

Effects of Golf Wear Consumers' Post-COVID-19 Changes of Clothing Benefits Sought on Selection Criteria and Post-Purchase Satisfaction

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Abstract This study seeks to identify the factors related to golf wear-seeking benefits for consumers aged 30 to 49 who have recently been noted as new players in the golf wear market, to segment groups for comparison, and to analyze the impact of golf wear benefits sought on selection criteria and post-purchase satisfaction. The survey was conducted from April 18, 2021, to May 12, 2021, on men and women aged 30 to 49 who have experienced purchasing golf wear. A total of 270 responses were used for final analysis through SPSS 25.0. The factor analysis on benefits sought have extracted four factors: Conspicuousness Benefits Sought, Economical Factor Pursuit Benefits, Functional Benefits Sought, and Uniqueness Benefits Sought. Additionally, as a result of segmenting the population according to benefits sought, the sampled group was subdivided into four: Functional Benefits Sought Group, Conspicuousness Benefits Sought Group, Enthusiastic Pursuit Benefits Group, and Economical Factor Pursuit Benefits Group. The factor analysis of selection criteria extracted three factors: Function-oriented Selection Criteria, Aesthetics-oriented Selection Criteria, and Symbolic-oriented Selection Criteria. It is hoped that the results of this research will help golf wear brands establish profitable marketing strategies.

Keywords Golf wear benefits sought, Selection criteria, Post-purchase satisfaction

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Introduction

Thanks to South Korea's economic growth and improved cultural standards, consumers today have more desire and interest in their own health. When the five-day work week system was implemented in South Korea, increased interest in sports led to an increase in the golfing population and, with this, Korea's golf wear market also expanded in size. The growth of the golf wear market did not have a steady course but showed cycles of five to six years between periods of good and bad business. The golf wear market seemed to make a turn toward its next growth cycle with the South Korean government's adoption of the 52-hour work week, the spread of 'work and life balance' culture, and the

adverse-growth of outdoor wear. This growth, however, was limited to the brands that presented a clear sports concept (Lee, 2021b; Moon & Park, 2011). However, there are indications of some unusual changes in the recent South Korean golf wear market. The fact is that almost 20 years after the period between the end of 1990s and the early 2000s, the golf wear business is enjoying a new golden era. The decrease of indoor sports activities due to COVID-19 led to a boom in contactless leisure activities, while growing recognition for outdoor sports like golf being relatively safe led to an increase in the golfing population. Most of all, a

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shift is being seen in the notions held by young golfers. Unlike with the older generations who played golf for business or fellowship, young golfers consider it a means of self-development pursued by way of exercise. With restricted opportunities for overseas traveling, golf-course tours are replacing overseas travels, especially among younger golfers. Furthermore, young golfers skilled in expression and communication enjoy posting content on social media with photographs taken at golf courses and restaurants. These so-called 'Proof Shots' are used as a means to impress others and highlight one's financial power and uniqueness. This is understood as a demonstration of Flex (Conspicuous) consumption aptitude. This Flex culture and the craze of taking 'Proof Shots' are driving the winds of change in South Korea's golf wear market (A. Lee, 2021c; Energy Kyungje, 2021; H. Lee, 2021; J. Lee, 2021). Some recent rising terms on Instagram include or refer to golf, such as #golfstagram (1.72 million) and #gollini (beginner golfer) (510,000). Meanwhile, high-priced golf wear brands, such as PXG, J.LINDBERBERG, and G/FORE have doubled their sales in 2021 compared to a year ago. Despite the associated high prices, orders for tailored golf wear recently increased from customers who wanted to show off their unique golf apparel, resulting in increased delays for delivery of orders (J. Lee, 2021; Ko, 2021). The golf wear rental business has also gained popularity, usually among customers in their thirties who cannot necessarily afford high-priced clothing but want to play a round in a different outfit every time (Moon, 2021).

The number of South Korean golfers showed a sharp increase from 2.51 million in 2007 to 6.36 million in 2017. According to the '2017 Korean Golf Index', published in 2018 by the Korea Golf Association (KGA), respondents in their forties (42.5%) and thirties (41.9%) had similar levels of positive responses when asked about whether they wanted to learn golf. In the '2020 National Survey on Physical Activity Participation' conducted by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MCST), golf was selected most (at 17.5%) when respondents were asked about learning a sport, regardless of whether they could afford it. The analysis of the population of the 'Golfzon' showed that 65% of new golfers in 2020 were in their twenties to forties (A. Lee 2021c; Korea Golf Association [KGA], 2018). From this, it is expected that

South Korea's golf population in the '3040 generation', or golfers aged 30 to 49, will increase. As Hyundai Research Institute estimated that the golf industry will grow from KRW 6.7 trillion in 2019 to KRW 9.2 trillion in 2023, the increase of the golfing population will pour over into the fashion industry. Whereas the fashion market had negative growth in 2020 due to COVID-19, the golf wear market showed the greatest growth at 5.7% (Fashionbiz, 2020; Im, 2021; Lee, 2021a). This growth is projected to continue, as 2020's estimate of KRW 5.13 trillion was projected to grow to KRW 6.34 trillion in 2022 (Jung, 2020).

According to the data released in June 2021 by the logistics industry, the sales of golf products from Hyundai Department Store experienced average growth of 135.4%, and the majority of buyers were in their thirties. Additionally, all Shinsegae Department Store branches showed remarkable growth of 65% in golf products, while Lotte Department Store showed its highest growth rates in sales among consumers in their thirties (at 65%) and forties (67%). However, the growth of the golf wear market was not shared by all brands. While brands targeting young golfers achieved growth, those targeting traditional middle-aged golfer groups had substantial drops in sales. The sales growth for golf wear was obvious not only in department stores but also for online shopping malls. In March 2021, Emart saw 49.7% growth in sales for its golf category, 72.9% in men's golf wear and 85.8% in women's golf wear compared to February 2021. For 2020, Gmarket, an online shopping site, enjoyed growth of 17% from January to November when compared to the same period in 2019. To attract new consumers, golf wear brands tried to diversify their distribution systems through online channels and to restructure strategic marketing directions. LF's "Daks Golf" launched the "Daks London" brand exclusively for online markets, specifically targeting golfers aged 30 to 49, the so-called the '3040 generation', while Kolon Industries FnC Organization also opened its online market, 'The Cart Golf'. Online platforms specializing in fashion, including Musinsa, W Concept, and 29CM, are presenting new strategies to better adjust to their changing customer bases, giving more focus to golf wear (A. Lee, 2021c; Bae, 2020; Ko, 2021; You, 2020).

Until recently, the common notion surrounding golf

wear was that it was designed for ‘aristocratic sports’ and was made with high functionality. Therefore, it was often used as a status symbol to reflect one’s financial power and social importance. For middle-aged individuals, golf apparel is often worn as casual wear with somewhat high-level sophistication. However, with its growing popularity across society, golf has become an essential component of high-level sports and, along with this, the concept of golf wear has also shifted from its place as casual wear to sportswear with functionality to improve physical exercise proficiency.

South Korea’s golf wear market is currently experiencing another wave of growth and, with the influx of young golfers, the consumer class is going through a change. Along with this, consumers’ perceptions of the golf wear market are also changing. This makes it necessary to pay attention to the newly emerging the ‘3040 generation’ of golf wear consumers as a major consumer group in the rapidly changing golf wear market. Pursuit benefits refer to the compensation a consumer personally hopes to receive from a product’s properties. It not only works as a property that constitutes the consumer’s selection criteria when buying a product but also serves as an important factor to affect the customers’ satisfaction after the purchase (Kim, 2013; Oh, 2010; Peter & Olson, 1987). As an important factor affecting consumers’ buying behavior, golf wear consumers’ benefits sought have been a subject in previous research (Choi, 2018; Han, 2018; Hwang, Kwon, Won & Kim, 2020; Kim & Lee, 2020; Lee & Hwang, 2011; Moon & Park, 2011; Na & Seo, 2003). Previous studies have also been conducted on the selection criteria for golf wear (A. Kim & B. Lee, 2020; Mun & Mun, 2015; Kim & Kim, 2017). However, most previous research centered on adults aged 20 years or older (D. Kim & J. Lee, 2020; Moon & Park, 2011), while research on golf wear consumers aged 30 to 49 years remains insufficient. Therefore, this study focuses on the sub-level factors of golf wear benefits sought among the ‘3040 generation’ consumers and segments them into sub-categories to compare and validate the characteristics of and differences between groups. In addition, the paper clarifies the golf wear selection criteria and factors of post-purchase satisfaction among this group in order to determine how they affect benefits sought. It is hoped that the findings of this research will contribute to helping

golf wear brands establish efficient marketing strategies targeted at customers aged 30 to 49 years that are being spotlighted as an emerging potential consumer group in South Korea’s golf wear market.

Theoretical Background

Clothing Benefit Sought

‘Benefit’ refers to the compensation or expected effects a consumer hopes to gain from a product or service. ‘Clothing benefits sought’ means the functional or psychological property or social benefit that a consumer pursues through the properties or services provided by clothes (Sung, 2012). ‘Property’ refers to the essential nature or features of a thing as an objective concept that constitutes a product. As such, ‘benefit’ refers to the compensation a consumer seeks in terms of compensation from the property of a product, which is a subjective concept provided by the property (Choi, 2018). A consumer may fulfill his or her desires by gaining benefits from his or her subjective concept, which have been endowed as compensation through the properties of an objective concept. It is then valid to say that a consumer’s behavior of purchasing a certain product is done to gain a certain benefit from the product. Therefore, it is necessary to survey which benefits a consumer wishes to gain by buying certain clothes. However, benefits sought vary according to the situation of how the buying behavior is conducted or according to the user, and not all consumers buy the same product for the same benefits. Consumers sharing the same benefit sought vary in the degree of value they place upon the product. This makes it necessary to segment groups in accordance with their benefits sought and look into the characteristics (Jeong & Cho, 2019; Yu, 2007).

The research by Hwang et al. (2020) on adult females shows that golf wear benefits sought displayed three factors: good body shape and uniqueness, practicality, and conspicuousness benefits sought. This research also showed that benefits sought did not have significant effects upon satisfaction. Meanwhile, research by Lee and Hwang (2011) stated that golf wear benefits sought consisted of elegance and supplementation of body shape, brand recognition, comfort,

youth and fashion, utopia, and originality. And benefits sought groups consisted of comfort benefits sought group, general benefits sought group, and active benefits pursuing group. The active benefits pursuing group valued all factors except 'comfort' as benefits sought, while the comfort benefit sought group took 'comfort' as the most important benefit.

According to the study by Moon and Park (2011), golf wear benefits sought consist of fashion and brand, ideals, youth and originality, and comfort benefits sought. On the other hand, the study by Kim and Lee (2020) lists six factors for benefits sought: ideal body shape, functionality, popular fashion, price, uniqueness, and brand. The study also segments its population into four benefits-sought groups: price-consciousness benefits sought, body shape pursuing group, brand benefit sought group, and diversity benefit sought group. All four groups rendered functionality benefits sought as the most valuable in purchasing golf wear. Another study conducted among middle-aged subjects by Choi (2018) extracted three factors of golf wear benefits sought: conspicuous style, reasonable practicality, and functionality and ease of activities. This study also revealed that, by adorning golf wear, middle-aged consumers pursued symbolism through conspicuous style and practicality by utilizing the apparel as casual wear. Choi (2018) segmented the subjects into three groups based on benefits sought, of which the practical benefits sought group demonstrated a stronger inclination towards benefits of reasonable practicality and functional ease of activities compared to the other two groups. The Social Benefits Sought Group showed a higher ratio in conspicuousness of style benefit sought, while the Emotional Benefit Sought Group showed lower ratios in all benefits sought than the other two groups.

These findings show that golf wear consumers place more value on benefits that can distinguish their physical beauty and complement their weak points, as in the supplementation of body shape and ideal body shape benefits sought as well as conspicuous benefits sought like popular fashion and brand benefits sought. It has been confirmed by various studies that consumers of sportswear value fashion, brands, and conspicuousness over functionality: youth and fashion in Kim, Jung, and Oh's 2017 study on 'Athleisure (athletic and leisure)' wear; fashion and brands in Moon's

2010 survey on badminton players' sportswear benefits sought; aesthetic and expressiveness in Michaelson, Kim and Ha's 2018 survey on Scuba Diver's wetsuit benefits sought; and uniqueness and fashion in An and Lee's 2013 survey on outdoor wear benefits sought. Therefore, this paper strives to confirm post-COVID-19 changes in golf wear benefits sought among the '3040 generation' and to analyze any differences from previous research on benefits sought prior to the pandemic.

Selection Criteria and Post-Purchase Satisfaction

The selection criteria for golf wear are confirmed as either subjective or objective as a combined sum of a consumer's purpose of purchase and benefits they wish to gain from the purchase (Park & Pyo, 2006). During the process of purchasing products, consumers vary in their degree of satisfaction in accordance with how the products meet their expectations. Satisfaction with the products purchased not only forms favorable and positive attitudes toward the brand but also leads to re-purchases or positive word-of-mouth promotion. In general, golf wear, like all sportswear, requires functionality, pleasantness, and durability as essential elements to qualify purchasing. As they began to replace casual wear, fashionableness and aesthetics were included as important criteria for selection (Choi, 2018).

In the study by Mun and Mun (2015), there were four factors of value in golf wear selection: function, popular fashion, brand, and payment efficiency. Of these, all factors except payment efficiency were found to have significant effects on satisfaction. In Moon and Park's (2011) study, the selection criteria for golf wear consisted of practicality and fashion benefits sought. Practicality had a significant effect upon comfort benefits sought, ideal benefits sought, youth, and uniqueness benefits sought, while fashion benefits sought had an effect upon fashion and brands, comfort, youth, and uniqueness benefits sought. Meanwhile, both factors for golf wear selection criteria had significant effects upon post-purchase satisfaction. In Park and Pyo's research from 2006, the golf wear selection criteria were comfortability, design and quality, body shape and usage adequacy, fashionableness, and brand. Analysis of the effects

upon the value of shopping and selection of a golf wear store, comfortability, design, and quality showed effects upon a diversity of products among the selection of stores: body shape and usage adequacy had an effect upon price, while fashion and brand had an effect on the atmosphere of a store and the salesperson, display and product harmony, and price. These results show that fashion and brand had more influence upon the various factors for selecting stores.

Han's(2018) study conducted among women in their twenties showed that golf wear selection criteria consisted of functional factors, appearance factors, internal factors, and external factors. Functional factors were taken as most important in the active Conspicuousness Benefits Sought Group, the Practicality Benefit Sought Group, and the Practical Uniqueness Benefits Sought Group. External factors were taken as most important by the Unique Attraction Benefits Sought Group and Active Conspicuousness Benefits Sought Group. Internal and external factors were both most importantly regarded by the Active Conspicuousness Benefits Sought Group. Kim and Kim's(2017) study conducted among university students in the Department of Golf in their twenties and adults in their thirties set their golf wear selection criteria as functionality, routineness, aesthetics, service, symbolism, and advertisement. Among these, aesthetics and symbolism showed positive effects on post-purchase satisfaction. Choi's(2018) research conducted among middle-aged subjects divided purchase selection criteria into extrinsic property and intrinsic property. Intrinsic property is further divided into expressive property and instrumental property. Research findings showed that expressive property among extrinsic property was the most important selection property in purchasing golf wear. Though golf wear selection criteria are given different names depending on who conducted the survey and among whom, common criteria are related with functionality and practicality, fashion and brand, and aesthetics. Therefore, this study identifies selection criteria for golf wear among the '3040 generation' and examines differences in the selection criteria rendered as most important by each consumer group. In addition, this study analyzes the effects by golf wear benefits sought upon selection criteria and by selection criteria upon post-purchase satisfaction.

Research Methods

Research Questions

This study aims to analyze the effects of post-COVID-19 changes in clothing benefits sought among golf wear consumers aged 30 to 49 years upon selection criteria and consumers' post-purchase satisfaction. This is in line with the recent trend where the '3040 generation' golfers have experienced a great increase in number and are leading the golf market. The research model is as shown in Figure 1. Consumer groups are segmented according to golf wear benefits sought, and selection criteria and post-purchase satisfaction are compared to identify differences between groups. The results will be provided for the growing golf wear brands as basic data for establishing marketing strategies. Specific research questions are as follows:

Research Question 1: Are there differences between groups according to the clothing benefits sought of golf wear consumers aged 30 to 49 years?

Research Question 2: Are there differences in sub-level golf wear benefits sought and post-purchase satisfaction for golf wear consumers aged 30 to 49 years according to different clothing benefits sought groups?

Research Question 3: Do the clothing benefits sought of golf wear consumers aged 30 to 49 years affect selection criteria and post-purchase satisfaction?

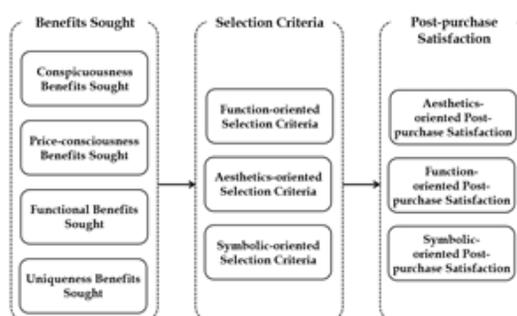


Figure 1. Research model

Data Collection and Variable Measurement

For an empirical study, the survey was conducted with 280 adults (female or male) aged 30 to 49 years who have experienced buying golf wear. The survey was conducted from April 18 to May 12, 2021, by a professional online survey agency and, from the total of 280 responses collected, 10 were excluded as unfaithful responses, leaving 270 responses for final analysis.

Questionnaires were developed by modifying and supplementing questions used by previous researchers. The questionnaire on golf wear benefits sought consisted of 15 questions based on those developed by Choi (2018), Hwang et al. (2020), Kang (2020), Lee and Hwang (2011), and Oh (2010), while the questionnaire on selection criteria and post-purchase satisfaction consisted of 11 questions and was based on those used by Han (2018), Kim and Kim (2017), Lee and Hwang (2011), Moon and Park (2011), Mun and Mun (2014), and Oh (2010). All questions excluding those on demographic characteristics and buying behaviors used 5-point Likert Scales ranging from 1 point (Disagree) to 5 points (Strongly agree).

For data analysis, IBM SPSS 25.0 was used: factor analysis to confirm factors for golf wear benefits sought, selection property, and post-purchase satisfaction, while reliability analysis was conducted to verify the reliability of each factor in factor analysis. Clustering analysis was conducted for group segmentation in accordance with benefits sought. ANOVA was used to verify characteristics typical of each segmented group, and analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted post-hoc. Regression analysis was conducted to verify effects between each factor, while frequency analysis was conducted to analyze demographic characteristics and golf wear buying behavior.

Characteristics of Respondents

The total 270 respondents consisted of 131 males (48.5%) and 139 females (51.5%). By age, 132 respondents were in their thirties (48.9%) and 138 were in their forties (51.1%), revealing an even ratio between the two age groups who have recently been spotlighted as emerging consumers in the golf wear market. As for educational background, those who are

currently in college or have graduated numbered 151 (55.9%), comprising the largest of all groups, followed by those in graduate school, who numbered 86 (31.9%). As for professions, 132 respondents (48.9%), the largest among all groups, were employed at companies, while 81 (30.3%), the largest of all income groups, had an average monthly income of KRW 5 million or more. As to the questions of why the respondents purchased golf wear, 232 (85.9%) replied that the reason was to play golf, contrasting with the 38 (14.1%), or the smallest group, who replied that the reason was to wear the apparel as casual wear. Regarding when they bought golf wear, the most typical response, by 111 participants (41.1%), was 'once per season'. As to where they bought golf wear, the largest number of responses was for outlets, wholesale markets, and other discount stores (110, 40.7%), followed by department stores (61, 22.6%), and online shopping malls (55, 20.4%). The most favored brands were "Titleist (54, 20.0%)", "Nike Golf (39, 14.4 %)", and "Callaway (29, 10.7%)", revealing that international brands were preferred to South Korean golf wear brands. A survey conducted by Fashionbiz in 2020 among golf wear consumers showed that the largest age group was those aged 30 to 39 years (55%), and the most favored place to buy golf wear was outlets (33.1%), followed by online shopping malls (26.4%). The results restated the findings of this paper to show that the '3040 generation' considered price the most important factor in buying golf wear. In response to questions on brands that they actually bought, most replies were for "Titleist (18.9%)", "Nike Golf (16.7%)", and "Callaway (7.5%)", identically matching this paper's findings on preference (Kwak & Kang, 2020).

Research Analysis and Findings

Factor Analysis

A total of 15 measuring questions were used for factor analysis and reliability verification to discover a sub-level of golf wear benefits sought in golf wear consumers aged 30 to 49, who are emerging as a potential consumer group in the golf wear market. By use of Varimax rotation for principal component analysis (PCA), the factor analysis showed four results, as seen

in Table 1. The lowest factor loading was .642~.867, and Cronbach's α for reliability verification was .657~.804, confirming that the values are proper for research standards. Factor 1 was named 'Conspicuousness Benefits Sought', including items addressing the desire to show off one's financial superiority by purchasing high-priced or well-known golf wear that others would recognize or to reveal a superior sense of fashion by buying up-to-date golf wear. The eigenvalue was 3.015, and the coefficient of determination was 20.099%, showing the highest determination power in all golf wear benefits sought. Factor 2 was named 'Economic Factor Pursuit Benefits', and that includes items related to buying golf wear at reasonable prices, such as buying during a discount sale period or from discount stores. Its eigenvalue was 2.176, and the coefficient of determination was 14.508%. Factor 3 was named 'Functional Benefits Sought', which include items regarding functionality rather than the style of golf wear, such as functionality and comfortability. Factor 4 was named 'Uniqueness Benefits Sought', which include items that reflect a desire to be differentiated from others and dispose the wearer's uniqueness, such as preferences for unique golf wear or differentiated golf wear. The eigenvalues of Factor 3 and Factor 4 are 1.927 and 1.909, respectively, and the coefficients of determination are 14.849% and 12.757%, respectively. The total cumulative variants were 60.181%. According to the

analysis, the '3040 generation' golf wear consumers showed great consideration for price-consciousness benefits or conspicuousness benefits to display their sense of fashion. At the same time, it has been confirmed that they valued price-consciousness benefit to buy golf wear at reasonable prices.

Based on the golf wear benefits sought extracted from these four factors, K-means clustering analysis was conducted to classify respondents. As a result of clustering analysis, respondents were classified into four groups, and their characteristics were defined by use of ANOVA and Duncan tests. Each group showed significant differences as to all four factors of benefits sought, and the analysis results are shown in Table 2. Group 1 valued functionality benefits sought more than the other groups, whereas this group showed the lowest rates in the conspicuousness, price-consciousness, and uniqueness benefits sought. Therefore, they were named the 'Functionality Pursuing Group' (n=34). Group 2 valued conspicuousness, uniqueness, and price-consciousness over functionality benefits sought. This group's average was high in conspicuousness benefit sought, and it was named the 'Conspicuousness Benefits Sought Group' (n=98). This group was the largest of all four groups. Group 3 valued all benefits in buying golf wear, and it was named the 'Enthusiastic Benefits Sought Group'

Table 1. Factor analysis of golf wear benefits sought

Factor Name	Item	Factor loading	Eigenvalue Variance%	Cronbach's α
Conspicuousness Benefits Sought	When I buy golf wear, I tend to buy famous brands of golf wear even if it is a little expensive.	.814	3.015 20.099	.804
	I tend to buy a pair of golf wear from a famous brand, rather than buy several from a brand I don't know well.	.752		
	When I buy golf wear, I prefer high-end brands of golf wear that others recognize.	.732		
	I tend to buy golf wear worn by famous golfers or celebrities.	.653		
Price-Consciousness Benefits Sought	I prefer trendy golf wear when purchasing golf wear.	.648	2.176 14.508	.711
	I usually use the discount period to buy golf wear.	.816		
	I usually buy golf wear at discount stores.	.786		
	I tend to compare prices before purchasing golf wear.	.642		
Functional Benefits Sought	When I buy golf wear, I tend to buy the cheaper one if it's similar.	.642	1.927 12.849	.699
	I prefer functional golf wear to stylish golf wear.	.687		
	I prefer comfortable golf wear to stylish golf wear.	.769		
Uniqueness Benefits Sought	I tend to scrutinize the functionality of the material when purchasing golf wear.	.710	1.909 12.725	.657
	I prefer unique golf wear.	.796		
	I tend to buy differentiated golf wear.	.736		
	I prefer golf wear that can show my personality to fashion when I buy it.	.661		

KMO=.722, p=.000

Table 2. The characteristics of clusters according to golf wear benefits sought (n=270)

	Functional Benefits Sought Group	Conspicuousness Benefits Sought Group	Enthusiastic Benefits Sought Group	Price-Consciousness Benefits Sought Group	F
	(n=34)	(n=98)	(n=74)	(n=64)	
Conspicuousness Benefits Sought	2.90 c	3.39 b	3.68 a	2.36 d	91.599***
Price-consciousness Benefits Sought	2.79 c	3.31 b	3.93 a	3.93 a	61.942***
Functional Benefits Sought	3.77 a	2.84 c	3.87 a	3.54 b	77.056***
Uniqueness Benefits Sought	2.78 c	3.11 b	3.71 a	2.68 c	46.825***

Note. ***p<.001
Duncan Test results show a significant difference between groups with a different character (a>b>c)

(n=74). Group 4 valued economic aspects over all other benefits sought and was named the 'Price-Consciousness Benefits Sought' (n=64).

To compare differences between golf wear benefits sought groups, a chi-squared(χ^2) test was conducted. The results of the analysis are as demonstrated in Table 3, with significant statistical differences between genders, places of buying, and preferred brands. The Functionality Pursuing Group is found to frequent department stores and brand stores to buy golf wear. The expected frequency for use of department stores and brand stores were 7.7 and 5.0 persons, respectively, whereas responses for actual visits were 11 and 10 persons, respectively. The expected frequency for discount stores was 13.9 persons, and the observed frequency was 6 persons. Preferred brands were "Hazzys Golf" and "W.ANGLE", with higher preference shown by consumers in comparison to expected frequency. The Conspicuousness Benefits Sought Group showed comparatively more female consumers than males than with expected frequency. In buying golf wear, they generally used department stores and brand stores. In comparison with the expected frequency for department stores and brand stores, at 22.1 and 14.5 persons, respectively, the actual purchases of golf wear were made by 26 and 19 persons, thereby exceeding expected frequency. The most preferred brand was Titleist, followed by "Callaway", and "PXG" in order. While the expected frequency for "Titleist", "J.LINDEBERG", and "PXG" was

19.6, 6.5, and 5.1, respectively, the actual preferences were 25, 9, and 9 persons, respectively. "Titleist" and "Callaway" are very commonly worn by professional golfers, and the survey results indicate consumers' benefits sought to show off their level of golf expertise. On the other hand, "J.LINDEBERG" and "PXG" seek to uphold their brand image as premium golf wear, e.g. the lowest prices for summer polo shirts were KRW 215,000 and KRW 279,000, indicating the wearers' conspicuousness benefits sought with financial power. The Enthusiastic Benefits Sought Group values all benefits sought, and their expected frequency for discount stores for buying golf wear was 30.1 persons, contrasted with 36 persons who have actually made purchases, signifying that they consider economic factors. As for department stores, this group's expected frequency was 16.7 persons, while the observed frequency was 19 persons, indicating conspicuousness benefits being also sought. As for online shopping malls, this group's expected frequency was 15.1 persons, and the observed frequency was 10 persons, signifying the tendency to buy brand products at reasonable prices. This group's preferred brands were "Titleist", "Nike Golf", and "Hazzys Golf", in that order, signifying their inclination towards functionality and conspicuousness benefits sought. The expected frequency for "Nike Golf" was 10.7 persons, but actual consumers numbered 14 persons, while "Adidas Golf" and "W.ANGLE (Wide Angle)" had expected frequency figures that showed smaller numbers

Table 3. Differences of clusters according to golf wear benefits sought

(n=270)

		Functional Benefits Sought Group	Conspicuousness Benefits Sought Group	Enthusiastic Benefits Sought Group	Price-consciousness Benefits Sought Group	χ^2
		(n=34)	(n=98)	(n=74)	(n=64)	
Gender	Male	16(16.5)	39(47.5)	34(35.9)	42(31.1)	91.599*
	Female	18(17.5)	59(50.5)	40(38.1)	22(32.9)	
Place (Space) of Purchase	Department Store	11(7.7)	26(22.1)	19(16.7)	5(14.5)	37.524***
	Brand Store	10(5.0)	19(14.5)	8(11.0)	3(9.5)	
	Discount stores	6(13.9)	35(39.9)	36(30.1)	33(26.1)	
	TV Home-shopping	0(5)	2(1.5)	1(1.1)	1(9)	
	On-line Shopping Mall	7(6.9)	16(20.0)	10(15.1)	22(13.0)	
Preferred Brands	PXG	2(1.8)	9(5.1)	3(3.8)	0(3.3)	61.530*
	Pearlygates	2(1.6)	8(4.7)	2(3.6)	1(3.1)	
	Titleist	5(6.8)	25(19.6)	15(14.8)	9(12.8)	
	Callaway	3(3.7)	10(10.5)	9(7.9)	7(6.9)	
	Descente Golf	1(1.3)	4(3.6)	2(2.7)	2(2.4)	
	J.LINDBERBERG	1(2.3)	9(6.5)	4(4.9)	4(4.3)	
	Nike Golf	6(4.9)	10(14.2)	14(10.7)	9(9.2)	
	W.ANGLE	5(2.6)	8(7.6)	1(5.8)	7(5.0)	
	Castelbajac	0(1.4)	1(4.0)	5(3.0)	5(2.6)	
	HAZZYS Golf	5(3.0)	8(8.7)	8(6.6)	3(5.7)	
	Heal Creek	0(1)	0(4)	1(0.3)	0(2)	
JDX	0(1.0)	1(2.9)	3(2.2)	4(1.9)		
Adidas Golf	3(2.1)	3(6.2)	1(4.7)	10(4.0)		

Note. *** $p < .001$, * $p < .05$, Observed frequency(Expected frequency)

than observed frequency. In contrast to the Conspicuousness Benefits Sought Group, the Price-Consciousness Benefits Sought included fewer female consumers and more male consumers. As for places to buy golf wear, the survey showed that discount stores and online shopping malls are more visited than others. Of these two locations, the expected frequency for online shopping malls was 13 persons, contrasting with the 22 persons shown in observed frequency, signifying that consumers used online shopping malls rather than discount stores to buy products at reasonable prices. By contrast, department stores and brand stores showed expected frequency rates of 14.5 and 9.5 persons, respectively, while actual consumers numbered 5 and 3, respectively. This group's preferred brands were "Adidas Golf", "JDX", and "CASTELBAJAC", with expected frequency figures of 4, 1.9, and 2.6 persons, while

the observed frequency was 10, 4, and 5 persons, respectively, signifying the preference for golf wear brands available at relatively reasonable prices. In both places for shopping and brand preference, it was confirmed that they all pursued economic factors.

Golf Wear Selection Criteria by Group in Accordance with Golf Wear Benefits Sought

To verify differences in selection criteria by golf wear benefits sought groups, factors for golf wear selection criteria were defined to clarify differences by ANOVA and Duncan tests. The results of the factor analysis on 11 items included in golf wear selection criteria are as seen in Table 4.

Three factors were drawn as golf wear selection criteria. The total accumulation/distribution was 63.642%, and Cronbach's α scores were .796, .748, and .755, respectively,

Table 4. Factor analysis of golf wear selection criteria

Factor Name	Item	Factor loading	Eigenvalue Variance%	Cronbach's α
Function-oriented Selection Criteria	Functionality (elasticity, comfortability, hygroscopicity, dryness, etc.)	.846	2.515 22.868	.796
	Ease of management such as washing	.771		
	Activity and wearing sensation	.769		
	Material and quality	.750		
Aesthetics-oriented Selection Criteria	Style or silhouette	.810	2.421 22.011	.748
	Design	.801		
	Color	.720		
	Supplementation of body shape	.571		
Symbolic-oriented Selection Criteria	Advertisement	.865	2.064 18.763	.755
	Trend	.776		
	Famous brand	.730		

KMO=.768 p=.000

confirming a reliable level. Factor 1 was named 'Function-oriented Selection Criteria', related with functions and ease of activities, such as elasticity and hygroscopicity. The eigenvalue was 2.515, and the coefficient of determination was 22.868%, confirming itself as a most important factor in the selection of golf wear. Factor 2 was named 'Aesthetics-oriented Selection Criteria', related with the wearers' external aesthetics, such as the style or silhouette and design. The eigenvalue was 2.421, and the coefficient of determination was 22.011%. Factor 3 was named 'Symbolic-oriented Selection Criteria', relating to revelation of the wearers' financial power and senses by wearing them through advertisements, level of the wearer's popularity, and reputation of the brand. The Symbolic-oriented Selection Criteria's eigenvalue was 2.064, and the coefficient of determination was 18.764%. The results indicate that young golfers that have been spotlighted in the recent market as new golfers give more consideration to practicality, such as elasticity and dryness, and ease of management, such as for washing, rather than the golf wear's actual design, style, wearer's supplementation of body shape, popular style, or brand name.

A comparison of differences in selection criteria among consumer groups in accordance with benefits sought showed the results seen in Table 5, confirming statistical significance in the differences between groups. According to the results, the Functionality Pursuing Group, along with the

Enthusiastic Benefits Sought Group and Economic Factor Pursuing Group, valued function-oriented criteria. On the other hand, this group did not value the symbolic-oriented criteria as much as the other three groups. The Conspicuousness Benefits Sought Group, along with the Enthusiastic Benefits Sought Group, valued the aesthetic criteria as most important but showed little value for selection criteria for the functionality of practicability when worn. The Enthusiastic Benefits Sought Group valued all criteria in the selection of golf wear, and the Price-Consciousness Benefits Sought showed an equal ratio to the Functionality Pursuing Group in the criteria for comfortability, but this was a lower ratio than for the Enthusiastic Benefits Sought Group and higher than the Conspicuousness Benefits Sought Group. This group showed the lowest rate of all four groups in symbolism selection criteria, including fashion or brand names.

According to the research by Choi (2018), the Efficiency Pursuing Group regards the instrumental property in the intrinsic as the most important factor in a purchase, and the Social Benefits Sought Group and Emotional Benefits Sought Group place a relatively higher value in the expressive function in the intrinsic property than the group pursuing the value of efficiency. These findings are similar to those of this current study. The research findings by Lee and Hwang (2011) also showed that the Active Benefits Sought Group valued all selection criteria, which include internal

Table 5. The golf wear selection criteria of clusters according to golf wear pursuit benefit

(n=270)

	Functionality Benefits Sought Group	Ostentation Benefits Sought Group	Enthusiastic Benefits Sought Group	Economics Benefits Sought Group	F
	(n=34)	(n=98)	(n=74)	(n=64)	
Function-oriented Selection Criteria	4.13 ab	3.76 c	4.23 a	3.98 b	12.529***
Aesthetics-oriented Selection Criteria	3.78 b	4.16 a	4.25 a	3.63 b	24.228***
Symbolic-oriented Selection Criteria	2.92 c	3.25 b	3.55 a	2.42 d	50.698***

Note. *** $p < .001$

Duncan Test results show a significant difference between groups with a different character (a>b>c)

criteria, practical criteria, external criteria, and advertisement. The Comfort Benefits Sought Group valued practical criteria and the General Benefits Sought Group valued advertisement. This indicates that groups that value all golf wear benefits sought valued the golf wear selection criteria as well. It also confirms that groups that sought the economic factors or practicality also regard materials, functionality, and ease of management as important selection criteria. Groups that value conspicuousness or social value in such selection criteria aim to enhance beauty or uniqueness in their external appearance and display their status to others. These findings indicate that selection criteria differ according to benefits pursued by golf wear consumers and that benefits sought serve as useful variants to segmentation of the market. This indicates the necessity for in-depth surveys regarding each segmented market.

The Effects of Golf Wear Benefits Sought upon Golf Wear Selection Criteria

For the analysis of golf wear benefits sought upon selection criteria, multiple regression analysis was conducted, with the results shown in Table 6. Before the analysis, the problem of multicollinearity was addressed. The highest correlation coefficient was .593, which is lower than the standard for correlation coefficients in multicollinearity, .8, and it was confirmed that there was no problem in multicollinearity. In addition, the Durbin-Watson statistic showed 1.877, 1.840, and 1.908, respectively, with VIF being 1.056~1.161 and tolerance being .861~.947, confirming that there was no

problem in multicollinearity.

For Function-oriented Selection Criteria, the functionality benefits sought ($\beta = .579, p < .001$) were found to be the only factor with effect. For Aesthetics-oriented Selection Criteria, Conspicuousness Benefits Sought ($\beta = .350, p < .001$), Functional Benefits Sought ($\beta = .180, p < .01$), and Functional Benefits Sought ($\beta = .308, p < .001$) had significant effects, while, unlike with the other two benefits sought, Functional Benefits Sought showed a negative effect. This indicates that the more golf wear consumers sought functional benefits, the less they value Aesthetics-oriented Selection Criteria, showing that the functional feature in golf wear must be emphasized to appeal to functionality pursuing consumers. The Symbolic-oriented Selection Criteria are affected by Conspicuousness Benefits Sought ($\beta = .732, p < .001$), Economical Factor Pursuit Benefits ($\beta = -.079, p < .05$), and Uniqueness Benefits Sought ($\beta = .122, p < .01$). On the other hand, the Economical Factor Pursuit Benefits had a negative effect, signifying that consumers seeking economic factor placed low value on symbolic criteria, such as brands with high recognition or trends.

The Effects of Golf Wear Selection Criteria upon Post-Purchase Satisfaction

To verify the effects of golf wear selection criteria upon golf wear post-purchase satisfaction, factor analysis was conducted on post-purchase satisfaction using the same measuring questions for the selection criteria. Three factors were extracted from golf wear post-purchase satisfaction, and

Table 6. Result of regression analyses for variables predicting post-purchase satisfaction of golf wear

Dependent	Independent	β	t	F	Adj. R ²
Function-oriented Selection Criteria	Conspicuousness Benefits Sought	.075	1.414	37.389***	.351
	Price-consciousness Benefits Sought	.069	1.366		
	Functional Benefits Sought	.579	11.464***		
	Uniqueness Benefits Sought	-.044	-.831		
Aesthetics-oriented Selection Criteria	Conspicuousness Benefits Sought	.350	6.385***	29.870***	.300
	Price-consciousness Benefits Sought	.027	.515		
	Functional Benefits Sought	-.180	-3.433**		
	Uniqueness Benefits Sought	.308	5.604***		
Symbolic-oriented Selection Criteria	Conspicuousness Benefits Sought	.732	18.105***	110.780***	.620
	Price-consciousness Benefits Sought	-.079	-2.058*		
	Functional Benefits Sought	-.010	-.257		
	Uniqueness Benefits Sought	.122	3.000**		

Note. *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

the total accumulation/distribution was 60.646%. Cronbach's α was .789, .713, and .701, respectively, and factor loading was .614~.828. As shown in Table 7, a total of three factors were extracted, and these are named 'Aesthetics-oriented Post-purchase Satisfaction', 'Function-oriented Post-purchase Satisfaction', and 'Symbolic-oriented Post-purchase Satisfaction'. Of the factors for selection criteria, the Adj.R² was highest for function-oriented criteria, while post-purchase satisfaction showed a higher Adj.R² in Aesthetics-oriented Post-purchase Satisfaction. This signifies that, in buying golf wear, the selection criteria and post-purchase satisfaction showed differences in their values for relevant factors.

Analysis of the effect of golf wear selection criteria upon post-purchase satisfaction was conducted through multiple regression analysis, with the results shown in Table 8. Prior to the analysis, the problems of multicollinearity were checked. VIF was 1.044~1.223, and tolerance was .818~.958, confirming that there was no problem in multicollinearity. The Aesthetics-oriented Selection Criteria ($\beta = .403, p < .001$) and Symbolic-oriented Selection Criteria ($\beta = .212, p < .001$) showed an effect upon aesthetic satisfaction, and Function-oriented Selection Criteria ($\beta = .540, p < .001$) had a significant effect upon functional satisfaction. In addition, Symbolic-oriented Selection Criteria ($\beta = .720, p < .001$) showed a significant effect upon symbolic

Table 7. Factor analysis of golf wear post-purchase satisfaction

Factor Name	Item	Factor loading	Eigenvalue Variance%	Cronbach's α
Aesthetics-oriented Post-purchase Satisfaction	Design	.825	2.500 22.726	.789
	Style or silhouette	.776		
	Supplementation of body shape	.700		
	Color	.674		
Function-oriented Post-purchase Satisfaction	Functionality(elasticity, comfortability, hygroscopicity, dryness, etc.)	.787	2.226 20.236	.713
	Activity and wearing sensation	.777		
	Material and quality	.702		
	Ease of management such as washing	.614		
Symbolic-oriented Post-purchase Satisfaction	Advertisement	.828	1.945 17.684	.701
	Trend	.730		
	Famous brand	.719		

KMO=.788 $p = .000$

Table 8. Result of regression analyses for variables predicting post-purchase satisfaction of golf wear

Dependent	Independent	β	t	F	Adj. R ²
Aesthetics-oriented Post-purchase Satisfaction	Function-oriented Selection Criteria	.059	1.109	35.654***	.279
	Aesthetics-oriented Selection Criteria	.403	7.044***		
	Symbolic-oriented Selection Criteria	.212	3.785***		
Function-oriented Post-purchase Satisfaction	Function-oriented Selection Criteria	.540	10.214***	35.995***	.281
	Aesthetics-oriented Selection Criteria	-.030	-.518		
	Symbolic-oriented Selection Criteria	.052	.920		
Symbolic-oriented Post-purchase Satisfaction	Function-oriented Selection Criteria	-.006	-.155	115.501***	.561
	Aesthetics-oriented Selection Criteria	.075	1.681		
	Symbolic-oriented Selection Criteria	.720	16.448***		

Note. *** $p < .001$

satisfaction only, partially supporting Moon and Park's (2011) finding that practical aspects and fashion pursuing aspects in golf wear selection criteria affect post-purchase satisfaction, as well as that of Mun and Mun (2015) that valuing functions, fashion, and brand among the four selection criteria have a significant effect upon post-purchase satisfaction.

Conclusion and Suggestions

Growing interest in health and restrictions on indoor activities due to COVID-19 have led to a dramatic upsurge in popularity for golf, typically an outdoor sport. With this, a new wave of vitality has emerged in the golf wear market, following a pause in growth. Furthermore, the popularity of golf has also brought about an increase in the number of young golfers, serving to boost the growth of the golf wear market. Noting this, the research here tries to define the benefits sought by the emerging the '3040 generation' as a great potential consumer group in the current golf wear market as well as surmise the differences between groups in accordance with the benefits sought. Based on these findings, the paper seeks to confirm the effects of golf wear benefits sought upon selection criteria and post-purchase satisfaction. The findings indicate a change in this generation that shows different consumer behaviors from older generations.

The main findings of this study are to be noted here. First, the factor analysis of golf wear benefits sought

extracted four factors: Conspicuousness Benefits Sought, Economic Factor Pursuit Benefits, Functional Benefits Sought, and Uniqueness Benefits Sought. Second, there were three factors in golf wear selection criteria: Function-oriented Selection Criteria, Aesthetics-oriented Selection Criteria, and Symbolic-oriented Selection Criteria. Third, there were three factors in golf wear Function-oriented Post-purchase Satisfaction: Aesthetics-oriented Post-purchase Satisfaction, Function-oriented Post-purchase Satisfaction, and Symbolic-oriented Post-purchase Satisfaction. Fourth, it is found that golf wear benefits sought only have an effect upon Functional Benefits Sought in Function-oriented Selection Criteria. It is also found that Aesthetics-oriented Selection Criteria had significant effects for Conspicuousness Benefits Sought and Uniqueness Benefits Sought, whereas a negative effect was seen for Functional Benefits Sought. The Symbolic-oriented Selection Criteria had effects in terms of Conspicuousness Benefits Sought and Uniqueness Benefits Sought, while there was a negative effect for Economic Factor Pursuit Benefits. Fifth, Aesthetics-oriented Selection Criteria and Symbolic-oriented Selection Criteria showed significant effects upon aesthetic satisfaction, while Function-oriented Selection Criteria influenced functional satisfaction. The Symbolic-oriented Selection Criteria demonstrated significant effects only upon Symbolic-oriented Post-purchase Satisfaction. Finally, the clustering analysis on the basis of golf wear benefits sought led to four segmented groups: the Functionality Pursuing Group, Conspicuousness Benefits Sought Group, Enthusiastic Benefits Sought Group, and

Economic Factor Pursuing Group.

The suggestions and significance of these research findings are as follows: First, this study is significant in that it has shown that, in contrast to the golf wear benefits sought by the previous generation, the '3040 generation' consumers take Conspicuousness Benefits Sought as their most important benefits sought, even ahead of price-consciousness and functional benefits sought. To this generation of golfers, the Adj. R^2 of Conspicuousness Benefits Sought was the highest among all golf wear benefits sought. This result differs from the findings of Moon and Park (2011) and Kim and Lee (2020), which were gathered from the general adult population, where idealistic or idealistic body shape benefits sought were the highest benefits sought. On the other hand, this paper's findings match those of Choi (2018) and Han (2018) that focused on female consumers, where the Adj. R^2 of Conspicuousness Benefits Sought was highest. From this result, it was possible to infer that this generation of consumers, regardless of gender, sought the conspicuousness benefits to show off their financial power and sense of fashion in golf wear purchases. As mentioned above, these findings are understood as reflecting the characteristics of this generation that values communication via social media and considers Flex (Conspicuous Consumption) a trend. On the other hand, with the recent trend to take price-performance ratio into consideration, younger golfers' price-consciousness benefits sought was also identified as an important benefit. In Kim and Lee (2020), Economical Factor Pursuit Benefits were taken as lower-level benefits sought. While Functional Benefits Sought were rendered as important among general sportswear, the result of this study showed them to be lower than Conspicuousness Benefits Sought and Economical Factor Pursuit Benefits. Going through several periods of great growth, golf apparel has improved in functionality, which is a unique function of sportswear and functional differentiation between brands. In this sense, I cautiously suppose that functional benefits sought are no longer a special but generalized benefit. Consumers buy or rent high-priced brand products in favor of Conspicuousness Benefits Sought, and yet they also value economic factors as an important benefit sought. Therefore, as stated above, consumers turn to online shopping malls

where they can buy reasonably priced products. Ostentation is mostly shown by wearing high-priced brand products. However, I consider showing off a sense of fashion as a form of conspicuousness in itself. Functionality-related areas are no longer differentiated, and to create appeal for brands targeting young golfers, surveying is required to uncover their diverse desires, such as preferred designs and colors, and in order to plan ways for them to fulfill their wishes for conspicuousness through such products.

Second, golf wear is mostly worn for exercise, and function-oriented selection criteria are most important. As such, within product planning, a variety of functionalities must be fulfilled as golf wear. As a result of this research, the Adj. R^2 of Function-oriented Selection Criteria related with functions and activities, such as elasticity, hygroscopicity, material, and quality, were highest. This result is identical with the research results by Kang (2020) and Moon and Park (2011), conducted among general adult subjects, and those of Han (2018), conducted exclusively among females. Golf wear, often worn as casual wear, is mostly worn for golf and, therefore, factors like functionality and ease of activity to suit exercise are more important than with other types of clothing. That these have been confirmed as important selection factors, regardless of gender, is a significant achievement of this research. The second point was for Aesthetics-oriented Selection Criteria, which relate to style or silhouette design, and other factors tied to the wearer's external beauty. This result is also identical with the findings of Kim and Lee (2020), where it was determined as the second most important selection criteria. However, this strayed from Kang's(2020) results, where brand was found to be more important than aesthetic criteria, including design. Jeong and Kim (2010) showed that the '3040 generation' gave more weight to the selection criteria on quality and functionality than other generations did. This indicates differentiation from other brands in regards to essential function and comfortability compared to factors related with fashion, design, or brand, meaning it would be a good strategy to appeal to the '3040 generation' consumers.

Third, in buying golf wear, consumers differ in value of selection criteria in accordance with personal benefits sought, which indicates a need to specify clear selection criteria in

golf wear product planning by emphasizing product differentiation for consumers' personal benefits sought. The more serious they regard functional benefits sought, the less seriously consumers take aesthetics-oriented selection criteria, while conspicuousness and uniqueness benefits sought affect symbolic-oriented selection criteria. On the other hand, consumers seeking economic factors give less value to symbolic-oriented selection criteria. Therefore, golf wear brands are advised to plan strategies to develop products with differentiation in terms of functionality and aesthetics. However, it is not to say that different valuations according to benefits sought may lead to ignorance of other selection criteria. Instead, it is to mean that, on the condition that essential functionality and fashionableness are secured for golf wear, deeper differentiation can be pursued in terms of consumer benefits sought. As can be understood by previous studies (Lim, 2009), consumers satisfied with their golf wear after trying it out will reinforce the relationship between the brand and the consumer. By planning out products to please consumers and ensure satisfaction, this will be a good opportunity to attract loyal customers in a field of fierce competition.

Fourth, the place used for shopping and preferred brand differ in accordance with different benefits sought groups. As such, the results of this paper indicate that it is necessary not only to understand benefits sought by golf wear consumers and apply them to planning but also to modify and reinforce strategies, such as distribution channels. In particular, Kim (2006) stated that consumers in the group valuing price are satisfied with the price and would not make a selection in a case where the clothing did not fit their body shape or was difficult to manage. Likewise, it is important to remember that price-consciousness benefits seeking consumers would not simply buy products just for their reasonable prices. Bought for outdoor exercise golf wear must prioritize comfortability for exercise over any other type of functionality, along with ease of washing and storage. Therefore, consumers who prefer reasonably priced products would avoid ignorance of brands and products that offer functionality and ease of management as golf wear. The Functionality Pursuing Group values hygroscopicity, wind-proofing, and durability, as well as activity in golf

wear, and members of this group are expected to remain interested in new functionalities in golf wear. Every season new products with new functions are pouring out, usually by brands that sell through department stores and brand stores (Nho, 2021). This is perhaps why the Functionality Pursuing Group makes purchases mostly in department stores and brand stores. The Enthusiastic Benefits Sought Group uses discount stores to buy golf wear products that may satisfy all benefits sought, and this group also shows high preferences for Nike Golf. Nike Golf is a well-known brand with proper functionality as sportswear and a high level of recognition, all at relatively reasonable prices and easily purchased at discount stores. The brand's popularity seems to come from the fact that it fulfills the functionality, conspicuousness, price-consciousness, and aesthetics sought by the Enthusiastic Benefits Sought Group. However, its sales are low for online shopping malls, where products are available at reasonable prices. The inferred reason for this is that online shopping malls may satisfy price-consciousness benefits sought but do not offer many products that can satisfy the need for functionality and real reliability in terms of functionality. The Conspicuousness Benefits Sought Group values conspicuousness, uniqueness, and price-consciousness over the functional benefits, and members of this group value aesthetics-oriented criteria as most important. However, the group has low placement for the criteria of functionality or practicability. This group has far more female consumers than male, matching with the results by Cho and Chung (2002) that females hold design and color as more important than males in golf wear purchases. In light of Jeong and Kim's (2010) research that the lower experience with golf, the higher the preference for brands, this result seems to be in line with the increase in female golfers in the '3040 generation' who have newly started the sport. For the Conspicuousness Benefits Sought Group, brand is understandably an important selection element, as this group showed preference for brands apt to show off a high level of golf or financial power, such as "Titleist" and "PXG". The Economic Factor Pursuing Group values economic aspects most of all, with few female consumers and the most males of all groups. Members of this group's favorite places to buy golf wear were discount stores and online shopping malls,

with the latter being more favored. Their preferred brands were “JDX”, “CASTELBAJAC”, “Adidas Golf”, and others that are relatively reasonably priced, confirming that they seek price-consciousness benefits in both the place for shopping and brand preference. Many brands are newly opened or are preparing to open with the vitalized golf wear market. Without differentiated strategies to embrace the needs of consumers, it will be difficult for many of them to succeed. This study is meaningful in that the ‘3040 generation’ golf wear consumers differ from general adults in clothing benefits sought. This research has also presented differences between groups in benefits sought and selection criteria according to benefits sought. It additionally provided analysis on the differences in places for purchases and preferred brands.

The limits of this study and suggestions for subsequent research are as follows: First, the majority of studies have been conducted with general adult populations for both genders or for female consumers, and there has not been research on golf wear consumers’ behaviors specifically among the ‘3040 generation’. This study has been conducted among consumers aged 30 to 49 who have recently risen in standing as a major consumer group in the golf wear industry. However, the golf wear market has been rising as a new market with the increase of golfers in their twenties as well as in the ‘3040 generation’. These new golfers in their twenties have lower financial power than those in the ‘3040 generation’, and they tend to use online shopping malls to buy golf wear (“MZ generation flexes”, 2021), indicating some differences. Therefore, subsequent research is encouraged to conduct studies on golf wear consumers in their twenties along with other groups and to study the differences in benefits sought or buying behaviors between generations. Second, this study did not include comparisons between genders. As shown by Cho and Chung (2002) and Kim (2006), it is presumed that there will be differences in golf wear buying behaviors, such as golf wear benefits sought and selection criteria. As such, subsequent research is recommended to include comparisons between males and females in golf wear consumption to contribute to setting brands’ differentiation strategies.

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