

## Exploring interplay among consumer engagements with multiple objects

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**Purpose** – A lot of the early consumer engagement research focused on online contexts such as online brand community. Although the examinations of CE have recently been conducted not only in online but also in different offline settings, many studies are conceptual and do not sufficiently investigate empirical issues (Heinonen et al., 2018). In addition, many researches have focused on how consumers engage with a single engagement object, but there is little understanding about CE with multiple engagement objects (e.g., the online brand community and the brand), simultaneously (Bowden et al., 2017). In our research, we will explore how consumers engage with different objects in fashion consumption context. The purpose of this paper is to empirically examine the interplay among CEs with multiple objects.

**Design/Methodology/approach** – This research applies a mixed research method (Creswell and Clark, 2011). We initially draw on semi-structured interviews with 18 consumers who like fashion. Interviewees talk about their experiences of fashion over the past few decades. Furthermore, we utilize an online survey of Japan based individuals who enjoyed fashion. Based on the data collected, the analysis focus on examining what consumers engage with, and how multiple CEs are related to each other.

**Findings** – The findings identify three CE objects that consumers engage with; fashion, brand and sales person. Additionally, results show that CE with the fashion and with the brand are covariant, and that CE with brand influence on CE with sales person.

**Research limitations/implications** – This paper contributes to the consumer engagement research by focusing the CE with multiple objects simultaneously in offline context. Further experimental studies are needed in various context (e.g., across online and offline) to generate further insights into the CE concept.

**Originality/value** – Consumer engagement research has paid little attention to the interplay among various CEs with multiple objects. Bowden et al. (2018) pointed out that the existence of the spillover effect from CE with the OBC to CE with the brand (i.e., there is the causal relationship between the two CEs). In addition to the causal relationship between CEs with different objects, our research indicates a covariant relationship. This leads to understanding deeply about CE dynamics.

**Key words** – Consumer Engagement, Multiple Objects, Mixed Research Method

**Paper type** – Research paper

### **References (max 1 page)**

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