New Marketing Strategies for Fast Fashion Brands in South Korea:
An Exploration of Consumer's Purchasing Experiences

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Abstract: Global fast fashion brands have been popular and most of them have entered the Korean market. With their success, Korean apparel companies launched domestic fast fashion brands; however, recently they have become fiercely competitive, and consumers are demanding better design and quality and cheaper prices than before. The purpose of this study is to explore consumer purchasing behavior of the global as well as domestic fast fashion brands sold in Korea and to suggest marketing strategies for the brands sold in Korea. The study includes interviewing 61 Korean consumers to ask about their purchasing behavior and experiences. This study found four themes from these in-depth interviews: 1) demand of product glocalization which considers both globalization and localization for better style, quality, and assortment plan, 2) satisfaction with the reasonable price range of fast fashion brands but dissatisfaction with price discrimination among countries, 3) importance of easy, comfortable, and convenient accessibility to fast fashion brands, and 4) preference for good brand reputation related to corporate social responsibility(CSR) and nationality. From these four themes, this study developed the four elements of the marketing mix: product, price, accessibility, and reputation to adapt to a new marketing environment that emphasizes the development of information technology, consumer-centric marketing, and corporate ethics. The findings of this research could contribute useful information to both global and domestic fashion companies as well as consumers.

Key words: fast fashion, Korea, glocalization, marketing mix, marketing strategies

1. Introduction

Recently, the apparel industry has become fiercely competitive in order to survive. As a result, consumers have come to expect better design and prices than ever before. They expect trendy and unique products at good prices. To meet these expectations and survive in the environment, companies have adopted a number of marketing strategies. Companies have tried to reduce the retail prices of apparel goods and offer a variety of styles with low inventories. With these trends, the term "fast fashion" appeared in the mid 1990s by fashion retailers to capture new trendy designs from the runway and develop, manufacture, and deliver quickly at low prices (Hines & Bruce, 2001). This atmosphere of the fashion industry has made some global fast fashion brands like Zara and H&M leaders in the fashion industry.

For these reasons, much research has been conducted on case

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studies focusing on a certain brand of global fast fashion brands (Kim & Lee, 2014; Lopez & Fan, 2009; Mazaira et al., 2003; Royo-Vela & Casamassima, 2011; Shen, 2014; Tokatli, 2008). These global fast fashion brands extend to South Korea. Some global fast fashion brands are successful in South Korea, while others are not. Not only apparel but also other industries have experienced a similar situation. For example, Costco has been successful in Korea while Walmart, the world's biggest retailer, failed there (Gandolfi & Strach, 2009). Walmart withdrew in 2006, just eight years after it opened in South Korea (Gandolfi & Strach, 2009). In addition to Walmart, Nokia, Nestle, and Google have experienced difficulty in adjusting in South Korea's market (Choe, 2006). Walmart sold its 16 stores to Shinsegae, which owns E-Mart, the number one domestic discount store in Korea (Choe, 2006). In addition, in 2006, French retailer Carrefour sold 32 stores to E-Land, a Korean apparel retailer (Choe, 2006). Google, a global search engine, is just a small player in Korea, where Korean indigenous search engines such as Naver and Daum are more popular. Many global brands and companies are not easily successful in South Korea. Gandofi and Strach (2009) found that the reason Walmart failed was because of its inability to capture unique Korean consumers and understand foreign culture. Due to the unique characteristics of the Korean market, firms that own global

brands should research the unique demands and tastes of Korean consumers and investigate the market environment before they enter the Korean market. The purpose of this study is to explore consumer purchasing experience of the fast fashion brands sold in Korea and to suggest marketing strategies for both global and domestic fast fashion brands sold in Korea. Even though there are many studies that have analyzed consumers' purchasing behaviors and experiences through quantitative studies, participants' answers to pre-decided questions do not adequately reflect how consumers really think about matters. Open-ended questions for qualitative research allow participants to mention how they feel about matters. Generally, interview research is more time consuming and costly; however, this method can produce unexpected thoughts and various ideas and experiences from consumers. The answers to open ended and semi-structured questions might help future research to construct instruments for survey questions of quantitative studies. Because of the advantages of qualitative methods, this study uses the interview method to explore consumer purchasing behavior regarding the fast fashion brands sold in Korea and suggest marketing strategies for these brands. The findings of this research could contribute useful information to both domestic and foreign fashion companies.

1.1. Global fast fashion brands in the world market

Consumers are tired of mass production, which produces the same style with large inventory and eliminates product uniqueness; therefore, apparel companies have tried to offer various styles and change the design of products immediately. For these reasons, fast fashion brands have appeared and have been widely applied by fashion retailers. The main idea behind fast fashion is to supply new products to consumers that reflect the hottest fashion trends and what consumers most want (Choi et al., 2014; Levy & Weitz, 2008). Cachon and Swinney (2011) proposed that a fast fashion system applies improved product design ability and quick response manufacturing ability to design trendy products that the latest consumers want and minimizes production lead times to prepare the supply for uncertain demand. Consumers' needs and wants are volatile, so demand uncertainty in fashion goods is relatively high compared to other products. Based on insufficient current sales data, fast fashion companies need to forecast sales with a short lead time and a tight schedule (Cachon & Swinney, 2011; Choi et al., 2014). In addition, companies try to maintain low inventory level since the cost of managing inventory is significant, and seasonal goods that have a short life cycle might be discounted if they are not sold in a timely manner (Choi et al., 2014).

The fast fashion brands that have expanded internationally are Zara and H&M. These fast fashion brands commonly belong to the "Specialty Store Retailer of Private Label Apparel" (SPA) category, which means that they are retailers that manage the entire process including product planning, design, production, distribution, and retailing ("Fast Retailing", 2015; Kim & Han, 2017). Even though they employ outsourcing in a certain stage, they are involved in management of garment-making process. For example, they may directly procure or design materials such as fabrics and findings. According to the website of H&M Group, they also organize production schedule and supervise suppliers to ensure that right goods are produced at the right price and distribute on right time even though they do not have their own factory. Fig. 1 shows the net sales of fast fashion companies. The major global fast fashion companies were selected based on SPA ranking provided by Fast Retailing Co., LTD. Fig. 1 shows that Inditex, a Spain retailer, which owns its signature brand, Zara, has had the highest world net sales and net income since 2011 among fast fashion brands. It is well known that Zara is able to develop products from conceptual design to finished goods on the sales floor within two weeks (Choi et al., 2014; Ghemawat & Nueno, 2003). The short lead time allows Zara to meet current market trends and maintain low inventory levels. If customer response to a style is not good, the company can stop making the style and quickly shift to a more popular style. Therefore, Zara can maintain a low number of clearance items, selling most of its products at original prices.

Meanwhile, the Gap, Inc., a retailer that offers classic or casual apparel at moderate prices, has relatively longer lead times than those of its fast-fashion rivals like Zara. This is because Zara's goods are mostly produced domestically or in countries near Spain, where Zara is headquartered, for timely delivery. Gap mostly uses overseas production to save labor costs. Gap did not have annual growth rates as high as other fast fashion brands from 2010 to 2016 (Fig. 1). Eventually, the number of Gap stores worldwide decreased from 1,430 to 1,319 between 2010 and 2017 ("The Gap", 2018; Statista, n. d.). The company supplies new products once or twice a week, but they were planned at least six months before ("The Gap", 2009). This makes it difficult for Gap to respond rapidly to new or changing fashion trends; therefore, the probability that Gap fails to follow current trends is higher than its rivals. Since 2004, Gap's sales have not met expectations. The company expected that high level of inventory causes markdown and low margin ("The Gap", 2018).

Fast Retailing Co., LTD., which owns Uniqlo, has had a large growth in net sales based on Fig. 1. In 2016, Uniqlo operated 1,667 stores in Asian countries and only 128 stores in other countries, including the United States, European countries, and Russia ("Fast Retailing", 2017). Uniqlo has performed strongly in Asia, while it has struggled in other continents such as the United States. Tadashi
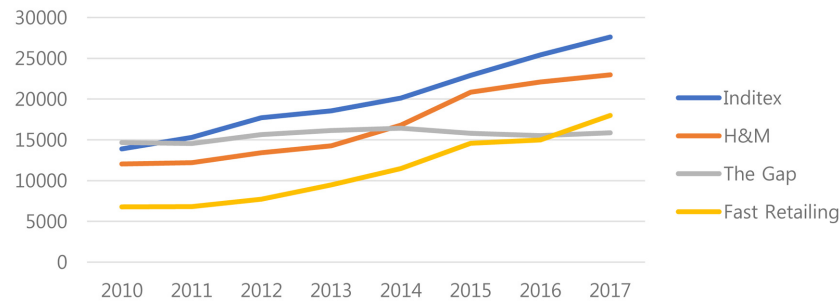
Fig. 1. World net sales of fast fashion brands (in millions of US dollar). Source: Based on data from the annual reports of Fast Retailing Co., LTD. (2017), The Gap, Inc.(2018), The H&M Group (2018), and The Inditex Group (2018).

Yanai, the chief executive of the company, tried to invest heavily in the US market, concentrating on big cities such as New York, Chicago, and San Francisco. Despite aggressive marketing strategies, the number of Uniqlo stores decreased in the United States due to low profits. The company closed three stores in New Jersey shortly after opening (Fickenscher, 2016).

1.2. Fast fashion brands sold in Korean apparel market

Korea along with Hong Kong and Taiwan was one of the largest exporters of textile and apparel until the 1980s. Since then, however, exports from Korea have decreased while imports have increased due to the rise of Korea's wage rate and consumer demand to foreign brands. The 1988 Seoul Olympic Games created an interest among the Korean people for foreign brands and an increase in consumption in foreign luxury brands despite the high prices of foreign products. In the 2000s, global fast fashion brands entered the Korean market. For example, Uniqlo entered Korea in 2005, Gap in 2007, Forever 21 in 2008, Zara in 2008, H&M in 2010, and Joe Fresh in 2014. Jeil Industry (now Samsung C&T) had already imported and opened Mango stores in 2001 and 2003 but retreated soon after opening the stores. In 2009, the Mango headquarters in Spain directly entered the Korea market; however, due to its poor sales revenue, only seven stores were left in 2017. Forever 21 has operated only two stores since 2016 after closing a flagship store in Garosoogil, Seoul. Uniqlo, Zara, and H&M had high annual growth rates at the early stage after entering the Korean market; however, they also had slow or negative growth rates later.

Due to the early success of global fast fashion brands, Korean apparel companies launched domestic fast fashion brands. For instance, E-Land launched Spao, Samsung C&T launched 8 Seconds, and Shinsung Tongsang launched Top 10. According to Park (2016), these launchings created fierce competition and market saturation in the Korean apparel markets. Fig. 2 shows that net sales of domestic as well as global fast fashion brands sold in Korea

increased from 2007 to 2015.

After Uniqlo opened stores in Korea in 2005, it continued to have a large annual growth rate in until 2015. Fig. 2 shows that Uniqlo held a dominant position from 2007 to 2015 over its rivals in Korea even though Fig. 1 shows that it lagged behind Zara and H&M in the world market. Meanwhile, Zara and H&M, the leading fast fashion brands in the world, suffered in the Korean market. Even though they are the most representative fast fashion brands, they had a slower growth rate in net sales from 2007 to 2015 than Uniqlo (Fig. 2). In addition, Korean fast fashion brands including 8 Seconds, Spao, and Top 10, also have a slow growth as Zara and H&M in net sales (Fig. 2).

1.3. New marketing strategies and revised marketing mix based on consumers' view points are required

The economic recession and the market saturation of fast fashion brands in Korea have recently had negative effects on their net incomes. They have tried to build new marekting objectives and strategies to survive under these circumstances. To provide brand marketers with helpful tools to achieve their marekting objectives, new marketing mix might be needed. Marketing mix is often used as the tools a company practices for marekting planning in response to its target market (Goi, 2009; Kotler & Armstrong, 2014). Marketing mix was dominantly useful for marketers for a long period, so many researchers found its limitation and modified its elements. Borden's (1964) marketing mix included 12 elements; product planning, pricing, branding, channels of distribtion, personal selling, advertising, promotions, packing, display, servicing, physical handling, and fact finding and analysis, while McCarthy (1964) developed and refined the marketing mix with four elements; product, price, promotion, and place, well known today as the four Ps. Many researchers added more Ps to the original four Ps. For example, Booms and Biters (1981) added the three Ps: participants (customers), physical evidence (environmental factors),
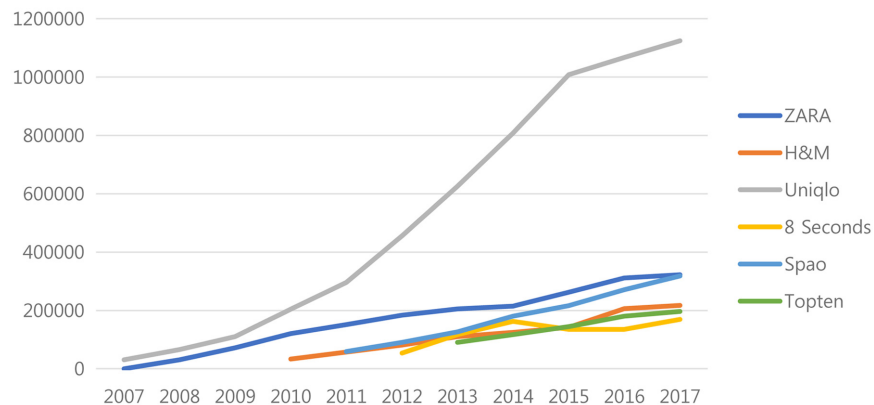
Fig. 2. Net sales of fast fashion brands in Korea (in millions of US dollars). Source: Based on data from Financial Supervisory Service.

and process (service delivery) to emphasize customer satisfaction employing better quality and service (Goi, 2009). Heuvel (1993) added personnel as another P to emphasize interaction between the marketer and the customer (Goi, 2009). Lauterborn (1990) addressed that the customer should be placed in the center for the successful marketing plan; therefore, the four Ps should be substituted with the four Cs: customer needs, customer cost, convenience, and communication. Kotler and Armstrong (2014) also mentioned that the four Ps concepts consider the seller's view not the buyer's view, so marketers should consider both views following the four Cs concept of Lauterborn (1990). Changable marketing environments such as the emergence and development of E-marketing, mass-customization, and the fourth industrial revolution need intimate interaction between the marketer and the consumer. To understand consumers' viewpoints, this study interviewed consumers rather than marketers. Through in-depth analysis of the interview results on the consumers' viewpoints, specific maketing strategies for individual fast fashion brands can be suggested.

2. Method

This study used the qualitative research method to explore consumer purchasing behavior and suggest marketing strategies following the phase of "the inductive logic of research in a qualitative study" by Creswell (2014, p. 66). After gathering information, open-ended questions (three central questions and seven sub-questions) were developed. Then, interviewees were asked the developed questions. The interview data was analyzed to form themes.

2.1. Sample

For phenomenological research, Polkinghorne (1989) recommended that researchers interview five to 25 participants who

experienced all phenomena. For grounded theory research, Creswell (2012) said that researchers might need 20 to 60 interviews to collect enough data to develop a model or a new theory. To collect more diverse experiences and opinions about purchasing behavior, this study interviewed 61 people until the respondents did not provide new experiences and thoughts.

The criteria for selecting interviewees were as follows. Every interviewee should be an adult who has visited a fast fashion brand store at least once and does not need a guardian agreement form required to minors. This is because all participants for this research should have experiences of fast fashion brands and make decisions by themselves without another's influence. Interviews were conducted outside the store at a location chosen by the interviewees for their comfort. Mostly they chose in front of the store gate because they did not need to move. Others chose cafés closely located to the store.

Interviews were conducted in Seoul, a capital city, and Daejeon, located in central South Korea (Daejeon Metropolitan City, NA). Most fast fashion stores are located in Seoul including Uniqlo (51 stores), Zara (19), H&M (11), 8 Seconds (13), Mixxo (17), and Spao (21) based on each company's website in January 2017. Myeong-dong in Seoul is one of the main shopping districts in Korea ("A shopping paradise", n. d.). Many small clothing, shoe, and accessory stores and many designer brands and national brand stores are located in streets and alleys and in big shopping malls such as Shinsegae Department Store, Lotte Department Store, Lotte Young Plaza, Myeong-dong Miliore, M Plaza, and Noon Square ("A shopping paradise", n. d.). Therefore, many flagship stores exist in Myong-dong. The interviews were conducted around the flagship stores. In Daejeon, the fifth largest city in Korea, several fast fashion stores are located including Uniqlo (7 stores), Zara (2), Mixxo (1), and Spao (2) based on each company's

website in January 2017. Interviewing in Daejeon helps understand consuming pattern of people who live in the local area.

2.2. Interview

To develop the interview questions, this study followed the research design of Creswell (2014). According to Creswell (2014), the central questions should be broad question that can ask for a general issue and an exploration of the central phenomena in the research. Shen (2008) addressed the advantages and disadvantages of both structured and non-structured interviews. Non-structured interviews can collect unexpected information related to the study; however, they make data analysis more difficult because interviewees' answers might be beyond the scope of the central questions (Gillian & Cassell, 1998; Shen, 2008). Meanwhile, structured interviews might lose unexpected significant information relevant to the study; however, research can analyze data easily because participants answered the same structured questions (Shen, 2008). Considering both advantages and disadvantages, this study employed semi-structured interviews. Before every interview, the definition and examples of fast fashion brands were briefly introduced if the interviewees did not know it. For this interview, a fast fashion brand was operationally defined as a brand which sells products that reflect recent fashion trends with affordable prices. A retailer which owns a fast fashion brand tries to develop, manufacture, and deliver diverse styles quickly maintaining low inventory levels. The operational definition of fast fashion brands was explained to the participants who do not know the meaning of the fast fashion brands.

To understand consumers' viewpoints, exploring their purchasing behavior is critical. To explore consumers' purchasing behavior, interviewing consumers is helpful and principal. Oliver (1997) and Reicheld (1996) mentioned that long-lasting brand experiences have to influence consumer purchasing behavior. Brakus et al. (2009) and Park (2015) found that brand experiences statistically significantly affect brand satisfaction and brand loyalty; and marketers should be aware of consumers' brand experiences. The central questions covered consumers' purchasing behavior asking consumers about their experiences during the three stages: searching, shopping, and consumption, introduced by Brakus et al. (2009), and Brakus et al. (2008). When consumers search products, they try to get information directly or indirectly, sometimes using marketing communication such as advertisements or public relations, fashion shows, and so on. When consumers shop products, they experience store services and face a store environment. When consumers consume products, they have satisfaction and loyalty about product quality. These main three steps were employed to develop three central questions for the interview. Asking sub-questions

under each central question helped narrow the focus (Creswell, 2014). Each central question has sub-questions like the following.

1. What have you experienced when you search fast fashion brand products?
   A. How do you think of fast fashion brands? If you do (do not) like fast fashion brands, what are the reasons that you are (are not) willing to search fast fashion brand products?
   B. How do you search fast fashion brand products?
   C. What do you learn after searching fast fashion brands or their products?
2. What have you experienced when you shop fast fashion brand products in physical and/or online stores?
   A. Which fast fashion brand products do you often (seldom) shop?
   B. What are the reasons that you often (seldom) shop these products?
3. What have you experienced when you consume fast fashion brand products?
   A. How do fast fashion brand products satisfy you?
   B. If fast fashion brand products do not satisfy you, what do you want to satisfy your desire?

Interviews were conducted between 11 a.m. and 8 p.m. on the weekends from July to December 2016. During weekdays, generally housewives were shopping so it might have been difficult to achieve diversity in participant jobs; therefore, weekends were chosen. To prevent the interviews from interfering with store business, only customers who were about to leave the store were asked to participate. Each interview took 10 minutes to 20 minutes. For compensation, interviewees were given a Lotte gift card with a cash value of 5,000 won (around US $5.00).

2.3. Data collection

For privacy protection, participants' data were collected anonymously; however, the age, gender, and job of participants were collected because the personal information might influence the research results. All interviews were recorded through an agreement with each interviewee. This study followed Shen's (2008) data translation method. All interviews were conducted in Korean and translated into English by the author. After that, a Korean-English speaker translated back into Korean. Back translation has often used to confirm the accuracy of the first translation and find errors and inconsistencies in the original translation. After checking the consistency between the back translation and the original meanings by interviewees, the contents were adopted.

When the first question about the definition of fast fashion was asked to the participants, 15 respondents out of 69 answered the exact meaning of fast fashion and provided examples of the fast

Table 1. Description of interviewees

ID	Sex	Age	Marital status	Child	City	ID	Sex	Age	Marital status	Child	City
1	F	25	Unmarried	0	Seoul	31	M	42	Married	1	Daejeon
2	F	27	Unmarried	0	Seoul	32	M	43	Married	1	Daejeon
3	F	29	Married	0	Seoul	33	F	41	Married	1	Daejeon
4	F	27	Married	0	Seoul	34	F	25	Unmarried	0	Seoul
5	F	39	Unmarried	0	Seoul	35	F	25	Unmarried	0	Seoul
6	F	40	Divorced	0	Seoul	36	F	40	Married	1	Daejeon
7	F	49	Married	2	Seoul	37	F	21	Unmarried	0	Seoul
8	F	39	Married	2	Daejeon	38	F	21	Unmarried	0	Seoul
9	F	39	Married	1	Daejeon	39	F	39	Unmarried	0	Seoul
10	F	41	Married	1	Daejeon	40	F	40	Unmarried	0	Seoul
11	F	43	Married	1	Daejeon	41	F	25	Unmarried	0	Seoul
12	F	49	Married	3	Daejeon	42	M	21	Unmarried	0	Seoul
13	M	49	Married	2	Seoul	43	M	21	Unmarried	0	Seoul
14	M	42	Married	1	Daejeon	44	F	33	Unmarried	0	Seoul
15	M	49	Married	2	Daejeon	45	F	33	Unmarried	0	Seoul
16	F	21	Unmarried	0	Seoul	46	F	49	Married	3	Daejeon
17	F	21	Unmarried	0	Seoul	47	F	43	Married	1	Daejeon
18	M	21	Unmarried	0	Seoul	48	M	49	Married	2	Seoul
19	F	25	Unmarried	0	Seoul	49	F	49	Married	2	Seoul
20	F	30	Unmarried	0	Seoul	50	F	39	Married	1	Daejeon
21	F	33	Unmarried	0	Seoul	51	M	49	Married	2	Daejeon
22	M	47	Married	3	Daejeon	52	F	42	Married	1	Daejeon
23	F	43	Married	1	Daejeon	53	F	27	Unmarried	0	Seoul
24	F	40	Unmarried	0	Seoul	54	F	47	Married	3	Daejeon
25	F	40	Married	1	Daejeon	55	F	39	Married	2	Daejeon
26	F	42	Married	1	Daejeon	56	F	29	Married	0	Seoul
27	F	42	Married	1	Daejeon	57	F	42	Married	1	Daejeon
28	F	21	Unmarried	0	Seoul	58	F	30	Unmarried	0	Seoul
29	F	21	Unmarried	0	Seoul	59	F	30	Unmarried	0	Seoul
30	F	40	Divorced	0	Seoul	60	F	27	Married	0	Seoul
						61	F	27	Married	0	Seoul

fashion brands sold in Korea; 46 of the participants answered that they have never heard of "fast fashion," but they understood after hearing the explanation of fast fashion brands and the examples. Eight people were excluded from the interview since they did not understand the meaning after hearing the explanation. Therefore, the total number of participants is 61. The participant information is described in Table 1.

3. Results & Discussion

This study found that interviewees think the four following themes are important from their fast fashion brand experience: 1)

product glocalization for better style, quality, and assortment plan; 2) reasonable prices without price discrimination among countries; 3) easy, comfortable, and convenient accessibility to fast fashion brands; and 4) strong brand reputation including sustainability and nationality.

3.1. Product glocalization for better style, quality, and assortment plan

Most respondents shared their diverse personal experiences from fast fashion brands in several dimensions such as product glocalization, reasonable price, easy accessibility, and strong brand reputation, but mainly focusing on product glocalization for better

style, quality, and assortment plan. Respondents compared differences between global fast fashion brands and local fast fashion brands in terms of product style and quality and added what they want for each group. They seem to assume that local fast fashion brands need to pursue globalization in product style, whereas global fast fashion brands need to pursue localization in quality, including product fitting on diverse body types by race and fabrics specifically developed for local consumer needs retaining their brand identity. Global brands in coffee shops, fast-food, family restaurant, and mass media, such as Starbucks, McDonald's, TGI Friday, and Disney, pursue product or service glocalization, which uses forces of globalization that allow localization (Robertson, 1995; Thompson & Arsel, 2004; Wilk, 1995). These products or services are developed and distributed on a global level, adopting local culture (*Business Dictionary*, n. d.). For example, Starbucks, McDonald's, and TGI Friday provide special menus for a specific country. Based on the result of the interviewees, fast fashion brands should adopt glocalization as other industries do.

Style. All interviewees discussed their personal preferences and experiences, focusing on satisfaction and/or dissatisfaction regarding fashion brand product design. More than half of the interviewees answered that they are satisfied with trendy, unique, and exotic styles in some European fast fashion brands such as Zara, H&M, and Mango, while they are not satisfied with basic styles of Asian brands such as Uniqlo (Japanese brand), Giordano (Hong Kong brand), and several Korean domestic fast fashion brands. Nevertheless, they visit Uniqlo to purchase its functional signature items with better fabric quality rather than design (Clifford, 2012).

Interviewee 7: I often visit H&M, Zara, and Mango store but I do not go to Giordano and Uniqlo for myself because design and color of H&M, Zara and Mango look trendy, while those of Giordano and Uniqlo show too simple a design. I visit Uniqlo for innerwear and jeans since its fabric quality is pretty good (Interviewee 9, 24, 25, 40, and 49 also gave similar comments).

Some interviewees responded that they do not like standardized Korean style. One of the reasons they visit global fast fashion brands is that they have expectations regarding goods that follow world trends rather than Korean trends.

Interviewee 17: I often visit H&M stores because its dresses have exotic styles. For example, I like unique design using punching in the center. Meanwhile, whenever I visit domestic brands, the similar styles are displayed so I cannot have new feelings about their products. Even though my fashion style is close to Korean style, I prefer bolder design, for example, deep neckline and glamour style.

Interviewee 21: Especially 8 Seconds has typical Korean style, which applies to many other Korean brands. Its style seems to me

out of fashion.

Not only women but also male Interviewees 18, 42, and 43, seek trendier design despite the limitation in menswear design. They are interested in T-shirts collaborated with other famous designers. Even though they prefer trendy design, menswear avoids excessively decorative designs such as lace, frill, and beads. Therefore, they are interested in figure images and logos printed on T-shirts. They like H&M, which often collaborates with a famous designer or a luxury brand.

Participants who chose Zara as a place to often visit among fast fashion brands answered that products are very trendy for fast turnover so they often visit to browse new products. Despite this merit, some interviewees want more unique and trendier products than fast fashion brands offer. Interviewees 21 and 45 said they use several online personal sellers who import goods from other countries or make by themselves and post on social network services (SNS) because the interviewees care about design and utility rather than price and brand name. They said that fast fashion brands are very trendy and unique compared to other brands, but the fast fashion brands are also for the public so their design is not as unique as they want.

Even though some interviewees prefer the trendy style of fast fashion, others still demand and purchase basic styles to wear at usual times. Most fast fashion brands provide diverse lines that include basic style. Interviewees answered that they can choose the basic styles from most fast fashion brand stores. They also answered that they can find more basic styles in Uniqlo stores than in other fast fashion brands.

Interviewee 18: The reason that I often visit Uniqlo is that the basic style is easy to match with other items.

Interviewee 27: I often purchase basic style garments to wear for a long period regardless of trends. Purchasing trendy accessories compensates for my old-style garment. Extremely trendy clothing is only for runway or celebrities in TV programs and movies. When I was young, I used to wear the same styles right after celebrities wore. Now I am a middle-aged woman so I consider more utility and fitness (Interviewee 57 also gave similar comments).

Interviewees 14 and 31 mentioned that new designs often make existing products obsolete too fast. They are not willing to purchase new products because the next new designs continue to come out soon. They are afraid that the style they want is going to be out of fashion soon.

Some interviewees mentioned insufficiency of products that show fast fashion brand identity. They are unsatisfied with insufficiency of the fast fashion brand's own identity.

Interviewee 32: I used to wear Boss business suit that is classic style but has its own button design and other details. When I wear

it, my friends recognize the suits are made by Boss even though the logo was not shown outside. When I asked how they knew, they answered Boss products have their own traditional style. However, I really do not know Zara's, H&M's, or 8 Seconds style. Only some products of Uniqlo such as Light Weight Quilting Jacket and Heattech show the brand's identity. Louis Vuitton has its own monogram patterns on the bags and Chanel has its own quilting or double C logo on the products. For example of Ikea or Lego where many designers work, even though the designers who designed products are different, we can have similar feelings from them within a brand (Interviewee 23 and 32 also gave similar comments).

Quality. Mostly interviewees were not satisfied with the quality of fast fashion brands. Interviewees responded that quality of fast fashion brands is not better than designer brands. The respondents addressed quality issues in terms of body fitness and fabric quality.

Some interviewees mentioned that European global fast fashion brands, Zara and H&M, do not provide satisfactory body fit for Asian women or free alteration service. Meanwhile, they were satisfied with Uniqlo products that fit well. They believe that design patterns of Uniqlo are for Asian women because it is a Japanese brand. Interviewees 20, 58, and 59 know that the free alteration service of pants is provided if the pants price is over 30,000 won (around US $30). Most fast fashion brands are classified as SPA, defined as retailers that "produce their own clothing, distribute and sell goods exclusively" (Lee, 2013). Therefore, the headquarters of each fast fashion brand directly manage all the company's products in the world. They give less consideration to the characteristics of body shape of local consumers than those of domestic consumers. This is different from an international license agreement in that local manufacturers are able to design and produce goods for local consumers. For example, Darks, a British brand, has been designed and produced considering Korean consumers' tastes by LF Corporation, a Korean apparel manufacturer. Daks has been popular among the Korean people since 1983 as an example of the successful license agreement. Meanwhile, many direct imported goods do not satisfy interviewees in quality.

Interviewee 19: When I browse H&M, Mango, and Forever 21 stores, I feel the quality is bad and the products do not fit me well. For example, their back stitch was not constant. In addition, tops do not fit my bust and shoulder part. I am Asian but I think the products were made for Caucasian body size because their headquarters are in European countries.

Interviewee 20: I often visit H&M since its size fit me well. I like design for this season (summer 2016). Many styles I like have been released and casual pants fit me well. However, I do not purchase H&M business suits, which require perfect body fit. Sleeve and pant lengths are too long to wear without alteration.

In addition to body fit, many other quality problems, including fabric defects, color effects, and sewing defects, were often found. Most interviewees shared bad experiences in quality of fast fashion brands. They answered that they cannot wear fast fashion products sustainably because of pilling and color fading problems. They pointed out sewing defects such as creasing of the garment, loose buttons, and uneven pattern or logos due to cutting and sewing mistakes.

Interviewee 20: One of unsatisfactory points in fast fashion brands is sewing defects in garments. Sometimes I found creasing around stitches and raw edges. The locations of print patterns are different depending on garments. For example, a T-shirt has a logo in the left side while others have it in the center. When I ordered a skirt online, a skirt that has different location of pattern from the website picture has been delivered. In addition, I often found horizontal stripes and plaids broken on side seam.

Interviewee 12: I am mostly satisfied with quality of Zara; however, the qualities of accessories such as shoes and bags were not satisfying. Especially leather shoes are not soft and their bottoms are slippery and heavy. In addition, they seem to be designed for feet of European people.

Some interviewees responded that they consider fabric content to check the quality of products. Even though most respondents answered that fast fashion brands do not have good quality, some of the following respondents answered that Uniqlo provides the best fabric quality among the fast fashion brands. Uniqlo has some signature items such as Heattech, Airism, Ultra Stretch Jeans, and Ultra Light Down Compact Quilted Jackets. The following respondents were satisfied with the fabric quality of the signature products even though many of them were not satisfied with the basic design of Uniqlo. Mostly they visit Uniqlo stores to shop the several kinds of signature products rather than expect refreshed trendy products there.

Interviewee 20: I like unique and trendy design but there is not such a unique one in Uniqlo store so I seldom visit the store. However, the quality of Uniqlo has pretty good value for money.

Interviewee 11: I often visit Uniqlo to buy my children's T-shirts because I am very satisfied with quality of cotton products (Interviewees 10, 33, and 47 also gave similar comments).

More than half of the interviewees own Heattech, the most successful main products of Uniqlo. They bought Heattech products by themselves or were given the products by someone. Interviewees have been satisfied with Heattech, which keeps body heat.

Interviewee 7: I have often bought Heattech for inner top and inner pants for my son, husband, and myself. There are many kinds of Heattech depending on materials. I chose both thin materials and fur materials. Heattech with fur is so warm. I think those products

are very functional.

Heattech was created as thin as 0.55mm; therefore, some interviewees can keep warm with the thin fabric. Most interviewees were satisfied with the diverse designs and items such as inner top and pants, shorts, socks, leggings, bra tops, slips, room wear, and Heattech fleece for both men and women.

Interviewee 3: Generally, Heattech is known as innerwear even though some Heattech products are made for outer tops and leggings. Some necklines for inner wear are not shown outside because they have deep-U-shape. Some have a turtleneck design I like. In addition, it is very thin enough for me to move easily and feel comfortable. I do not look bulky so I can dress more fashionably and warmly in winter than before (Interviewee 54 gave similar comments).

With the success of Heattech, it became basic goods. Heattech has been upgraded based on consumers' feedback. According to Fast Retailing Co., LTD., antibacterial and dry functions were added in 2004, a moisturizing function in 2005, stretch functions in 2006, anti-static and shape-retaining functions in 2009, and odor control functions in 2011. In addition, the company said, its yarn has become finer and softer.

In addition to Heattech, several interviewees (Interviewee 19, 20, and 58) discussed Airism, which Uniqlo developed for summer innerwear. The website of Fast Retailing Co., LTD. shows, Airism is able to rapidly absorb and evaporate perspiration, give a smooth and soft feeling with ultra-fine fibers, has an anti-odor function, gives a cool feeling, and stretches for comfort.

Ten interviewees own Ultra Light Down Compact Quilted Jackets, one of the successful products of Uniqlo. Interviewees 7 and 49 mentioned that they are very convenient to wear in late fall, early spring, or warm winter because it is so light. Sometimes they wear them inside a coat because they are slim and light and not as bulky as other down jackets.

Interviewee 20, who has worked at Uniqlo, answered that Ultra Stretched Jeans are one of the popular items of Uniqlo. When she worked at Uniqlo as a part-time sales person, Ultra Stretch Jeans were supplied to her as a uniform. They are extremely elastic for her to feel comfortable so she has purchased many of them. Interviewee 1 mentioned that she has purchased them several times for the comfortable feeling of wearing them.

Assortment Planning. The assortment planning of fast fashion brands mostly satisfies interviewees in that most fast fashion brands provide women, men, kids, and baby lines. Each line provides tops, bottoms, and accessories. Once they visit a fast fashion brand store, they can shop various items there.

The house wives among the interviewees were mostly satisfied with the broad target market of Uniqlo because they can select what their family members need. They often visit Uniqlo stores for their family. Some interviewees responded that they want more diverse styles and better quality in accessories of fast fashion brands. Others answered that they wish they could purchase more accessories that fit with well the apparel products because existing bags and shoes are not enough to match. Interviewee 22, a male respondent, answered that he visits H&M to browse more diverse products such as belts and briefcases.

3.2. Reasonable price range of fast fashion brands but unsatisfying price discrimination among countries

Even though the answers regarding prices of fast fashion brands are diverse, generally, participants seem to assume that prices of fast fashion brands were more reasonable than other groups of apparel brands within Korea, whereas fast fashion brands should a provide fair, transparent, and consistent price among countries in global standard.

Reasonable prices of fast fashion are satisfactory. Most interviewees are satisfied with the price of fast fashion products and others are not. Even the same people answered that they are satisfied with some specific brands or products but not with others. They think the value for the money depends on the product quality, the service and the brand image. Some interviewees said they used to visit the expensive luxury brands but now they seldom go there because global fast fashion brands fulfill their desire for expensive goods. They feel the difference in product quality between luxury and fast fashion brands is lower than that of product prices between them. Others answered that their economic problems caused them to shop for less expensive products.

Even though fast fashion brands give consumers reasonable prices, they are still more expensive than products without a brand name. Korea has several places where products without brand names are sold. The main place for the products is Dongdaemoon traditional market. There are 31,500 small stores in the 30 malls, and factories that produce trendy goods rapidly with pretty cheap prices ("Dongdaemoon Special Tourist Zone", n. d.). Generally, the designers in the Dongdaemoon market copy famous brand product designs but the copied products have low quality to match the cheap price. Therefore, most respondents answered that the price range of fast fashion brand goods seems to be between fast fashion brand goods and products without brand names and they concluded the prices of fast fashion brand goods are reasonable considering their quality and service. In addition, they often used sales periods to get price discount benefits. They also said that cheap prices of products cause impulse purchases.

Interviewee 20: Prices of fast fashion brands are more reasonable than luxury brands. I like the price range of Uniqlo. I often

found promotion events regarding discounting prices from SNS. I feel Zara's price range is more expensive than other fast fashion brands but its discounted prices look reasonable (Interviewees 21 and 24 also gave similar comments).

Interviewee 11: I am mostly satisfied with the price range of H&M and Forever 21 so I bought about ten pieces at one time. However, I often regret the impulse purchase when I get home.

Some interviewees shop at Korean fast fashion brands, such as 8 Seconds, Spao, and Mixxo, that have lower price ranges than Zara, H&M, and Gap. Other Korean domestic fast fashion brands such as Spao and Mixxo that manufacture apparel in South East Asia to save cost are cheaper than their rivals (Lee, 2015).

Interviewee 17: I like Zara design and store environment such as the department store, but I seldom shop at Zara after I realized its prices were high.

Interviewees 5, 10, and 24 answered they want to buy cheap and trendy garments, shoes, and accessories. They mentioned that fast fashion brands such as Zara and H&M are cheaper and trendier than luxury brands and designer brands in department stores. However, other interviewees said they would rather shop at designer brands than fast fashion brands even if they pay more because they are not satisfied with salespeople's services of fast fashion brands. They had high expectations about the store services of Zara being as good as department stores' service; therefore, they were disappointed at indifferences of the sales people at fast fashion brand stores.

Price discrimination of global fashion fast fashion brand among countries is unsatisfactory. Price differences of global fast fashion brands among countries do not satisfy the interviewees. As reported by El Confidencial, the prices of ZARA products were most expensive in Korea followed by the United States and China (Gonzales-Rodriguez, 2015). For example, the Zara product prices in Korea are two times higher than in Spain (Gonzales-Rodriguez, 2015).

Interviewee 14: When I visited ZARA and H&M stores in the United States, I felt the price range of the brands was much lower than that of the same brands in Korea (Interviewees 23, 31, 32 also gave similar comments).

3.3. Easy, comfortable, and convenient accessibility to fast fashion brands

Accessibility to online and offline store. More than half the interviewees answered that one of the reasons for visiting fast fashion brands is comfortable accessibility to the specific stores. They often visit stores close to their residence rather than visit flagship stores, because they believe the same products are distributed and carried regardless of store locations. All interviewers said that one of the

reasons they often go to Uniqlo is easy accessibility. Lotte Shopping, a leading retailer in Korea, has the biggest distribution network in Korea. In 2004, FRL Korea Co., LTD was founded by Lotte Shopping and Fast Retailing Co., LTD., which owns the Uniqlo brand. According to the website of FRL Korea Co., Lotte Shopping and Fast Retailing Co., LTD. set up a joint venture. Most of Lotte Department Stores and Lotte Marts that Lotte Shopping owns have Uniqlo stores. Lotte Shopping provides Uniqlo with better store locations and lower rental fees for buildings than other apparel brands (Hang, 2015). In addition, Uniqlo opened inside other big chain marts such as Home Plus.

Interviewee 7: I often go to Uniqlo after grocery shopping at Lotte Mart even when I do not have something to buy because Uniqlo is located inside Lotte Mart (Interviewees 2, 3, 6, 9, 13, 15, 22, and 26 also gave similar comments).

With this retailing strategy, Uniqlo had 163 stores in Korea as of February, 2016. Meanwhile, 8 Seconds had only 30 stores and H&M had 27 as of August 2016. Foever21 had only two stores in Myungdong and Hongdae in Seoul and Gap had 40 stores including outlet stores as of August 2016. The each specific number of stores was shown on each company website. Thirteen out of 24 interviewees who live in Daejeon responded that they have never visited 8 Seconds, H&M, and Mango, which do not have stores in Daejeon. Instead, they answered that they purchase those brands' products online.

Interviewee 5: When I lived in the Unites States, I often visited Gap stores because most malls include Gap stores but I could not visit them in Korea because I could hardly find them there.

Despite the popularity of fast fashion brands and the increases in their revenue, Lotte Department Store in Anyang withdrew Zara from its store because it has lower efficiency per unit area than other apparel brands (Min, 2014). Even though the number of sold items of a fast fashion brand is greater than designer brands, its average revenue per square meter is lower than a designer brands' because their price range is lower than other apparel brands in the department stores and most fast fashion brands require a larger space than other apparel brands; therefore, it has lower efficiency per square meter than other apparel brands in the department store.

Most interviewees answered that they have used online shopping for fast fashion brands. They discussed both convenience and inconvenience regarding online shopping. They discussed the convenience of an online mall in that they can shop anywhere and anytime regardless of store hours and store place; however, four respondents said the limitations are that they cannot touch fabrics in person and try products, and this discourage them from making a purchase. An interviewee who often uses an online mall addressed the augmented reality virtual fitting room.

Interviewee 26: I visit the off-line store rather than the online store. I have experienced failure when purchasing by online mall. A dress with color and fabric different from the online picture has been delivered (Interviewee 5, 25, and 26 also gave similar comments).

Interviewee 27: I used to purchase fast fashion brand products online when my son was young because it was difficult to bring him. However, I use off-line stores now to try products because I gained weight and it is not easy to find products to cover my body defects. When I used an online mall, I spent much time finding the right products and waiting for shipment.

Interviewee 26: Online shopping has the limitation of seeing garments only on the computer monitor. I wish to try online products in a virtual fitting room using new technology such as the augmented reality.

Store environment. Most interviewees are satisfied with the store environment of fast fashion brands that have relatively bigger spaces, more fitting rooms to try products, a better organized layout for convenient shopping, and fancier interior design than other apparel stores. Some interviewees prefer music and the luxury interior of Zara, and others like the store layout of Uniqlo for comfortable shopping. Some discussed the inconvenience in store layout of certain fast fashion brands such as H&M and Forever 21.

Interviewee 20: I feel comfortable shopping in Uniqlo because products are organized well by item such as pants, coats, shirts, accessories, and inner. Meanwhile, the same items are divided into different sections at H&M so it is uncomfortable to shop. If I want to buy a dress, I need to browse all sections in a store. When I asked a staff where a specific dress was, even the staffs took a long time to find it. I would shop easier if the products were organized like Uniqlo.

Interviewee 21: If I want to buy a bag or shoes in H&M and Forever 21, I need to look all around the stores. I know they display products by design theme and concept, but the layout methods are inconvenient for people who don't like shopping and who do not have enough time to shop.

A few interviewees who are over 50 years old mentioned that the 8 Seconds store environment including window displays, interior, and music appeal to young generation. Sometimes the music is too loud for them to concentrate on shopping. They said that they are pretty satisfied with Uniqlo's store environment where products are neatly organized with bright lighting and a quiet atmosphere. Interviewees also discussed the satisfying environment of having enough fitting rooms to use. Some interviewees said the inspection of personal belongings in front of the gate of fitting room is uncomfortable.

Services. Some interviewees are satisfied with salesperson's services at fast fashion stores in that they do not feel pressured to purchase any goods, while they feel pressure from salespeople at small size stores such as designer brands in the department store. Mostly, the salespeople of small size stores follow customers to help them as they shop and ask about purchasing decision after the customer has tried products in the fitting room. This makes some interviewees feel pressured to buy. Therefore, they answered that they feel more comfortable when they shop in fast fashion brands. They just organize products, count the number of products customers choose in front of the fitting room, and answer consumers' questions.

Despite the comfortable service of fast fashion brands, Interviewees 14 and 23 discussed unsatisfying service. They said that salespeople of fast fashion brands are not kind and they look very busy. They have experienced that they gave up asking questions because salespeople look busy organizing products. They felt the salespeople were not ready to respond to customers. They also mentioned that global fast fashion brands' price ranges are higher in Korea than in other countries. These price ranges are overlapped with designer brands; however, salespeople's services of fast fashion brands are not as kind as those of designer brands.

In addition, some discussed the return policy of fast fashion brands. Generally, they prefer the return policy of fast fashion brands in which customers can return goods within a specific number of days that the company decides as long as a product has its hang tag attached and is accompanied by a receipt.

Interviewee 17: Some owners of small clothing stores tend to provide no refund and no exchange service. Others just provide exchange service. However, it is easy to refund at fast fashion brand stores. Sometimes salespeople of fast fashion brands do not even ask the reason for the refund.

Furthermore, several interviewees discussed the alteration services of Uniqlo. Generally, fast fashion brands do not provide alteration services because of their low prices; while some designer brands offer alterations without additional payment. However, Uniqlo provides free alteration services only for reducing the length of pants both online and offline if the pants' price is over 30,000 won (around 30 US dollars). Nine interviewees who knew this service were satisfied with it. Each store has staffs who provide alteration services. They are not specialists in alteration, so they just cut them and sew using a backstitch and cannot amend pants maintaining the original hem line style so they inform customers of this simple service to reduce expectations. However, some interviewees complained that the service did not meet their expectation.

Communication means. The interviewees mentioned various communication routes of fast fashion brands, including TV, newspaper, and magazine commercials, SNS, brochures, short cards, and banners. They have often seen Uniqlo commercials, especially

for functional items such as Heattech, Ultra Stretched Jeans, and Airism. Watching advertising causes some of them to visit stores and buy not only the advertised items but also other items that are not on the commercials. They want to know not only new product information but also sale information and event news regarding fashion shows, sustainability campaigns, and collaboration with other brands or designers. Even though many fast fashion brands conduct various events, only 10 interviewees knew about the events about collaboration and only three interviewees knew the events about sustainability.

Interviewees have never seen TV commercials for Zara. Basically, Zara only spent 0.3% of total costs for advertising, while general retailers spent an average of 3-4% (Ferdows et al., 2004; McGuire, 2001; Tokatli, 2008). The decreased advertising costs allow Zara to use relatively expensive labor for garment production in regions closely located to the Spain headquarters and ship by for stores in Asian countries to reduce lead time (Tokatli, 2008).

Ten interviewees said that online accessibility to brands is important for purchasing decisions in that they could purchase products and look for information about new products, opening stores, store location, discounts, and events in an online environment. They can get the information from company websites that all global fast fashion brands have provided in Korean language and SNS such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Zara, H&M, Uniqlo, Gap, 8 Seconds, Spao, and Mixxo have official sites in the SNS. All interviewees have accounts for Kakao Talk, a popular SNS for the Korean people. Some responded that they received much information about brands from Kakao Talk. To pursue this easy accessibility and adjust local culture, global fast fashion brands use local SNS such as Kakao Talk.

3.4. Preference for good brand reputation related to corporate social responsibility (CSR) and nationality

More than half of the interviewees answered that they are concerned about brand reputation. They said the company's and/or brand's reputation, including mission, CSR, and nationality, often influences their purchasing decision. Twenty-one interviewees answered that they know the meaning of sustainability and CSR and both are very important factors in their purchasing decision. The nationality is also important in that some interviewees said products look different depending on their nationality and others responded that they have preferred countries.

CSR. Some interviewees are concerned about CSR of fast fashion brands in that fast fashion companies produce too much trash clothing, and the low-price range of goods of fast fashion is at the expense of sweatshops. Interviewee 10 responded why she feels uncomfortable when she visits the fast fashion brand stores.

Interviewee 10: I recently often purchase garments from fast fashion brands with reasonable prices. I do not care that they are not durable and have low quality. I often throw them away whenever a season is over because the space of my closet is limited and garment prices of those brands are not expensive. Sometimes, I feel guilty when I concern about the increase of trash of garment even though I donate some. Before the appearance of fast fashion brands, I paid much money to buy designer brand goods. This made me seldom purchase them.

Interviewees 20, 52, 58, and 59, know that H&M has a campaign, "H&M Conscious for a More Sustainable Future," which issues a voucher that entitles a customer to 5,000 won (around US $5) off his or her next purchase at H&M when spending 40,000 won (around US $40) during the valid period once he or she brings a bag of his or her used clothes. Interviewees 20 and 59 have used the voucher and they are satisfied with the benefits.

Interviewee 14: I heard that one of the purposes of fast fashion brand is fast production; therefore, contractors try to meet due dates for production or their wage cannot be fully paid. This situation causes factory workers to get pressure to work at night without extra pay. I also heard the child labor issue is serious. Fast production and cheap prices of apparel goods is the result of this bad factory working condition. I know a Korean food company, Nam Yang, has issues in managing salespeople so I do not buy Nam Yang foods.

Interviewee 14 knows the significance of companies' code of conduct but does not know what fast fashion brands or companies concern is regarding fair trade. Interviewee 14 suggested that apparel brands attach a "fair trade label" on all products made in good working conditions supervised by an international organization and he said the label should be assigned by the organization. Interviewee 18 visits not only global but also Korean fast fashion brands such as Spao, Top10, and Mixxo. He found that the price of Korean fast fashion brands is relatively cheap but he is not much satisfied with the quality.

Interviewee 18: Only price is not an important factor for purchasing decision. To save labor costs, workers may work in terrible working conditions. This causes products to have low quality. I do not want to buy low-quality products for a cheap price.

Interviewee 4 said she thought H&M cares about environmental issues in that it provides a "Conscious Exclusive Line" made of used clothing. H&M launched "Conscious Exclusive Line" to emphasize its ability to make trendy and attractive clothing using recycled fabric such as recycled polyester with plastic bottles and organic cotton (Cho, 2015). The line has been shown in Korea every year since 2009 (Cho, 2015). Most interviewees in this study had not seen any products in the Conscious Exclusive Line and

they didn't even know the line exists. Only Interviewees 4 and 26 answered that they have seen but not purchased the products from the line. They felt the whole price range of the line is much higher than the regular products in the H&M store.

Interviewee 26: I had not understood why recycled or upcycled products are more expensive than regular products until I learned the process of manufacturing recycled and uncycled products. I had thought recycled products were cheaper than regular products because new materials were not required. They should have explained why the recycled products are more expensive than regular ones. If recycled or upcycled products were not more expensive than regular products, I would buy them.

Based on the opinion of interviewee 26, companies should research how to reduce manufacturing costs for recycled and/or upcycled products. If they cannot reduce the cost, they should explain the reason for the higher price. Interviewee 2 discussed Uniqlo's event to collect used clothing from customers, providing cup holders made by Uniqlo and a free exchange ticket for a cup of coffee in Angel-in-us, a coffee store. Uniqlo made cup holders using jean fabric left from alterations to commemorate Earth Day in Korea (Kim, 2015). The profits were used to help the homeless in Korea and refugee camps in Jordan and Syria (Cho, 2015; Kim, 2015). While global fast fashion companies such as H&M and Uniqlo are concerned about sustainability, Korean fast fashion brands are not very active in sustainability. Interviewee 26 responded that to compete with global fast fashion brands, Korean fast fashion brands should be more concerned about social responsibility to improve their reputation, which can attract consumers.

Nationality. Sixteen of 61 interviewees addressed the nationality of several fast fashion brands. Among those 16, ten interviewees said the country of origin does not fully influence their purchasing decision but influences the brand reputation, and six interviewees said they consider nationality when they purchase products.

Interviewees 3, 20, 22, 32, 33, and 54 said they are not willing to often visit Uniqlo stores, but they visit the store only when they really need to buy something like functional wear. They cited a political reason between Korea and Japan. Japan colonized Korea from 1910 to 1945. After South Korea became independent in 1945, Korea and Japan established diplomatic relations in 1965. However, disputes over Dok-do (Liancourt Rocks) ownership and compensation issues of sexual slaves (Comfort Women) for Japanese military during the World War II have not been settled. The Korean media and Internet users continued to point out the foreign policy of Japanese government (Horesh et al., 2014).

Interviewee 3: I used to purchase Uniqlo products for my children and my husband because of low prices and easy accessibility. However, after I learned that Uniqlo is a Japanese brand, I try not to purchase Uniqlo goods because of its nationality (Interviewee 22 also gave similar comments).

Interviewee 33 mentioned that it could be a great marketing strategy in Korea if Uniqlo supports the survivors of Japanese Military Sexual Slavery with a donation and/or volunteer work. Not only political issue but also health issues were addressed. Interviewee 22 was concerned that contaminated products are being imported from Japan because she believed the products might include radioactive cesium from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster in 2011. Despite the political issue and health issue, some interviewees said they continued to purchase products. Interviewees 31 and 32 did not think Uniqlo products include radioactive cesium because most Uniqlo products have been produced in other countries even though the headquarter is in Japan. Interviewees 19, 27, and 39 said that they knew the brand origins of all fast fashion brands sold in Korea and they believe the brand origins influence the brand image; however, they said they do not much care about the manufacturing countries' economic level because they realized even some luxury products are made in many developing countries. They answered that they believe the Japanese make fine, elaborate, and delicate products with excellent quality; Europeans make trendy, unique, and bold style products; and Africans or South East Asians produce ethnic and exotic style products.

The marketing strategies and the elements of the marketing mix suggested based on each theme from the participants' interviews.

From each theme and the suggestions, the most suitable elements of marketing mix were chosen and developed in this study. The findings of this study can contribute to reestablishment of the marketing mix in new marketing environments. The object of the first theme, glocalization and diverse assortment plan, is products. For glocalization, if Korean domestic brands intend to be successful in Korea, they need to follow global trends in design as well as consider domestic consumers' preferences rather than just reduce the price ranges. Once they are successful in Korea, they can extend the brand to other countries. In this case, they also should consider the local trend of other countries. Meanwhile, global fast fashion brands need to differentiate diverse body types by race. If the global fast fashion brands such as Zara and H&M want to be successful in Korean market, they should develop localization which consider how to develop sewing pattern fit perfectly to local consumer's shapes. In addition, fast fashion brands need to research and develop their own fabric to improve their product quality. In Korean fast fashion market, only Uniqlo has good sales records. Other fast fashion brands' sales records in Korea are not as good as Uniqlo. Even though Zara and H&M lead in the world market, they have suffered from poor sales in Korea. Other Korean local fast fashion brands also have low growth rates. The thing that

only Uniqlo has goods sales record in Korea means that Korean consumers consider product quality and reputation that Uniqlo researches and develops to produce qualified products. Moreover, each brand should maintain its own brand identity providing a diverse assortment plan such as women's, men's, and children's wear as well as accessories. According to the respondents, they want to browse diverse product categories for mix and match coordinates.

The second theme is about price. From the second theme, price should continue to be reasonable because most interviewees were relatively satisfied with the price range compared with other apparel group categories such as luxury and designer brands. However, they are not satisfied with price discrimination among selling countries. If the price is different among countries, an additional explanation about the high price should be given to consumers. The first two themes, products and price, are the same as the elements of existing marketing mix: products, price, promotion, and place (4 Ps).

The third theme is about accessibility to communicate brand and visit both online and offline stores. In the past, interviewees got information with one-way communication from TV, radio, and magazines and purchased products at physical stores. Recently, interviewees search products using online and offline stores, and they may order what they want directly from manufacturers or retailers and ask manufacturers or retailers directly questions they used to ask salespeople in physical stores. The increase of online shopping and online advertising and promotion causes customers to not be passive anymore. Based on this perspective, accessibility can be added as an important element. It includes easy, comfortable, and convenient accessibility to brands. While place and promotion, traditional elements of, are driven by the viewpoint of company side, accessibility to brand is driven by the consumer side.

The fourth theme, brand reputation, was used as the last element of the marketing mix. Some interviewees of this study were concerned about sustainability regarding fair trade, recycling, and upcycling. Other interviewees discussed the effect of the political conflict and nationality on brand reputation. Kotler (1984) added two additional Ps, political power and public opinion, to the four Ps first suggested by McCarthy (1964). Based on the result of his study, the two additional Ps influence brand reputation. Harris Poll surveys people employing six corporate reputation dimensions to evaluate corporate reputation (Schlosser, 2017). Among the six dimensions, three dimensions are social responsibility, workplace environment, and vision and leadership related to sustainability and entrepreneurship. Brand reputation is evaluated by consumers; therefore, it can be an essential element in today's consumer-centric environment.

4. Conclusion

Global fast fashion brands have been popular since the 1990s; however, recently, many fast fashion brands have had slow or negative annual growth rates. Market saturation is one of the reasons; therefore, the competition in the market became fiercer. Marketers in apparel companies try to build new strategies for survival. A few brands that have researched and developed their own specific fabrics for functional wear continue to have sales increase but slower than before. Now marketers should know what consumers want.

This study interviewed 61 Korean consumers to ask about their purchasing behavior and experiences. This study found four themes from in-depth interviews; local fast fashion brands (Korean fast fashion brands) need to pursue globalization in design and quality, whereas global fast fashion brands need to pursue localization in fitting on local people's body (Glocalization) while retaining brand identity and providing diverse assortment plan; prices of fast fashion brands are reasonable among other groups of apparel brands within Korea, whereas fast fashion brands should provide fair and consistent prices among countries in a global standard; easy, comfortable, and convenient accessibility to fast fashion brands is a critical factor; and fast fashion brands should try to have a good brand reputation. From the four themes, this study developed the four elements of the marketing mix: product, price, accessibility, and reputation to adapt to new marketing environments that emphasize the development of science and technology, consumer-centric marketing, and corporate ethics.

Although this research provides meaningful results, limitations still exist. For this research, only 61 people participated and they were selected in only off-line stores of any of the fast fashion brands; therefore, the research results cannot be generalized to the whole Korean market of fast fashion brands. However, this study tried to explore what fast fashion brand Korean consumers think and want through in-depth interviews with open-ended questions that have not been used in quantitative studies commonly used in consumer behaviors. Future research might apply the themes that this study found to build survey questions for a quantitative study. The results might enhance generalization of the result with a larger sample size. Even though three of the interviewees had experience working in fast fashion brands, most participants were interviewed as consumers, and this study focused on the viewpoint of consumers rather than producers or firms. Therefore, future study might study designers, merchandisers, manufacturers, and/or salespeople in the fast fashion brands.

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