

A Comparative Study on the Korean and Chinese University Students' Materialism and Clothing Attitudes

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There have been many cultural and economic exchanges between Korea and China from ancient times because of geographical neighborhoods. Also, we can see easily Chinese fashion among Korean and Korean fashion among Chinese because of more frequent contacts between two countries after China joined World Trade Organization in 2001.

The purpose of this study was to compare the Korean and Chinese university students' materialism and clothing attitudes to provide touchstone materials for the promotion of trading between two countries. Questionnaires developed by researchers were used for data collection. The respondents were 429 Korean university students in Jeonbuk Province and 405 Chinese university students in Dandong Province. These two provinces were selected as appropriate areas because of similarities in size and population. The survey periods were from February 20 to March 19, 2003. Frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviations were calculated. Also, cluster analysis, one-way ANOVA, t-test, and discriminant test were done. Duncan's multiple range test was followed.

The results were as follows. First, the factors of materialism were happiness, utility, and accomplishment. Korean students pursued utility more than happiness and accomplishment, and Chinese students pursued accomplishment more than happiness and utility. Second, the students were divided into the happiness pursuit, the utility pursuit, and the

accomplishment pursuit according to their materialism factors. The group size of the utility pursuit among Korean students and Chinese students was the largest. Also, the group size of the happiness pursuit among Korean students was bigger than Chinese students, and the group size of the utility pursuit and the accomplishment pursuit among Chinese students was bigger than Korean students. Third, factors of clothing attitudes were ostentation, fashionability, psychological dependence, sexual attraction, and conformity. Korean students preferred fashionability, psychological dependence, and sexual attraction of clothing more than other factors, but Chinese students preferred conformity of clothing more. Fourth, utility and accomplishment among materialism factors, and fashionability and conformity among clothing attitudes had significant effects which could discriminate Korean from Chinese students. The total discriminating power was 77.1%.

Chinese students were more accomplishment oriented but still held conservative clothing attitudes than Korean students. These differences between two countries might be derived from temporarily disconnected relations because of political reasons and the strong population control policy of 'one child per a family' in China. Also, this result could be used to segment the wide Korea and China clothing markets for the promotion of trading between two countries.