

Original Research Article

The Effect of Integrity of Product Image and Perfectionism

Personality of Consumer on Purchase Intentions

Abstract: This study employed the 2×2 mixed experimental design to explore the effect of integrity of product image and perfectionism of consumer on purchase intentions. The result indicated that the integrity of products had significant effect on purchase intention of consumers. The perfection of product image is more readily consumed than imperfection of product image, and consumers are willing to spend more money to buy perfection of product image of the same quantity. The perfectionism of consumers had non-significant impact on their purchase intentions. But there is a remarkable interaction effect occurred between the integrity of product image and consumers' perfectionism. Consumers of higher perfectionism, compared with those of lower perfectionism, tend to have higher requirement on the integrity of product image.

Key words: product image; integrity ; perfectionism; purchase intention

1. Introduction

The factors influencing consumer purchase intention are numerous, and the effect of product image factor is eye-catching. Du Pont Law believes that about 63% of the people decide whether to buy or not basing on the image of the products when purchasing, and over 83% receive information from reference. The first step for consumers to buy products is whether the products could arouse the attention of consumers, thus to stimulate consumers' desire to buy the products. Product image is a very good marketing variables, Yamamoto and Lambert (1994) found that the product appearance would affect consumer product preferences. And studies show that the appearance of the product can influence consumers' perceptions of function, quality and usability of products (Marielle e. h. Creusen, Robert w. Veryzer, Jan P.L. Schoormans, 2010). Many studies have confirmed that good product image has a significant effect on commercial success (e.g., Black and Baker, 1987; Bruce and Whitehead, 1988; Gemser and Leenders, 2001). But there were also studies pointed

out that the product image was not likely to have effects on each aspect, and its effect had certain relativity and pertinence (WANG Xingyuan, 2000). In other words, the effect of product image on consumer's purchase behavior may have mediating effect, such as: the personality factors of consumers.

Consumer personality traits have effects on consumer behavior (J. Paul. Peter; Jerry. The C.O lson, 2000). There is an experimental research shows that personality is a highly relevant psychological construction with consumption experience (Mehmetoglu,2012). As a kind of personality traits, perfectionism is likely to affect consumer behavior decision-making. ZiFei,et al. (2011) study on the perfectionist attention preference to imperfect graphics shows that imperfect graphics could arouse imperfect anxiety of perfectionist, generating attention capture effect which made it more difficult for the perfectionist to pull away attention to this kind of graphics. But at present, there is no sufficient evidence to prove that perfectionism personality influence consumer behavior decision-making. It is not clear so far that whether consumers of perfectionism personality and integrity of product imagine affect consumer purchase intention or not. For this purpose, this article aims to test the influence on consumer purchase intentions of product image integrity and consumers perfectionism personality through experiment research.

Product image is one of the ways to manifest the product quality, as well as an advantage to influence product marketing (e.g., Hammer, 1995; Pilditch, 1976; Veryzer, 1995). The most immediate marketing goal of product image is to stimulate consumer purchasing desire. A large number of empirical research show that the product appearance is the first stimulus signal to consumers. For example, Creusen and Schoormans (2005) believe that the product image includes six different elements: the role of conveying aesthetic feeling, symbol, function, ergonomics, attract attention and classification. It is hard for consumers to optimize all the elements of the roles of product image, such as color-bright product having color value from the aesthetic point of view, but may also have lower function value. WANG Xingyuan (2000) points out that in the study of different categories of products, the effects of product image elements are different. The imagine elements of consumer products mainly are

brand, function, style, etc., while the imagine elements of means of production products are function and quality. This shows in consumer purchase intentions and purchase behavior, product image plays an important role, and consumers' core concerns are function. However, in terms of the imperfection of product image, because the product image is defective or damaged, and the product appearance of beauty is lost, quality assurance and the practical effect is reduced as well, it will inevitably affect consumer purchase intention. Therefore, this study suggests that compared with the imperfection of product image, consumers purchase intention is more intense for perfection of product image. Thus, this research hypothesis:

H1: The integrity of product image has a significant main effect on purchase intentions. The perfection of product image is much easier to induce consumer purchase desire than the imperfection of product image.

Consumer behavior and consumer psychology believe that personality factors are the (most) important factors affecting consumer behavior. It has been proved that personality is able wield effect on various behavior through emotion drive, it also reflects on the consumption experience (Asendorpf & Wilpers, 1998; Barnett, 2006; Burke, Matthiesen, & Pallesen, 2006; Costa & McCrae, 1980; Peeters, van Tuijl, Rutte, & Reymen, 2006). Consumer personality differences have different preferences on products, and it also becomes one of the factors for their purchase intention and decision-making. Perfectionism personality characteristic is one of the important personality factors which influences people behavior intention and decision particularly (Rhe 'aume et al., 2000). In Alfred Adler's view, the intrinsic motivation for changing oneself is the pursuit of perfection. The personality traits for striving to complete the task associated with critical self-assessment is a perfectionist (ZHANG Chunxing, 1995; GAO Xiaofang, 2008). One who has the qualities of perfectionism personality traits could have a very high standard in real life and pursuits of perfect goals, and hopes to be perfect, tends to be perfect or extreme condition. ZiFei and other people think *Is What It Is, Perfect, Optimum, Getting Better* these four motivations lead to perfectionism consumer pursuit of perfection in the process of product purchase. Hereby, perfectionism, as a kind of personality traits, may also

94 impact on purchase intention. For consumers with perfectionism personality traits
95 have higher request for the product in the purchase decision and are pickier on the
96 choice of products, they expect to buy perfect products both in appearance, functions
97 and qualities of products, therefore, this research hypothesis:

98 ***H2:** The perfectionism personality of consumers have significant influence on*
99 *purchase intention.*

100 ***H3:** The integrity of product image and perfectionism personality have*
101 *significant interaction on purchase intention.*

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103 **2. Research Method**

104 **2.1 Experimental Design**

105 Using 2 x 2 mixed design of experiment, including personality perfectionism (A)
106 and integrity of product image (B) two factors. The former is variable between
107 subjects, divided into high score (A1) and low score (A2) two levels; The latter for
108 internal variable of subjects, divided into perfection (B1) and imperfection (B2) two
109 levels, which we can get A1B1, A1B2, A2B1 A2B2 four kinds of experimental
110 treatment. Take the subjects willing to bid as the response variables for purchase
111 intention. The purpose of this experiment is to examine the product integrity,
112 consumer personality perfection, and the interaction of both whether influence
113 consumers purchase intention for products?

114 **2.2 Experimental Subject**

115 Random selected 130 college students as subjects, perfectionism personality test
116 on them firstly with 120 valid data taken back. Then according to the test of
117 perfectionism standard score to rank from high to low, then taking high sub 27%
118 which are 32 in total as perfectionism high scores, taking low sub 27% which are 32
119 in total as perfectionism low scores. In the effective number of subjects, male account
120 for 37.5%, female account for 62.5%. The average is 21.08 years old; Including 52
121 undergraduate, account for 81.2%, 12 graduate, account for 18.8%; Family economic
122 conditions above medium level are 49 , account for 76.6%, 15 in poverty levels,

123 account for 23.4%.

124 **2.3 Experimental Material**

125 (1) The Chinese version of Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale Test. The
126 scale is revised by Zi Fei and Zhou Xu(2011), formed by concerning over mistakes,
127 organization, parents expectations, personal standards, and doubts about actions five
128 dimensions, by exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis, the scale
129 has good structure validity. Internal consistency coefficient of the scale of each
130 dimension is 0.64 ~ 0.81, retest reliability is 0.63 ~ 0.82. As a result, the scale has
131 good validity.

132 (2) Experiment materials: seven little experiments are designed in this study, a
133 total of 7 real images (see the appendix for detailed materials). Experiment 1 is a set
134 of spoon (eight are in good condition, two are in bad condition); Experiment 2 is a
135 plate of pears (six are good, three are bad); Experiment 3 is a plate of mango (six are
136 good, two are bad); Experiment 4 are two plate steamed stuffed buns (three are in
137 good condition, two are in bad condition); Experiment 5 is a small bag of bread (there
138 are two pieces of dirty); Experiment 6 is a box of tissue (eight bags in good condition,
139 two bags are in bad condition); Experiment 7 is a bag of bread (eight pieces are good,
140 two pieces are soiled by cockroaches).

141 **2.4 Experiment Procedure**

142 **2.4.1 Distinct High and Low Groups for Subjects Personality Perfectionism**

143 According to perfectionism test scores, then taking high sub 27% which are 32 in
144 total as perfectionism high scores, taking low sub 27% which are 32 in total as
145 perfectionism low scores. The discrimination of both are significant ($M_{high} \pm SD_{high} =$
146 99.13 ± 6.49 , $M_{low} \pm SD_{low} = 69.41 \pm 5.05$, $F = 418.16$, $P = 0.000$). Subjects have a
147 good degree of differentiation.

148 **2.4.2 Experiment Implementation Procedure**

149 Every small experiment is equipped with certain life situation and two figures of
150 A, B, the subjects will see figure A first and write down the price of willing to pay on
151 answer sheet. Then see figure B and write down the price of willing to pay on answer
152 sheet as well. Every figure will present 10 seconds, and then leave for 10 seconds to

153 answer, the interval between A and B are 5 seconds. For example:

154 Experiment 1, Instructions: if there's a furniture store is in clearance sale, and
155 you want to buy a set of tableware, this set of tableware as shown in the figure below,
156 how much are you willing to pay for this set of tableware? Please do not discuss with
157 others after seeing and fill in your bid on the answer sheet.



A Integrity of products

B Imperfect products

Figure1 Product integrity and imperfection test

161 Present figure A first (as shown in figure 1), then subjects give the bid they are
162 willing to pay. Then present figure B, then subjects give the bid they are willing to
163 pay for the set of tableware.

164 Seven little experiment use the order of ABBAABBA to present. The rest of the
165 small from experiment 2 to experiment 7 are similar with the experiment one, the only
166 difference is the contents of experimental material.

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168 3. Research Results

169 3.1 The effect of products integrity and consumer personality perfectionism 170 on consumer purchase intention

171 First, using one-way ANOVA to analysis gender, age, family economic status
172 and cultural level and other demographic variables influence on purchase intentions,
173 but the result show that the effects are not significant. Then do MANOVA of the
174 product image integrity and consumers perfectionism influence on consumer
175 intentions, the descriptive statistics are shown in table 1 and figure 2:

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**Table1 The average and the standard level perfectionist bid difference
under different experimental conditions**

Perfectionism personality	Product integrity	
	perfection of products	imperfection of products
perfectionist (n=32)	84.28 (43.17)	37.79 (28.71)
Non-perfectionist (n=32)	83.91 (59.69)	55.86 (56.12)

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—Note: the brackets for the standard deviation

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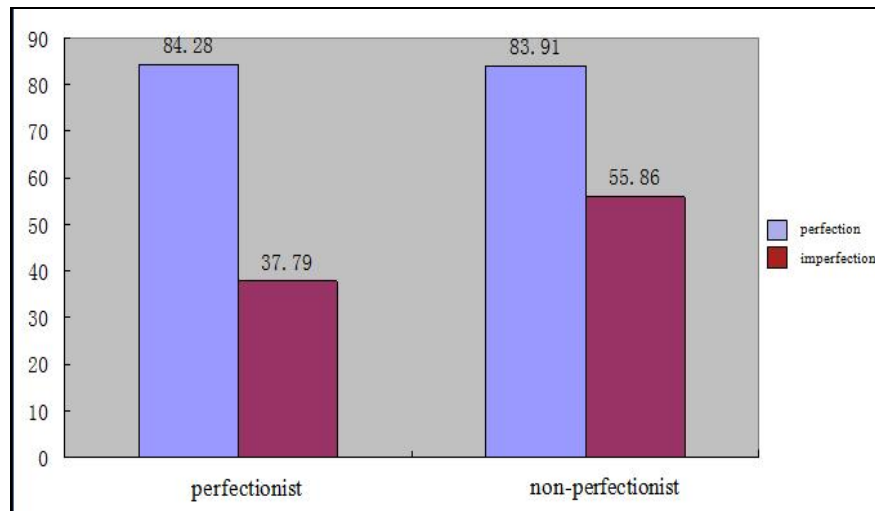
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The Table 1 and Figure 2 show that from the view of consumer perfectionism personality, when facing the perfection of products, high perfectionist and low perfectionist both give a higher price, but the difference is not significant between them. However, for the imperfection of products, the difference between high perfectionism consumers and low perfectionism consumers are significant, high perfectionist are pickier for defective products. Therefore, the research hypothesis 1 has been verified that the influence of integrity of product image on consumer purchase intention effect is remarkable.



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**Figure 2 The effect of products integrity and consumer personality
perfectionism on consumer purchase intention**

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3.2 Analysis of the integrity of product image and consumers perfectionism effect on purchase intention

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Using ANOVA to test the effect of integrity of product image and consumers perfectionism on purchase intention, the results are shown in table 2 and table 3, the

main effect of the integrity of product image is significant ($F(1,62) = 132.65$, $p = 0.000 < 0.001$).

Table2 Participants in the effect test

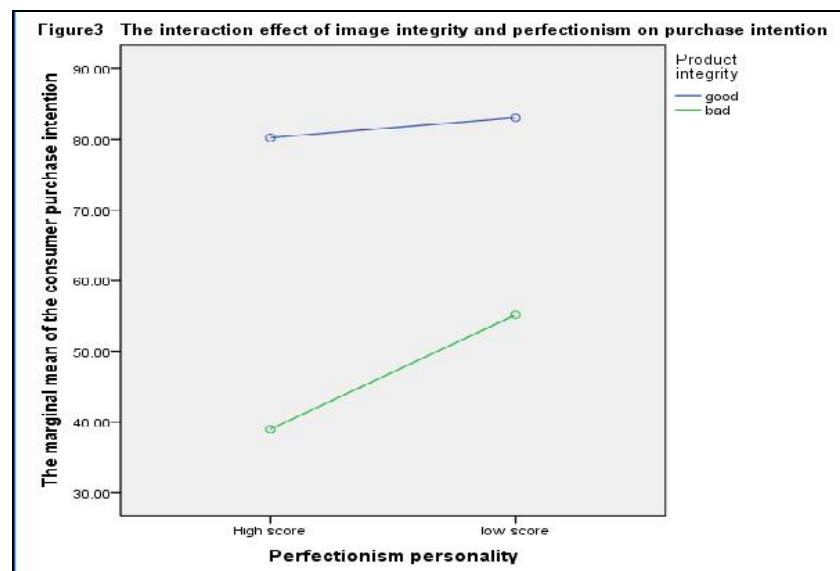
	III qs	df	Ms	F	Sig.
integrity of product	38274.528	1	38274.528	132.651	.000
integrity of product * perfectionism	1424.445	1	1424.445	4.937	.030
error	17889.264	62	288.537		

When facing different degrees of integrated product, consumers are tend to pay a higher price for high integrity or absolute integrity products. And the interaction is significant between product image integrity and perfectionism ($F(1,62) = 4.94$, $p = 0.030 < 0.05$), the interaction effect is shown in Figure 3, namely high perfectionism personality consumers compared with low perfectionism personality, they demand more on integrity of product image, goods appearance standards and rigor levels, they are more inclined to buy high degree of perfection even no defect products.

Table3 Effect of test between subjects

	III qs	df	Ms	F	Sig.
Intercept	530115.303	1	530115.303	120.166	.000
perfectionism	2897.508	1	2897.508	.657	.421
Error	273514.597	62	4411.526		

But in table 3, according to consumer's perfectionism, there is no significant influence on purchase intention ($F(1,62) = 0.657$, $p = 0.421 > 0.005$).



211 **4. Discussion**

212 This study results show that the effect of product image of integrity on purchase
213 intention is significant; the effect of consumer personality perfectionism on its
214 purchase intention is not significant; perfectionism and product image integrity have
215 significant interaction effects on purchase intention.

216 Whether the subjects are perfectionism personality or not, their offer is higher for
217 the perfection of products; The offer is lower for the imperfection of product, namely
218 on the product image integrity, consumer purchasing desire difference is significantly.
219 This is likely that consumers often use some easy clues to determine in
220 decision-making and economic psychology call this phenomenon as *Availability*
221 *Heuristic*. Kahneman and Tversky (1973) argue that availability heuristic means that
222 people tend to evaluate the relative frequency, basing on the object or event in the
223 consciousness or memory availability degree, easily perceived or recalled object or
224 event is judged to appear more often. If people evaluate the possibility of its
225 emergence according to the degree of availability of an object or event and those who
226 are easily to be perceived or recalled will be judged as more likely to appear, and even
227 exaggerated the possibility. This phenomenon for exaggerating the occurrence
228 probability of an even is called *Availability Bias*. Perhaps it is the *Availability Bias* or
229 availability heuristic that affects the consumer decision-making. Product image of
230 integrity is most likely to become the core element of availability heuristic, as well as
231 being exaggerated or extended the imagination by *Availability Bias*. Exaggerated or
232 extended imagine are easily to become a psychological response priorities. Therefore,
233 product image integrity become the key factors that influence consumer
234 decision-making and consumer purchase intention. Christopher K. Hsee (2004) also
235 used a similar experiment to confirm that people use availability heuristic strategy in
236 decision-making. A lot of people make decisions emotionally, unconsciously,
237 irrationally frequently, which are affected by the availability heuristic. To determine
238 its likelihood of occurrence by the availability of an object or event in the
239 consciousness or memory, people tend to judge the objects and events which are

240 easily perceived and recalled as easily appeared.

241 When people consume commodities, the pursuit of the greatest satisfaction of
242 commodities is the purpose and desire of people they want to achieve, namely the
243 effectiveness of product become a decisive factor for people's consumption decision.
244 Many studies about the purchase intention results indicate that customers perceive the
245 value of the commodities have a significant impact on consumer purchase intention.
246 Consumers perceive the value of the commodities refers to the perception for gains
247 and losses, the overall evaluation of products utility, that is the ratio of perceiving
248 gains and losses (Zeithaml, Parasuraman, Barry, 1990). Monroe (1991) argues that the
249 perceived value of consumer is one causal variable of consumer purchase intention,
250 and there is a positive significant relationship to purchase intention. Currently, most
251 studies agree that the quality of products, service quality and price factors constitutes
252 the driving factors of customer perceived value (Parasuraman,2000). When the
253 consumers consume, they will balance perceived value of gains and losses for
254 products with the driving factors, and make a final decision whether to buy or to buy
255 what kind of products. In this study, the degrees of product image are different, and
256 consumer driven by the product quality differences driving factors, the effect of
257 perceived value will be different definitely, and that causes the impact on purchase
258 intention. Therefore, there are significant differences on the bidding for perfection and
259 imperfection of products.

260 The study finds that the integrity of the product image and perfectionism have
261 significant interactions. As a steady pursuit of high standards of personality traits,
262 perfectionism personality will be more tend to focus on small details, and has high
263 expectations and high standard on commodities, pays attention to the quality and
264 function of commodities, particularly sensitive to defects existing in the product, and
265 tend to enlarge this tiny difference and function. The amplified difference evokes a
266 certain level of anxiety, a perfectionist pursues no compromise through constantly
267 comparing in the anxiety aroused by details, thus perfectionist tends more to choose to
268 buy undamaged and impeccable products. Relative to the non-perfectionism
269 personality, people with perfectionism personality traits can't accept any defective and

270 damaged products. Because of the personality characteristics, when they are in the
271 buying decision process, they will pay more attention to the defects of product image.
272 For the non-perfectionism personality, a few small flaws of product image can be
273 ignored, and these types of consumers pay more attention to the practical value of the
274 product. Obviously, consumer's perfectionism personality and the integrity of the
275 product image interactive on people's purchase intention and consumption decisions,
276 and for some products have defects, the consumers of perfectionism personality who
277 are influenced by their personality traits, make them require as perfect as possible
278 both in appearance and the quality of product and function.

279 But consumer perfectionism personality traits as a single variable having no
280 significant effect on purchase intentions are a bit out of our expectation. In the past
281 research and real life observation, perfectionism is not absolutely. Every individual in
282 a certain situation will has perfectionist tendencies. However, due to different
283 experiences in growing up and personality traits of individuals differences, the
284 orientations and statuses of perfectionism are different. ZHANG Fan (2011) points out
285 that defined as a perfectionist will not always show the perfectionist tendencies when
286 dealing with something, on the contrary, the non-perfectionist is likely to produce
287 perfectionism tendencies in certain situations. It is also likely that they are all college
288 students in scale measurement and the experimental subjects' choice. Sample
289 structure is unitary, experimental materials selection is limited and diversity is
290 insufficient etc, which have a certain impact on results. This study is the preliminary
291 research of integrity of product image and consumer perfectionism on the effect on
292 purchase intention, and other aspects of variables need to be further added into the
293 study of the analysis, such as demographic variables, economic conditions of subjects,
294 shopping habits and values, and so on. These factors will affect the purchase intention.
295 In addition, the irrelevant variables in experimental process or strict control for errors,
296 and the body variable control and other aspects are worth further discussing.

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299

300 **5. Conclusion**

301 This experiment preliminary obtained the following conclusions: (1) the effect of
302 product image of integrity on purchase intention is significant; (2) the effect of
303 consumer personality perfectionism on its purchase intention is not significant; (3)
304 perfectionism and product image integrity have significant interaction effects on
305 purchase intention.

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343

344 **Appendix:**

345 **Experiment 1**

346 Instruction: if in a furniture shop clearance sale, you want to buy a set of dishes. This
347 set of tableware (as shown), are you willing to pay for this set of tableware? Please fill
348 in the number of the price you are willing to pay _____\$.



349
350 Instruction: if in a furniture shop clearance sale, you want to buy a set of dishes. This
351 set of tableware (as shown), are you willing to pay for this set of tableware? Please fill
352 in the number of the price you are willing to pay _____\$.



353

354 **Experiment 2**

355 Instruction: see below, these pears. If you buy, how much are you willing to
356 pay? Please fill in the number of the price you are willing to pay _____\$.

UNDER PEER REVIEW



357

358 Instruction: see below, these pears. If you buy, how much are you willing to
359 pay? Please fill in the number of the price you are willing to pay _____ \$



360

361

Experiment 3

362 Instruction: see below, the mango. If you buy, how much are you willing to
363 pay? Please fill in the number of the price you are willing to pay _____ \$.



364

365 Instruction: see below, the mango. If you buy, how much are you willing to
366 pay? Please fill in the number of the price you are willing to pay _____ \$.



367

368

Experiment 4

369 Instruction: see below, the steamed stuffed bun. If you buy, how much are you willing
370 to pay? Please fill in the number of the price you are willing to pay _____ \$.

UNDER PEER REVIEW



371

372 Instruction: see below, the steamed stuffed bun. If you buy, how much are you willing
373 to pay? Please fill in the number of the price you are willing to pay _____\$.



374

375

Experiment 5

376 Instruction: see below, this bag of bread. If you buy, how much are you willing to
377 pay? Please fill in the number of the price you are willing to pay _____\$.



378

379 Instruction: see below, this bag of bread. If you buy, how much are you willing to
380 pay? Please fill in the number of the price you are willing to pay _____\$.



381

382

Experiment 6

383 Instruction: see below, these paper. If you buy, how much are you willing to
384 pay? Please fill in the number of the price you are willing to pay _____\$.

UNDER PEER REVIEW



385

386 Instruction: see below, these paper. If you buy, how much are you willing to
387 pay? Please fill in the number of the price you are willing to pay _____ \$.



388

389

Experiment 7

390 Instruction: see below, this bag of bread. If you buy, how much are you willing to pay? Please fill
391 in the number of the price you are willing to pay _____ \$.



392

393 Instruction: see below, this bag of bread. If you buy, how much are you willing to pay? Please fill
394 in the number of the price you are willing to pay _____ \$.



395