researchers found there are multiple types of beauty, and

specific types are seen as more or less suitable for certain products (Solomon, Ashmore, and Longo 1992). A further study investigated how idealized beauty types are distributed across specific medium vehicles (Englis, Solomon, and Ashmore 1994). Solomon and Douglas (1987) examined product symbolism in terms of female executives' clothing choices. In their study, they identified factors that affect the diversity of clothing symbols associated with the female executive role, and found the range of clothing selection varied due to attitudes toward symbolic consumption and information sources. These studies provide empirical evidence for understanding products' symbolic function as well as offer useful implications for marketers. However, few studies have been conducted to examine product symbolism in men's perspective, especially for the prosperous men's fashion industry. There is still a blank in our understanding of symbolic consumption and possibly a gap between male consumers' perception in decoding information cues and industry's perception in encoding those cues.

Opinion Leadership

Diffusion research has been conducted across different disciplines for many decades and yielded plentiful findings. Among those studies, emphasis was placed on innovators and opinion leaders due to their key roles in the diffusion process. Between these two groups, the opinion leader is the most important agent in accelerating this process. Opinion leaders "have a greater share of influence…take the lead in influencing the opinions of others…are defined as those individuals from whom others seek advice and information" (Rogers 1962, p. 208). An opinion leader "refers to one who exerts

disproportionate influence on others through interpersonal communication" and "often has a substantial effect on the diffusion of a product throughout its intended market" (Summers 1971, p. 313). Furthermore, opinion leaders are more innovative than their followers (Myers and Robertson, 1976; Rogers, 1962). Because of its importance both in adoption process and diffusion in the market, opinion leadership has been examined, profiled, and predicted in many fields, including fashion. Clothing is of special importance since it is high in social influence and is a publicly consumed good with high symbolic value to consumers (Bertrandias and Goldsmith 2006).

Most of previous studies on opinion leadership were about predicting or profiling opinion leaders. Robertson and Myers (1969) investigated the correlation between personality and opinion leadership and innovative buying behavior in three product categories — appliances, clothing, and food. But they found that none of the personality variables in their study could predict opinion leadership. Darden and Reynolds (1972) conducted a research to predict opinion leadership for men's fashions, and found fashion interest and fashion venturesomeness were relatively context-free predictors of male fashion leadership. Another study (Hirschman and Adcock 1978) in the field of men's fashion apparel examined opinion leaders and two other groups (innovative communicators and innovators) in five aspects: socioeconomic characteristics; sociographic influence; evaluations of retail store attributes; media usage; and store patronage.

Among previous studies, overlap of opinion leadership was found across product categories. Merton proposed that there are two types of opinion leaders: monomorphic and polymorphic (1957):

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The monomorphic influentials are the 'experts' in a limited filed, and their

influence does not diffuse into other spheres of decision. Others, and this includes a

good number of the top influentials, are polymorphic, exerting interpersonal

influence in a variety of (sometimes seemingly unrelated) spheres (p. 414).

Marcus and Bauer (1964) found significant opinion leadership overlaps for fashion

and public affairs, as well as fashion and marketing. However, Robertson and Myers

(1969) found that opinion leadership is indeed monomorphic across three product

categories — appliances, clothing, and food. Later King and Summers (1970) reexamined

overlap of opinion leadership across six product categories: packaged foods, household

cleaners and detergents, women's fashions, cosmetics and personal grooming aids,

clothing materials, and large and small appliances. They found opinion leadership overlap

is common across all these categories, and is highest between product categories which

involve similar interests (also confirmed by Montgomery and Silk 1971; Myers and

Robertson 1972).

Based on these findings, we can assume that male fashion opinion leaders are also

opinion leaders in some other areas, especially the areas with similar interests to them. So,

by understanding male opinion leaders' preferences in fashion apparel, designers and

marketers both in the fashion industry and some other industries can catch and meet the

consumers' needs. Particularly when males' identity and needs are changing,

understanding and targeting those opinion leaders make industries catch up with the

change and able to target the larger market which is influenced by opinion leaders in such

an era that the power of marketing has been transferred to consumers (Solomon 2005).

Information Sources

In order to target opinion leaders, it is necessary to know from where they usually seek information since opinion leaders also tend to be information seekers (Reynolds and Darden 1971). By examining information sources used by opinion leaders and followers, we can understand the relationship between their clothing choices and information sources used.

Some researchers (Kinley, Conrad, and Brown 2000) found that male apparel shoppers use more nonpersonal cues than personal information sources. They also found young adult males more engaged in information searching than older males. In a study on media exposure of opinion leaders in a specific innovative automobile product, Armstrong and Feldman (1976) found significant differences in terms of magazine readership between opinion leaders and nonleaders. Opinion leaders exhibited greater exposure to print media in terms of reading more newspapers and magazine classes than nonleaders. It was posited that impersonal information sources are more important than personal information for relatively earlier adopters of innovations than for later adopters, since only few members in the social system have experienced it at the time the innovation comes out (Rogers 1962). This theory was verified in some empirical studies. For example, Armstrong and Feldman (1976) found Opinion leaders tend to use objective nonpersonal information sources, while non-leaders tend to use personal sources. Information sources are also suggested to be topic-oriented. Studies (Reynolds and Darden 1971; Summers 1970) have found that women's fashion leaders concentrated on those most exposed to fashion magazines. Furthermore, according to Rogers (1962), opinion leaders are suggested to use cosmopolite

information sources which are external to a social system, and use a larger number of different information sources. Solomon and Douglas (1987) proposed that the range of acceptable clothing styles (symbol diversity) is influenced by exposure to information sources. They found that female executives who are attentive to business sources resulted in acceptance of a narrow range of styles, and conversely attentive to fashion sources resulted in a wider range.

Based on the literatures stated above, we can assume that male consumers' perceptions and interpretations of male looks are different from one to another. Furthermore, differences also exist between male fashion opinion leaders and nonleaders. Male opinion leaders are expected to categorize male looks into a greater number of categories than nonleaders. Based on this assumption, we also propose that male fashion opinion leaders have wider acceptance of male looks for themselves than nonleaders. Furthermore, the meanings assigned to categories are different from one to another. In addition, these differences are influenced by information sources used.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

Opinion leaders have a greater share of influence. They influence others' opinions and are the people from whom others seek advice and information (Rogers 1962). Opinion leaders speed or impede the diffusion process by approving or disapproving new ideas (Rogers 1962). Male fashion opinion leaders serve this same function in the area of men's fashion. They speed or impede the diffusion of new styles by adopting or rejecting them before these new styles are adopted by the majority. So, fashion opinion leaders are aware

of new styles earlier than nonleaders. It is also suggested that opinion leaders differ from their followers in "information sources, cosmopoliteness, social participation, social status, and innovativeness" (Rogers 1962, p. 233).

In addition, opinion leaders are generally assumed to possess more knowledge or expertise in the product category of interest than do nonleaders. Jacoby and Hoyer (1981) found a strong positive correlation between opinion leadership and expertise demonstrating the assumption that opinion leaders are more knowledgeable in their area of leadership. Since prior knowledge plays an important role in how one perceives and interprets a targeted stimulus, we propose that opinion leaders with a larger knowledge base can interpret male looks by categorizing them into a greater number of categories than nonleaders. Moreover, due to opinion leaders' influential role in the diffusion process by approving and disapproving new ideas and their greater degree of innovativeness, we propose that male opinion leaders' acceptance of different male looks for themselves will be much wider than nonleaders'.

The other interest of this research is to explore what meanings men assign to their perceived categories of male looks. When perceiving products' attributes, consumers tend to assign them to categories and organize information about product or person associations by resembling other types of cognitive categorization (Solomon 1988). However, the meaning perceived might be different from person to person. Since symbols acquire meanings through the socialization process, the history of individuals' enculturation to a large extent determines the similarity in their interpretation of symbolic meanings (Solomon 1983). So, it is reasonable to propose that male consumers assign the same male look to different categories. The perceived meanings or labels of those categories will also

differ from individual to individual due to differences in personal socialization experience.

In addition, opinion leaders use more impersonal information sources, while nonleaders use more interpersonal sources (Rogers 1976; Feldman 1976). Opinion leaders are also more cosmopolite than their followers, which means that opinion leaders seek information from outside of the social system (Rogers 1976). Baumgarten (1975) also found that innovative communicators, who are both innovators and opinion leaders, seek information from more impersonal and cosmopolite sources.

In the area of fashion, fashion opinion leaders get new looks from impersonal and cosmopolite sources, such as fashion magazines; while nonleaders seek information about clothing from interpersonal sources, such as observing what others wear. So, the differences in interpreting and accepting male looks are also expected to be influenced by the information sources used. We propose that the more impersonal information sources are used, the more categories of male looks can be categorized and the wider the acceptance of male looks is; while the more personal information sources are used, the less categories of male looks can be categorized and the narrower the acceptance of male looks is.

Based on the above discussions, we propose the following research question and hypotheses:

(1) Male Look Categorization:

Research Question: What are the categories used by male consumers to classify male
looks?

(2) Fashion Opinion Leadership and Information Seeking Behavior:

H1:   Male consumers' fashion opinion leadership is (a) positively related with the frequency of using impersonal information sources and (b) negatively related with the frequency of using interpersonal information sources.

H2:   Male consumers' fashion opinion leadership and the variety of information sources they use are positively related.

(3) Fashion Opinion Leadership and Male Look Categorization:

H3:   Male consumers' fashion opinion leadership and number of categories they use to classify male looks are positively related.

H4:   Male consumers' fashion opinion leadership and the variety of male looks that they accept for themselves are positively related.

(4) Information Seeking Behavior and Male Look Categorization:

H5:   The number of categories men use to classify male looks is (a) positively related with the frequency of using impersonal information sources, and (b) negatively related with the frequency of using interpersonal information sources.

(5) Information Seeking Behavior and Male Look Acceptance:

H6:   The variety of male looks the male consumer accepts for himself is (a) positively related with the frequency of using impersonal information

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sources and (b) negatively related with the frequency of using interpersonal information sources.

METHODS

Stimuli

An initial pool of photographs of male models collected from five modeling agencies was developed. These five agencies from which we collected model images are: (1) SVM New York; (2) VNY Model Management; (3) Major Model Management; (4) New York Model Management; (5) IMG Models.

From the five agencies' online portfolios, we downloaded all male model images that met the criteria that the model is a male model with standing or other upright posture and being clothed (cover half or more of body). This resulted in a database 1,175 images of 368 models. For a better result from the photo sorting methodology will be used, another two criteria were applied to further refine the image database: (1) the model must be fully clothed; (2) the image must be clear enough to be viewed on a 480px X 640px pixel. Applying these two additional criteria resulted in the final database of 156 images of 117 male models from the five modeling agencies. Thirty male model images were randomly drawn from this final photo database and printed on sorting cards for the sorting study. We acknowledge that these model images can not represent all the contemporary male looks. But by examining participants' perception upon the same images, it is still valid to explore the differences in participants' interpretation of male looks.

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Sampling and Data Collection

A convenience sample consisting of 129 male students who are 19 or older were approached from Auburn University for soliciting participation in this study, because college students are more innovative and open to accept new trends, and represent a large portion of the market for apparel. To approach these students, questionnaires were given to eight friends of the researcher who have access to many male students. Among these eight recruiters, five were graduate teaching assistants at Departments of Mathematics and Statistics, Curriculum and Teaching, Biological Sciences, Computer Sciences, or Consumer Affairs. They could either reach a lot of undergraduate students in the classes they taught or some male graduate students in their departments. The other three recruiters were undergraduate students who could reach a lot of male students from the classes they were taking. One hundred and twenty-nine self-administered questionnaires (See Appendix) along with letters informing participants of the confidentiality and anonymity of the study, sorting cards, and envelopes for enclosing sorting cards were personally delivered to male students who were 19 or older by the eight recruiters. We offered a random drawing for $10 gift certificates to ten winners from all the participants. Based on their consents, volunteers took the questionnaires back to home and filled them out. Then, participants who finished the questionnaires returned them to our recruiters. At last, the researcher collected the completed questionnaires back from the recruiters. A total of 73 completed questionnaires were collected with a response rate of 57%. The low response rate was expected since it took a while for the participant to sort the photos and fill out the

questionnaire, and the survey was conducted through the month of April which was just near the final examination period.

We asked participants to sort the 30 model images into different piles on the basis of similarity of male looks and put them in each envelope. Then, they were asked to provide a label or some words to describe each pile of male looks and write them on each envelope. After they finished the photo sorting task, the participants were asked to complete a set of questions addressing the acceptance of male looks, fashion opinion leadership, information seeking, and demographic information.

In the beginning of the booklet, we asked the participants to look through those 30 male look photos which were printed on the sorting cards and sort them into piles on the basis of how similar they are to one another. They were asked to put the piles of sorted photos into envelopes and write a label or some words to describe each pile of look on the envelope. Then, they were asked to look through those same photos again which were printed in the booklet and rate each photo on how likely they would be to look like the person shown in each photo. After that, they wrote down the number of single picture that most closely resembled how they would most be to look like. To ensure the participants sort photos and rate their acceptance of those male looks with the same context in mind which guarantees the validity of this study, we provided them a common social situation. A situation of going out was used as a context in which the participants sorted photos and rated the acceptance of the looks showed in those photos. Furthermore, we informed the participants that this situation only included casual situations such as hanging out with friends, shopping, or going on a casual date; but did not include formal and special situations such as going to an office job, a job interview, a wedding, or a formal dance.

In the booklet, questions addressing the variables of interest to this study were provided in the order of acceptance of male looks, fashion opinion leadership, and information sources.

Acceptance of male looks. Participants were asked how likely they would be to look like the person shown in each picture. Each photo was rated on a five-point Likert scale from 1 ("not at all likely") to 5 ("very likely"), with a higher number meaning they were more likely to dress like the person in the photo.

Fashion Opinion Leadership. The six-item self-report scale developed by Flynn et al. (1996) was used to measure fashion opinion leadership. This opinion leadership scale was originally developed and tested in three different product categories by the researchers: rock music, fashionable clothing, and environmentally friendly products. The validity and reliability of this scale was demonstrated and proved across all the three product categories. This scale was later used in Bertrandias and Goldsmith's study (2006) on fashion and also was proved with an acceptable high reliability. In this study, reliability analysis showed that the coefficient alpha was .83, which is still acceptable exceeding the .70 recommendation of Nunnally (1978). Participants were asked to rate those items on a five-point Likert scale from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 7 ("strongly agree"), with a higher number meaning stronger agreement. Since item 1, 2, and 3 were negatively worded, they were reverse-coded.

Information sources. A scale of information seeking behavior was developed based on some information sources used by opinion leaders and nonleaders in former studies. Items included in this scale are seven impersonal information sources: magazines (labeled as INFO1), newspapers (INFO2), catalogs (INFO3), television (INFO4), store displays and

windows (INFO6), and websites and fashion blogs (INFO7); three personal information

sources: salespersons (INFO5), friends (INFO8), and family members (INFO9). The

numbering of labels is according to the order of presence of each item in the scale.

Participants were asked how frequently they seek information from each source when they

purchase clothes by using a five-point Likert-type scale from 1 ("always") to 5 ("never"),

with a higher number meaning less frequently. These item scores were reverse-coded so

that in data analysis, a higher score would indicate a more frequent use of the information

source. Factor analyses showed that those nine items formed two factors, with all

impersonal information items loading on the first factor and all personal information items

loading on the second factor. Results from factor analyses are presented in Table 1. Then,

reliability analyses on each sub-scale showed a coefficient alpha of .74 for impersonal

information items and a coefficient alpha of .49 for personal information items. Results

from reliability analyses also showed that the reliability of impersonal information

sub-scale cannot be improved by deleting any item. However, .74 is still an acceptable

reliability. On the other hand, deleting item 5 (salesperson) from personal information

sub-scale can increase its reliability to .56. We did not delete this item, since the

improvement in the scale reliability was not enough to justify deleting one the only three

items in the scale.

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Table 1. Factor Analyses of Information Seeking Data

Item	Factor1	Factor 2
INFO1	**.76**	-.26
INFO2	**.57**	-.13
INFO3	**.60**	-.18
INFO4	**.75**	.02
INFO5	.15	**.48**
INFO6	**.61**	.24
INFO7	**.63**	-.19
INFO8	.31	**.75**
INFO9	.06	**.75**
% of variance	30.2	17.3

NOTE: INFO1, INFO2, INFO3, INFO4, INFO6, and INFO7 are impersonal information sources; INFO5, INFO8, and INFO9 are personal information sources. Bold numbers indicate largest factor loadings.

RESULTS

Sample Characteristics

The sample was composed of 73 male students ranging form 19 to 34 years old; the mean was 23.2 years (SD = 3.2). Participants were from college of engineering (24%), college of liberal arts (21.9%), college of sciences and mathematics (19.2%), and college of business (13.7%). The majority of them were undergraduate students (65.7%). The participants were composed of white (65.8%), Asian (17.8%), black or African American

(12.3%), and other (4.1%). Most of them had monthly disposable income less than $699.

Results from descriptive statistics are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Description of Sample

Demographics	N	%
College		
College of Agriculture	2	2.7
College of Architecture, Design & Construction		5.5
College of Business	10	13.7
College of Education	2	2.7
College of Engineering	18	24.7
College of Forestry & Wildlife Sciences	1	1.4
College of Human Sciences	1	1.4
College of Liberal Arts	16	21.9
School of Nursing	1	1.4
College of Sciences & Mathematics	14	19.2
Other	4	5.5
Academic year		
Freshman	10	13.7
Sophomore	7	9.6
Junior	15	20.5
First year Master's	4	5.5
Second year Master's	8	11.0
First year PhD	5	6.8
Fourth year PhD	1	1.4
Other	7	9.6
Ethnicity		
Asian	13	17.8
Black or African American	9	12.3
White	48	65.8
Other	3	4.1
Monthly disposable income		
Under $100	15	20.5
$100 - $299	17	23.3
$300 - $499	12	16.4
$500 - $699	8	11.0
$700 - $899	3	4.1
Over $1000	5	6.8
Don't know	9	12.3
Prefer not to answer	4	5.5
Marital status		
Single	67	91.8
Married	5	6.8
Widowed	1	1.4

Research Question

To explore our research question, content analysis was conducted to explore what categories of male looks are perceived by men. A total of 460 labels with descriptive words provided by participants to describe each pile of photos were transcribed and coded by a primary coder and a secondary coder. The secondary coder was not involved in this study, but was informed of the purpose of this study and trained to do the coding. The coders first scrutinized the data and developed a coding guide consisting of ten categories labeled 'style', 'brand', 'profession', 'occasion', 'subculture', 'media influence', 'attitude/intention/personal characteristics', 'clothing article', 'color', 'outfit fit/mix and match/details of outfit', and 'other'. Definitions and example comments for each coding category are presented in Table 3. Using these eleven categories, the two coders coded each of the labels independently from each other, which resulted in an inter-coder reliability of 97.6%. Through negotiation between the two coders, all the disagreed-upon phrases were re-coded, attaining a 100% final agreement. Results from the content analysis are presented in Table 4. Those results revealed that: (1) most labels (55.4%) were describing styles (e.g., "casual", "formal", "dressy", "fancy", "beach style", "professional"); (2) 14.3% of labels were describing the wearer's attitude, intension or personal characteristics (e.g., "bum", "dressed to kill", "can I be in your music video", "dandy"); (3) 10.4% of labels were describing occasions (e.g., "alone in a field", "business", "daytime", "college", "everyday", "for picnic", "foreign biker", "I did graffiti in New York", "it's going to rain"); (4) 8.9% of labels were describing the subculture the wearer belongs to (e.g., "preppy", "emo", "punk", "gay", "metrosexual", "hippy", "frat

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look", "Gothic", "skater"); (5) 3.5% of labels were about clothing article (e.g., "coats",

"suits"); (6) 3.0% of labels were describing the wearer's profession (e.g., "artist", "popular

band", "stripper"); (7) 2.8% of labels were about brands or influences of media (e.g.,

"Abercrombie", "American Eagle", "Aragorn", "from boys II men to N'sync"); (8) 2.4% of

labels were about fit, mix and match or details of the outfit (e.g., "Clothes that don't fit

right", "expensive suits", "leather", "lots of layers"); and (9) 1.1% of labels were about

color (e.g., "flamboyantly fruitabulous", "dark").

Table 3. Coding Guide

Coding category	Definition	Example comments
Style	The particular kind of appearance conveyed from clothing.	"Casual", "formal", "chic".
Brand	Name of a brand.	"Abercrombie", "BCBG".
Profession	The type or nature of a job.	"Artist", "model".
Occasion	An event the wearer is involving in; or a circumstance or environment the wearer is in.	"Active, good to hang out", "Cold weather clothes".
Subculture	A group within a society that sets itself apart by means of unique beliefs or behaviors.	"Emo", "Gay".
Media influence	Media sources or characters appeared in media sources.	"From boys II men to N'sync", "GQ".
Attitude/Intention/Personal Characteristics	The wearer's attitude, intention to do something, or characteristics about the wearer revealed from clothing.	"Bizarre, dressed to kill", "bum", "dandy".
Clothing article	Specific clothing item.	"Bad jackets".
Color	Color - related characteristics of clothes.	"Dark".
Fit/Mix & Match/Details of outfit	How the clothes fit the wearer; how the wearer mix and match different clothing items; details related to the texture, price, or cut of the clothes.	"Sleeveless, showing arms", "leather".

Table 4. Frequencies of Labels

Coding Category	Total	%
Style	255	55.4%
Attitude/Intension/Personal Characteristics	66	14.3%
Occasion	48	10.4%
Subculture	41	8.9%
Clothing Article	16	3.5%
Profession	14	3.0%
Fit/Mix & Match/Details of Outfit	11	2.4%
Media Influence	8	1.7%
Brand	5	1.1%
Color	5	1.1%
Other	22	4.8%
Total	460	

Note: Some labels were coded under more than one category.

Furthermore, the result of an examination of all the pictures picked out by the participants showed that male looks in Picture 5, Picture 8, and Picture 20 (see Figure 1) mostly resembled how they would like to look if they were hanging out with friends, shopping, or going on a casual date, with respectively percentage of 23.5%, 23.5% and 20%.

Figure 1. Top Three Selected Male Looks

Picture 5   Picture 8   Picture 20

As we have discussed that men would interpret male looks differently due to their prior knowledge and personal socialization experience, the variance existed across all of the 30 male looks to a different extent. For example, Picture 5 showed in Figure 1 was perceived by participants as "casual" and "relax" (65.3%), "comfortable" (6.7%), and was also interpreted by some others as "punk/indie", "bad-boy macho look", "dandy", "sporty", "preppy" or "fraternity look", "cool stuff", "trendy" or "urban", and "West Coast" or "California style". Not only did the participants interpret each male look differently to some extent, they also had different understanding of even the same label. Such as "casual" was explained by some participants as "clothes worn when relaxing and going out", or "hang out with friends and go to a party", or "attending family function", or "can be worn to anywhere". It was also explained by other participants as "wear any day type stuff", "clothes for conservative males to wear to work, class, casual dates, or hanging out". "It's relaxed, not showy, and functional", "comfortable and easy to coordinate", or "stylish and

fashionable". In addition, for some participants, there were subtle differences in differentiating male looks. For example, a participant labeled three groups of male looks as "elegant", but one was "elegant – smart and handsome", another was "elegant – stiff, pompous", and the other was "elegant – weird". These results mean that participants' interpretation of male looks even varies across the same broad category and each one had their own process to encode the meanings of the same male look.

Hypotheses Testing

Before presenting results from statistical analyses, each variable's scores were calculated in the following ways. First, for the variety of accepted male looks, the average scores across participants' ratings on all photos in the male look acceptance scale was used. The rationale for this variable score computation method is that if the participant's average score across all the 30 photos is high, it means the participant gave relatively high ratings compared to other participants on all the male looks. It also means the participant accepts a more variety of male looks. Second, the number of male look categories was calculated from the number of piles into which each participant sorted the male look photos. Next, the fashion opinion leadership variable score was calculated as the average of the participant's ratings on the six items that measured fashion opinion leadership, three among which were reverse-coded. So, the higher the average score, the higher the participant's fashion opinion leadership. Next, there were two sub-scales in the information seeking scale, impersonal information sources and personal information sources. We calculated the average score for items for each sub-scale (all reverse-coded) as the variable score for the impersonal

information sources (INFO1, INFO2, INFO3, INFO4, INFO6, and INFO 7) and personal information sources (INFO5, INFO8, and INFO9). Finally, the variety of information sources was computed by taking the average score across all the nine information source items. Descriptive statistics for each variable are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics for Variables ($N = 73$)

Variable	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Fashion opinion leadership	3.7	1.3	1.0	6.2
Impersonal information sources	2.4	.7	1.0	4.0
Personal information sources	2.8	.8	1.0	4.3
Variety of information sources	2.5	.6	1.0	3.6
Male look categories	6.1	3.0	2.0	16.0
Variety of accepted male looks	2.3	.6	1.2	4.0

To test hypothesis 1 through hypothesis 6, correlation analyses were conducted, and the results are presented in Table 6. The results indicated that male consumers' fashion opinion leadership and frequency of using impersonal information sources were positively related, while there was no significant correlation between fashion opinion leadership and personal information sources. Therefore, hypothesis 1(a) was supported and hypothesis 1(b) was rejected. Male consumers' fashion opinion leadership and variety of information sources used were also positively related, supporting hypothesis 2. There was no significant correlation between fashion opinion leadership and male look categories. Thus, hypothesis 3 was rejected. However, male consumers' fashion opinion leadership and variety of male looks accepted for themselves were positively related, supporting

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hypothesis 4. In addition, there was no significant correlation between information sources and male look categories. Thus, hypothesis 5(a) and 5(b) were rejected. Finally, frequency of using impersonal information sources and variety of male looks the male consumer accepts for himself were positively related. However, there was no significant correlation between personal information sources and variety of accepted male looks. So, hypothesis 6(a) was supported, while hypothesis 6(b) was rejected.

Table 6. Correlations

	Fashion Opinion Leadership	Impersonal Information Sources	Personal Information Sources
Impersonal Information Sources	.31**	-	-
Personal Information Sources	-.01	-	-
Variety of Information sources	.25*	-	-
Male Look Categories	-.05	.18	.16
Variety of accepted male looks	.27*	.46**	-.02

*$p< .05$, **$p< .01$
Note: Information sources were measured on a five-point Likert-type scale from one to five, with a
       higher number meaning less frequently.

DISCUSSIONS

By exploring men's perceptions of different male looks, this study not only adds new evidence to previous studies, but also provides implications for the marketing practitioners. Results from content analysis revealed how men decode various cues from male looks. The categories men used to categorize male looks indicate that they distinguish male looks by using some clothing cues, such as style, color, clothing article, fit, mix and match, and details of clothing. They also perceive some information beyond clothing, such

as the wearer's profession, attitude, intension and personal characteristics, as well as the subculture the wearer belongs to and occasions. From this perspective, male look presented from clothing is employed by male consumers as a symbolic cue to infer some information about the wearer. This supports previous findings on products' symbolic functions (Belk 1978; Holman 1981b; Rosenfeld and Plax 1977; Sapir 1934; Solomon 1983, 1988) in the scope of men's clothing. Furthermore, being educated under all kinds of media influences, male consumers build up a connection between associations attained from brands, celebrities, fictional characters and magazines and the information perceived from male looks. This finding supports the proposition that masculinity has been fragmented and changed by subcultures and media influences (Crane 2000; Polhemus 2000; Segal 1990; Steel 2000; Turow 1997). This also means that media, marketing and advertising play an important role in guiding male consumers how to decode specific information cues. Those images and associations directed by those industry insiders affect male consumers' cognitive perceptions on different male looks and even their attitude towards those looks. As Solomon (1983) proposed that the history of individuals' enculturation to a large extent determines the similarity in their interpretation of symbolic meanings, there are variances found in men's interpretations of male looks, which also supports similar findings in a previous study Holman (1976). Based on those findings, marketing practitioners should realize that male consumers perceive clothing cues differently. As industry insiders, they should make those information cues and perceived meanings consistent between the media and their products. For example, they could deliver the right information and brand image to target consumers, and sponsor the right spokesperson who can be representative of the image of the brand which appeals to the target market.

From correlation analyses, we found that the higher the opinion leadership, the more impersonal information sources were used. This is consistent with findings in previous studies (Armstrong and Feldman 1976; Kinley, Conrad, and Brown 2000). However, we did not find evidence that the lower the opinion leadership, the more personal information sources are used as it was found in previous studies. Compared with those previous studies in which random, large, or national samples were used, we had a small and convenience sample. This difference in the sampling procedure might have biased the results. For example, the small convenience sample recruited from a Southern university used in this study resulted in including only a small percentage of fashion opinion leaders, which restricted the variance in the fashion opinion leadership variable. Furthermore, reliability analyses showed a low reliability of the personal information sub-scale. So those three items in the sub-scale may not measure the true score of personal information seeking, which could also affect the results from correlation analyses.

We also found that the higher the opinion leadership, the more variety of information sources was used and the more variety of male looks was accepted. These findings support Rogers' (1962) proposition that opinion leaders use a greater number of different information sources and are more innovative than their followers, which was also supported by Myers and Robertson (1972). In this study, we found that the more impersonal information sources men use, the more variety of male looks they accept for themselves. This indicates that the exposure of information sources affects men's range of acceptance of male looks, which is similar with what Solomon and Douglas (1987) found in their study using female executives. However, we did not find any significant relationship between the use of personal information sources and the acceptance of male

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looks. This may result from our sampling procedure and the low reliability of personal information seeking sub-scale. Although correlation analyses showed these significant relationships, the correlation coefficients were low. So those relationships may not be practically significant.

LIMITATIONS

There are some limitations of this study. Due to the limited ability to recruit a diverse sample across different geographic areas, we used a sample consisting of students from Auburn University. And due to the photo sorting methodology we used and regard to the inadequate time span to collect data, we had to use a small and convenience sample. This sampling procedure still made our findings from content analyses sound in terms of exploring male consumers' perceptions on the same male looks. What was also brought to our concerns is the findings on our participants' perception of male looks can not be representative of the male consumers'. If we could expand our sample to the nation wide, we expect there would be different findings on the presence of men's contemporary masculinities. However, the sampling procedure might bias our findings from correlation analyses. Furthermore, there were also some limitations from the measurement scales. By asking self-designating questions on fashion opinion leadership which relies on the participant's presumed influence on others, we might not get the true scores on each participant's fashion opinion leadership. Since opinion leadership is a construct of the influence of opinions on others, a more rational measurement on this construct should be measuring the person's opinion leadership from their followers' responses. So, a more

precise measurement on opinion leadership needs to be developed in the future, which also can be practically operated in the applied settings. On the other hand, the personal information seeking sub-scale we used attained a low reliability. This also biased our findings from correlation analyses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Further research should recruit a larger and more diversified sample in order to explore what men's contemporary masculinities are under a bigger social context. A need also exists in the development of a better information seeking scale with high reliability. In addition, more analyses should be conducted to explore if there any predictors which can help us segment male consumers based on the same cognitive perceptions on male looks. This will help industry insiders easily produce appealing information cues and delivered to the target market through the right media. Further study should also examine the synchronicity between male consumers' perceptions from the brand and its offerings, and also the synchronicity between male consumers' perceived meanings and the industry insiders' produced information cues.

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Survey on Male Looks

The purpose of this study is to understand how people think about different "looks" for men. Please read and follow the instructions in every section. There are no right or wrong answers; we're just interested in your opinions. Your answers are very valuable for this study and your participation is highly appreciated!

Section I: Photo Sorting
Part 1
Instructions:
You are going to see a set of photos that represent different "looks" for men. Please look through the pictures and sort them into piles based on how similar they are to one another. In other words, put all of the photos you think represent the same or a similar "look" into a pile. You can make as few or as many piles as you would like. When you are finished putting the photos into piles, please put each pile you have made into one of the envelopes. For each pile, please (1) write a label best describing the "look" the photos represent; and (2) describe the "look" in words or phrases ON THE ENVELOPE.

Part 2
Instructions:
In this part we're interested in your personal feelings about the "looks" you saw in the photos you sorted. Imagine that you are going out and that you will be in a casual situation, such as hanging out with friends, shopping, or going on a casual date. Don't think about more formal situations such as going to an office job, a job interview, a wedding, a formal dance, etc.

Please look at each of the photographs shown below again and indicate how likely you would be to look like the person shown in the picture. Please circle a response for each scale shown below:

1

2

3
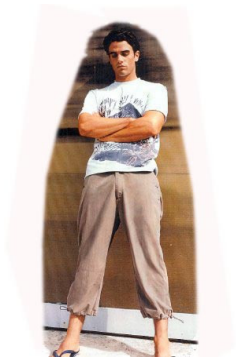

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Photograph #	How likely I would be to look like the person shown in the picture:				
	Not at all likely		Moderately likely		Very likely
1	1	2	3	4	5
2	1	2	3	4	5
3	1	2	3	4	5
4	1	2	3	4	5
5	1	2	3	4	5
6	1	2	3	4	5
7	1	2	3	4	5
8	1	2	3	4	5
9	1	2	3	4	5
10	1	2	3	4	5
11	1	2	3	4	5
12	1	2	3	4	5
13	1	2	3	4	5
14	1	2	3	4	5
15	1	2	3	4	5
16	1	2	3	4	5
17	1	2	3	4	5
18	1	2	3	4	5
19	1	2	3	4	5
20	1	2	3	4	5
21	1	2	3	4	5
22	1	2	3	4	5
23	1	2	3	4	5
24	1	2	3	4	5
25	1	2	3	4	5
26	1	2	3	4	5
27	1	2	3	4	5
28	1	2	3	4	5
29	1	2	3	4	5
30	1	2	3	4	5

OK, now please look through the pictures one more time and write the number of the single picture that most closely resembles how you would most like to look if you were hanging out with friends, shopping, or going on a casual date.

_____

Section II: Fashion and Information Seeking Behavior
Part 1
Instructions:
This short questionnaire is about fashion. Please read each statement carefully. For each of the statements below, please circle the number that most closely matches your view of the opinions stated. The items are scaled from 1 to 7, with a higher number meaning stronger agreement.

	Strongly Disagree			Neither Disagree Or Agree			Strongly Agree
1. My opinion on fashion seems not to count with other people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. When they choose fashionable clothing, other people do not turn to me for advice.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Other people rarely come to me for advice about choosing fashionable clothing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. People that I know pick clothing based on what I have told them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I often persuade other people to buy the fashions that I like.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I often influence people's opinions about clothing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Part 2
Instructions:
For each information source shown below, please circle the number that mostly indicates how frequently you seek information from this source when you consider purchasing clothes.

	Always	Very Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Magazines	1	2	3	4	5
Newspapers	1	2	3	4	5
Catalogs	1	2	3	4	5
Television	1	2	3	4	5
Salespersons	1	2	3	4	5
Store displays and windows	1	2	3	4	5
Websites and fashion blogs	1	2	3	4	5
Friends	1	2	3	4	5
Family members	1	2	3	4	5

If you use other information sources that are not stated above, please specify them:

_____

Section III: Please Tell Us Something about Yourself
Instructions:
Please answer the following questions. These are for classification purposes only; your individual responses will remain anonymous.

1. Which is your college or school?

- [ ] College of Agriculture

- [ ] College of Architecture, Design & Construction

- [ ] College of Business

- [ ] College of Education

- [ ] Samuel Ginn College of Engineering

- [ ] School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences

- [ ] College of Human Sciences

- [ ] College of Liberal Arts

- [ ] School of Nursing

- [ ] Harrison School of Pharmacy

- [ ] College of Sciences and Mathematics

- [ ] College of Veterinary Medicine

Other, please specify_____
2. What is your year of birth?

3. What is your current **<u>academic year</u>**?

- [ ] Freshman
- [ ] Sophomore
- [ ] Junior
- [ ] Senior
- [ ] First year Master's
- [ ] Second year Master's
- [ ] First year PhD
- [ ] Second year PhD
- [ ] Third year PhD
- [ ] Fourth year PhD

Other, please specify_____

4. What is your **<u>Ethnicity?</u>**

- [ ] American Indian or Alaska Native
- [ ] Asian
- [ ] Black or African American
- [ ] Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- [ ] White
- [ ] Hispanic or Latino
- [ ] Prefer not to answer

5. Please select a range that best describes your monthly disposable income (that is, the amount of money you have to spend after you've paid for "essentials" like rent, food, utilities, etc.).

☐ Under US$ 100

☐ US$100-US$ 299

☐ US$300-US$ 499

☐ US$500-US$699

☐ US$700-US$899

☐ US$900-US$1000

☐ Over US$ 1000

☐ Don't know

☐ Prefer not to answer

6. Please select your **marital status**.

☐ Single

☐ Married

☐ Divorced or separated

☐ Widowed