The Impact of Product Assortment Framing on The Attitude Toward Gift Set

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Abstracts: The purpose of this paper is to study how consumers' attitudes toward different types of product assortment and Unpacking Framing under the moderating effects of consumption situation, prior knowledge of products, and involvement. Results are based on a survey with 344 respondents. The results indicate that consumers favor a diverse product assortment over a simple one. Second, if the consumer buys the product as a gift, they favor a more diverse product assortment, however, if the consumer buys it to consume by themselves, diversification or simplification of product assortment does not matter. Third, in the case of diverse product assortment, consumer favors detailed message framing over comprehensive one. Fourth, in the case of high prior knowledge, the consumer favors a detailed description of the product. Furthermore, there is no such difference in the case of low prior knowledge.

Keywords: Product Assortment, Unpacking Framing, Consumption Situation, Prior Knowledge, Involvement.

1. INTRODUCTION

We often give gifts to reconfirm or establish relationships with others, which means that gifts are a reflection of the giver and receiver, and their unique relationships. Giving gifts to people, we care about allows us to convey our feelings and appreciation for them. We often think about the gifts on birthdays, Valentine's Day, Christmas, or holidays. Gifts take up a considerable part of our consumption to the extent that 10% of the total amount traded in the markets is related to gifts [27]. While people procure products for their own consumption, they also do for others. Depending on who will receive the product, people choose differently. The gift makes the bond between giver and receiver thicker. Gift is sent to express deep love of giver to receiver [31] [5]. The giver of gift expects positive reaction to it by the receiver of it. When choosing a gift item, the giver can be worried about the possibility that the receiver will not like it [8]. The giver wants to impress good image of him to the receiver with the gift and worries about the possibility that it fails to impress a good image of him. Thus, the giver can feel gift worry [39]. People have a more cautious attitude when purchasing a product for a gift because the gift itself is not only a product but also sends an important meaning to the other person at the same time [16].

As such, the gift is an important issue in daily life. The seller of a product worries about how to advertise it by catering to various preferences of consumers. Then, what method of suggesting information will be the most effective? The product assortment is one of the major attributes affecting consumer's choice when a consumer visits a specific shop. The information on an assortment of products is expressed in various ways. Detailed information of product assortment may not be listed. Abstract expression can be more effective. In contrast, detailed description on product can be more effective. It is to list detailed information on products for consumers to choose what they want from a wide range of products. The seller judges and decides which method he or she chooses. Actually, symbolic phrases emphasizing excellence of gifts are frequently used. "Korean beef, premium gift, value beyond prestige goods" is an example. Such an advertisement has merit that it is succinct, but has problem in sending detailed information. In contrast, Product assortment can be informed with detailed information. On the other hand, while an advertisement with detailed information is convenient to consumers, but it can give the image that it is too complicated. Unpacking effect leads one to expect the probability that accident may happen more highly. As described above, there are various types of advertisement. Thus, message framing is important. Advertisements determined by seller preference can have a negative effect. However, there is lack of research on consumer attitudes depending on product assortment and message framing. This research examines consumer attitudes on advertisements of gift sets. First, it will compare product attitudes on detailed advertisement and succinct

advertisement, and the moderating effect of consumption situation. In addition, the study conducts product attitudes on unpacking framing under a variety of product assortment and examines moderating effects of prior knowledge and involvement. To this end, this article is structured as follows. First, a brief review of the literature is developed. The research hypotheses are then presented along with the methodology.

2. THEORIES AND HYPOTHESES

2.1. Product Attitude According to Product Assortment

Porter (1985) suggests that restructuring current sales approaches to align with changing consumer behavior can be a successful differentiating advantage. Even though it has long been universally suggested that a broad product assortment is beneficial to consumers meeting the heterogeneity of customer needs, recent research suggests that this may actually be detrimental to market share [15][9]. Gourville and Soman [15] suggest that companies should shift their focus from non-sortable assortments to sortable assortments. This means moving from the number of different attributes for similar products to the diversity of one attribute, such as size [15]. Assortment causes unsortable consumers psychologically trade-off between products, which can lead to internal conflicts that inherently delay the customer's purchase [36][15][33]. That is, if a customer is presented with an equally attractive product, they will delay purchasing to mitigate the risk of making a poor decision [33]. Given that a department store's original role is to curate and select what customers are likely to demand, reduced assortment sizes can be useful in assisting consumers in their decision-making process. Hence, it could be argued that differentiating the assortment by reducing the number of options while increasing the sortable assortment is beneficial. to decision paralysis. The increasing impact of assortment size on retailer costs raises the question of how assortment size affects a buyer's choice of retailer. Therefore, retailers interested in creating a cost-effective assortment may want to know whether reducing the number of items in an assortment reduces the store's attractiveness and makes it less likely that consumers will choose the store [10]. Product mix can be explained by width, length, depth, and consistency [7]. Width is the kinds of products treated by a company. It is a collection of all the products, and it can be called a product assortment. A gift set is composed of various products within a product series (width). It is the length of the product assortment included in the product mix. Depth is the number of transformed products provided in a product. Consistency provides a direction of product strategy. The product assortment is the number of alternatives in a single product group. As product assortment is length, this research divided it into simplification and diversification. Consumers prefer the combination of diverse products to a small number of products. If product assortment is diverse, it is highly likely that consumers can find what they want in the collection of products [1]. Diverse product assortment can raise the possibility that each consumer can find what he or she wants from the collection of products he or she can select. Diverse product assortment can reduce the uncertainty of selection and satisfy diverse motivations of individuals and, it can also promote the formation of new preferences [9]. The fact that one can select what one wants from a wide list of products can increase utility and directly influence preference.

The utility is subjective satisfaction felt by possessing valuable goods, but it may have limitations. The satisfaction of eating the first apple is greater than the satisfaction of eating the fourth apple. The law of diminishing marginal utility is the phenomenon where the increase of utility (marginal utility) the consumer gets by consuming one unit of property continuously decreases. It can be explained by prospect theory. The value function curve representing benefit and loss values is asymmetric form. As the curve shapes like S-letter from the judgment point, it is also called the reflection effect. From the perspective of marginal utility, the loss can increase utility. In loss rather than in benefit, the extent of the same value in loss is greater than that in benefit. Let's assume that the amount of gift A is the same as the total amount of utilities of gift B, gift C, gift D, and gift E. Here, the utility of gift B, gift C, gift D, and gift E is greater than the utility of gift A. If the utility of each of the other four gifts is smaller than that of gift A, the result is the same. That is, by the law of diminishing marginal utility, consumers can be more favorable to a diverse product assortment than to a simple product assortment. Assuming that consumers will be more favorable to diverse product assortment than to simple one. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 1: Product attitude will be more favorable to diverse product assortment than simple product assortment (or a single product)

2.2. Moderating Effect of Consumption Situation

The consumption situation is determined by the purpose of procuring a product. This research divided consumption situation into gift situations and self-consumption situations. Lai [19] suggests that information captured from hypothetical usage situations consistently provides better predictions of buyer behavior than traditional measures of consumer attitudes. Most of the research in the field of consumer behavior is based on the assertion that consumer characteristics are useful in explaining consumer behavior [3]. While none of the contextual studies specifically analyzed the importance of product attributes in consumer choice, various studies found that the number of brands considered, depth of search, type of information sought, price limits, and sources of information could all vary. This suggests that consumers' purchase intentions depend on the extent to which they associate product characteristics with expected consumption situations [4][13][19]. Therefore, people prefer different products or brands depending on the situation. However, more research needed to establish the impact of perceived context on consumers' evaluations of product attributes. The first consumption situation involves purchasing a bottle of wine to drink at home during the week, alone or with family, during dinner. It is the most common situation to buy a bottle of wine, he emphasized. The second usage situation involves purchasing a bottle of wine to take to a dinner party with 5 or 6 close friends at a friend's house on a Saturday night. The sharing of the wine was emphasized. A study by McNair [24] found that 85% of wine consumed with a meal. So, both of these usages refer to the dinner context. An end-use situation involving purchasing a bottle of wine for an employer or dear friend's 50th birthday. It is designed to reflect the highest level of perceived risk associated with purchasing wine. Quester and Smart [30] suggest that depending on the purpose of procuring products, consumers differently perceive risks and differ in the attributes they consider. That is, in procuring gifts, consumers perceive psychological discomfort because they don't know the references of gift receivers. Therefore, the tendency to avoid risk increases. The tendency to avoid risk leads them to procure gift sets containing a variety of products to reduce uncertainty about the preferences of gift receivers. That is, we can expect that consumption situation affects product assortment. Accordingly, this research assuming that depending on consumption situation, product attitudes will be moderated on product assortment, thus, hypothesis as following:

Hypothesis 2 Product attitude according to product assortment will be moderated by Consumption situation.

2.3. Product Attitude According to Unpacking Message Framing

Previous message framing relied on the assumption that individuals would differentially receive loss-and-gain framing messages based on personal characteristics (health beliefs, personality traits), situational characteristics (play behavior), or a combination of these. When a message framed with these characteristics, communication efficiency improves, and individuals are more likely to adhere to a given behavioral recommendation [2]. Messages can focus on the positive benefits of pursuing the behavior (the 'gain frame') or the negative consequences of not pursuing the behavior (the 'loss frame'). Gain or loss framing is also referred to as 'message framing' or 'goal framing' [21]. According to prospect theory [35] individuals respond differently to objectively the same information depending on whether the message highlights an advantage (a gain frame) or a disadvantage (a loss frame). Message framing is one of the most manipulated features that influence consumer attitudes and behavior [23]. Previous research shows that gain/loss framing alters an individual's interest in and subsequent understanding of a message before making a judgment [26]. Researchers have investigated the effects of gain-framing and lossframing persuasive messages in different contexts, such as smoking cessation [14][34] disease prevention behaviors [20][28] and consumer recycling intentions [38][17]. Advertising of food products can occur in various mediums: online advertising, television, print, Point-of-Purchase displays, on packaging, and many more [13]. Message framing is a series of process of changing specific elements of message and the scope of thinking. In the respect of accepting messages, it has a direct effect on attitude formation. That is, based on external message frame, one interprets specific accidents and forms attitudes on specific objects, determining one's attitude and intention. Among message-framing, there is the concept of unpacking effect. This means that the detailed description of a subject changes the evaluation of that subject to an extreme degree [37]. Unpacking message framing explains each product in the package products to consumers. Among them, packing framing is the frame of abstract expression expressing with 'etc.' or 'et al.' or embracing the whole. That is, it is comprehensive description

like 'probability of falling down at home.' In contrast, unpacking framing is detailed description like 'the probability that one can fall down by an object + the probability that one can fall down by striking with a child'. The effect of unpacking frames on product attitudes can be explained by prospect theory. First, people favor certain benefits than uncertain profit. Second, people favor uncertain loss than certain loss. It is the concept of multiplying expected value of procurement utility and probability, and it is explained by procurement expected utility. Procurement expected value of procurement utility = Expected value of procurement utility * Probability

Here, the expected value means population average, that is, the average utility consumer feels by procuring something. Assuming that one procures the same series of products, we can assume that the expected value of procurement utility is the same. Here, what changes is probability. In the case of unpacking message, the probability is 1(100%), because one knows what are inside the package. In the case of packing message, the probability of buying what one wants is less than 1, because one does not know what is inside the package. That is, procurement expected utility of packing message is smaller than that of unpacking message. Accordingly, product attitude may prefer unpacking message framing to packing message framing. Thus, the following hypotheses are posed:

Hypothesis 3: Product attitude will favor unpacking message framing to packing message framing.

2.4. Moderating Effect of Prior Knowledge and Involvement

Prior knowledge is defined as at the amount of consumer's objective information or self-reported knowledge related to the product [18]. Prior knowledge is the information stored in consumer's memory. It is the degree to which consumer has product-related information, experiences of using the product, and comfortableness to the product. The higher prior knowledge is, the better the ability of consumer to search for and treat information and consumer can treat information more widely about attributes of the product when he or she procures the product [6]. If consumer has low prior knowledge about the product, they can have difficulty in organizing and encoding complicated information. Insufficient information can block consumer from making decisions on procuring the product by extracting stored information. Generally, when consumers encounter an advertising message with sensory appeal, they first search for information registered in a schema built by past sensory experiences [40]. In such a case, it is likely that consumer will treat information responding to convenience and situation rather than evaluation of concrete attributes of the product. That is, if one has sufficient prior knowledge on a product, one can treat information on attributes of the product efficiently. As a result, to provide information on the product will help consumers to procure products. In contrast, if one has low prior knowledge, one is poor at withdrawing stored information even if one is given information on the product. Hence, naturally, provision of product information is not related with product attitude. Involvement is the degree an individual is involved in a specific object in specific situation [41]. Involvement can be divided into high and low. Product involvement on attributes of product is consumer's interest in the product. The higher consumer is involved to a product, the more the consumer's cognitive activity is activated. That is, consumers in high involvement make cognitive efforts. In contrast, consumers in low involvement may not make cognitive efforts. Thus, consumers in high involvement inspect the message very carefully. On the contrary, consumers in low involvement form their attitudes without integrating their thinking and beliefs. Consequently, expecting that unpacking message framing of gift set will be moderated by involvement, therefore, the following hypotheses are posed:

Hypothesis 4: Product attitude according to unpacking message framing will be moderated by prior knowledge.

Hypothesis 5: Product attitude according to unpacking message framing will be moderated by Involvement.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study produced 8 types of advertisement as stimulus by designing 2 message framing (packing vs. unpacking) * 4 product assortments (2 kinds of single item vs. 2 kinds of set product item). This research induced answers to involvement to products and prior knowledge on them from respondents before starting the survey. In addition, this research differentiated survey contents into two types depending on consumption situation. First, the 3651

research made respondents choose from 4 kinds of advertisement, and investigated product attitudes on two kinds of advertisement - comprehensive description and detailed description. Finally, this research measured demographic characteristics. Stimulus used in the research are real advertisement on Korean beef easily available in the market. By conducting the Focus Group Interview (FGI) with 12 researchers in the Global Business Communication lab at KIT, this research chose gift sets of Korean beef. This research either used the product features and messages simultaneously or separately. In reality, various advertisement strategies were used including the case where messages are attached to the products without product features. Among them, representative comprehensive descriptions and detailed description messages were selected and used as stimulants with products. This paper conducted an offline survey of common people and college students living in Daegu city and Gyeongbuk province for about 2 months from April to June, 2023. By providing respondents with the set of toothpaste and toothbrush, this research led them to respond sincerely to the questions. The final sample size was 344 after data cleaning out of 380 returned questionnaires.

3.1. Measurements

The data were analyzed using SPSS 22 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 22). Before testing hypotheses, this research did validity and reliability tests of measurement tools. Frequency analysis was used to reveal characteristics of the sample. each hypothesis was tested with t-test. Involvement was divided into high involvement and low involvement and was used as moderating variable. PII (Personal Involvement Inventory) scale of Zaichkowsky [41] consists of 12 expressions ("important, greatly related, very meaningful, useful very valuable, beneficial, much interested, attractive, want, desirable, and necessary"), and answers were measured with 7-point Likert scale (from 1=not at all to 7=definitely yes). Above and below the mean value, high involvement took upper 35% (M>5.75) and low involvement took lowe35% (M<4.67). Guided by Selenes and Gronhaug [32] prior knowledge on Korean beef were measured with five questions: 'I know well Korean beef by the experiences of procuring it before'; 'I know well the different characteristics of Korean beef originating from different regions'; 'I know the characteristics of different parts of Korean beef'; 'I know well Korean beef by maturing methods'. Respondents were asked to choose their choices on the 7-point Likert scale. Product attitudes were the version of Ma Mengjie [25] among items used by Mac Kenzie et al [22]and Edell and Burke [12] — 'likable, favorable, good, positive, and interesting'. Answers were measured with 7-point Likert scale (from 1=not at all to 7=definitely yes).

3.2. Exploratory factor analysis and Reliability

Validity of the scale can be identified with exploratory factor analysis, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test, and Bartlett test. First, variables were grouped into proper factors matching the research purpose. All the factor loadings were >0.579. KMO tests showed all the values of variables were >0.6, testifying the aptitude of the model. Bartlett test showed that significance level was <.05, testifying the aptitude of the model. In the reliability test, Cronbach's alpha was >0.6, identifying internal consistency. Accordingly, exploratory factor analysis and reliability were properly identified. The detailed results are as follows.

Variables	Items	Factorloading	KMO	Bartlett's test	Cronbach-alpha
	invol1	.925		.000	.985
	invol2	.937			
	invol3	.920			
	invol4	.936	.953		
	invol5	.924			
Involvement	invol6	.916			
	invol7	.938			
	invol8	.937			
	invol9	.914			
	invol10	.898			

Table 1. Factor analysis and Reliability Testing

	invol11	.930			
	invol12	.929			
	pkn1	.923			
	pkn2	.943			
Prior knowledge	pkn3	.903	.848	.000	.960
	pkn4	.951			
	pkn5	.925			
	pa1	.953			
	pa2	.953			
Product attitude	pa3	.952	.882	.000	.971
	pa4	.950			
	pa5	.930			

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Results of Hypothesis Testing

This paper used product assortment (simplification vs. diversification) and message framing (unpacking vs. packing) as antecedent variables of product attitude. That is, it examined product attitude when message framing is packing and unpacking, and when product assortment is simplified and diversified. And, this research examined three moderating effects. First, in the relationship between message framing and product attitude, prior knowledge and involvement were used as moderating variables. Second, in the relationship between product assortment and product attitude, consumption situation was used as moderating variable. H1 divided product assortment into two groups, and to compare means of two groups, t-test was used. simplification of product assortment and diversification of it were used as independent variables, and product attitude was used as dependent variable. Brand attitudes depending on product assortment were Mean diversification= 5.448, Mean simplification= 4.882, t= -4.884, p<.000. The results are statistically significant. So, hypothesis 1 was adopted. It means that when product assortment was diverse, product attitude was more favorable, than when it was simple.

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Product assortment	Mean	N	S.D.	t	Sig.
Simplification	4.882	141	.947	-4.884	.000
Diversification	5.448	171	1.073		

Table 2. Product Attitude according to Product assortment

H2 is the test of means of two groups on dependent variable depending on consumption situation. Two kinds of consumption situation were selected per case, and t-test was done. Two types of product assortment (diversified vs. simplified) were independent variables, procurement situation was moderating variable, and product attitude was dependent variable. In the case of gift situation, product attitudes depending on product assortment were Mean diversification= 5.769, Mean simplification = 4.918, t= -5.669, p<.000. So, as the results are statistically significant, H2-1 was accepted. In the case of self-consumption, product attitudes depending on product assortment were Mean diversification= 5.019, Mean simplification= 4.849, t= -.995, p>.001. Thus, as the results are statistically not significant, H2-2 was rejected. Statistical results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Product Attitude according to Product assortment and consumption situation

Consumption situation	Product assortment	Mean	Ν	S.D.	t	Sig.
0.11	Simplification	4.918	68	.967	5.000	.000
Gift	Diversification	5.769	99	.926	-5.669	
0.11	Simplification	4.849	73	.934		.322
Self-consumption	Diversification	5.019	72	1.118	995	

H3 divides message into two types. This research did t-test to compare means of two groups. Unpacking message and packing message were independent variables, and product attitude was dependent variable. Product attitudes depending on unpacking and packing types were M packing= 4.806, M unpacking= 5.364, t= 4.437, p<.000. As the results were statistically significant, H3 was adopted. It means that product attitudes are more favorable to unpacking message framing, and the results are shown in Table 4.

Message framing	Mean	Ν	S.D.	t	Sig.
Packing	4.806	96	1.133	4.407	000
Unpacking	5.364	216	.972	4.437	.000

Table 4. Product Attitude according to Unpacking Message Framing

H4 is to test the means of dependent variable for two groups depending on prior knowledge. To do this, this research did t-test by selecting prior knowledge per case. Two types of packing message (packing vs. unpacking) were used as independent variables, prior knowledge as moderating variable, and product attitude as dependent variable. In the case of high prior knowledge, product attitudes depending on message framing were M packing= 4.205, M unpacking = 5.257, t= 6.045, p<.000. As the results were statistically significant, H4-1 was accepted. In the case of low prior knowledge, product attitudes depending on message framing were M packing= 5.568, t= 1.436, p>.005. As the results were statistically not significant, H4-2 was rejected. The findings are shown in Table 5.

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Prior knowledge	Message Framing	Mean	Ν	S.D.	t	Sig.	
High	Packing	4.205	38	1.070	6.045	.000	
	Unpacking	5.257	109	0.867	6.045		
Low	Packing	5.304	50	1.023	1 100	540	
	Unpacking	5.568	95	1.069	1.436	.518	

Table 5. Moderating Effect of Prior Knowledge

H5 is to test means of dependent variable for the two groups depending on involvement. To do this, this research this research did t-test by selecting involvement per case. Two types of packing message (packing vs. unpacking) were used as independent variables, involvement as moderating variable, and product attitude as dependent variable. In the case of high involvement, product attitudes depending on message framing were M packing= 4.000, M unpacking = 5.421, t= 6.393, p<.000. As the results were statistically significant, H5-1 was accepted. In the case of low involvement, product attitudes depending on message framing were M packing= 5.503, M unpacking = 5.633, t= 0.649, p>.005. As the results were statistically significant, H5-2 was accepted. The findings are shown in Table 6.

Involvement	Message Framing	Mean	Ν	S.D.	t	Sig.
High	Packing	4.000	26	1.099	6 202	000
	Unpacking	5.421	58	0.863	6.393	.000
Low	Packing	5.503	33	.904	0.040	540
	Unpacking	5.633	98	1.020	0.649	.518

Table 6. Moderating Effect of Involvement

CONCLUSIONS

This paper is to examined the effects of product assortment and Unpacking Framing of gift sets on product attitudes. In the first step, this research identified preference of consumers by dividing product assortment into diversified one and simplified one. Dividing consumption situation into gift situation and self-consumption situation, this research analyzed the moderating effect. In the second step, under the diversified product assortment, this research identified preference of consumers by dividing message framing into packing and unpacking framing. And, it also analyzed moderating effects of prior knowledge and involvement. Hypothesis tests can be summarized as

follows. First, when products are assorted as combination rather than as single products, consumers were more favorable to the gift sets of Korean beef (H1). Second, In the gift consumption situation, moderating effect appeared, while in the self-consumption situation, such a moderating effect did not appear (H2-1, H2-2). Third, product attitudes were more favorable to unpacking message type than to packing message type (H3). Forth, in the case of high prior knowledge, product attitudes were favorable to unpacking message type than to packing message type, while in the case of low prior knowledge, there was no such a difference (H4-1, H4-2). Fifth, In the case of high involvement, product attitudes were favorable to unpacking message type than to packing message type, while in the case of low In the case of high prior knowledge, product attitudes were favorable to unpacking message type than to packing message type, while in the case of low involvement, there was no such a difference (H5-1, H5-2). From the above analytical results, we can identify that consumers favor diverse assortment of products than simple one, and that they favor unpacking message framing than packing one. such findings are consistent with the findings of existing researches that consumer preference is related with product assortment and consumption situation. In the beginning, this research expected that in self-consumption situation, consumers might favor single items, but there was no difference in their preference on product assortment (H2-2). It seems to show that recently, personal trends have changed into diverse ones. There have been many researches on unpacking message framing. However, there have been not many researches on preference to unpacking message framing in psychological and economic aspects. This research, based on prospect theory, proved relativeness of variables. That is, marginal utility was applied to preference on product assortment, and procurement expected effect was applied to preference depending on message framing. Accordingly, this research can contribute to theoretical and scholarly development in the sense that it considers two aspects. In particular, in the gift situation, we can assume that marketing strategies diverse product assortment can get favor of consumers. Plus, in most consumption situations, information on products should be easily available. This is why unpacking message consumers can directly recognize at the store is effective, and it suggests that direct advertisement at the store, the Point of Purchase (POP) advertisement strategy will be effective.

Limitations and Further Research

Despite the success of this research in testing hypotheses and providing some suggestions, there are some limitations of this research. As the question regarding the stimulant of gift set was assumed to be self-consumption, product attitudes on self-consumption are not very clear. While there are various sizes of gift sets, this research artificially set the sizes only as large & small. Hence, analytical findings based on it can have some problem. However, this research can contribute to revealing consumer preferences on products. This research only applied consumer goods as stimulants. Researches on product types providing other benefits such as durable goods and diverse sizes of gift sets can be interesting as well. Recently, consumer preferences are rapidly changing. Young generations respond explosively to the release of special or monumental products. Heterogeneous or homogeneous collaborated products are sufficient to satisfy desires of consumers. Research applying such collaborated products will be fresh and meaningful.

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