

Model size and discounts in fashion advertising: Individualistic versus collectivistic mindsets

Sukki Yoon

Bryant University

Kacy Kim

Bryant University

YUNG KYUN CHOI

Dept. of Advertising & PR/Dongguk University, Seoul

Teresa McCarthy Byrne

Bryant University

Sharmin Attaran

Bryant University

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Abstract

This research examines consumer responses to fashion advertisements featuring slim versus plus-size models, with or without price discounts. Study 1 reveals that American consumers are more likely to purchase and recommend a brand when a slim model endorses a discounted (vs. undiscounted) product. However, this effect vanishes with a plus-size model. We propose that slim models activate an individualistic mindset, emphasizing self-interest, while plus-size models evoke a collectivistic mindset, highlighting societal interest. Study 2 identifies a cultural difference: Korean consumers, operating in a chronically collectivistic mindset, prefer brands endorsed by plus-size models over slim models, regardless of discounts.

Keywords: plus-size models, price discounts, culture