

# A Cross-Cultural Research of Clothing Purchasing Behavior among Koreans and U.S.

Ok-Hee Lee

Dept. of Clothing and Textiles, Suncheon National University

## I. Introduction

Knitwear that can satisfy such as consumer's desire, and give the soft and convenient feeling is a popular fashion item that women can enjoy because of its unique characters like the flexibility, expansion, and drape. Also, as people are to be preferred functionality and fashionability by world-wide casual trend, knitwear is recognized by fashion product of high added value. Lately, it is expanding by the product of formal wear, town wear, and sports wear compared with past that was staying at the product of knitwear as sweaters, under garments, and socks. Knitwear that positioned the item for assortment of fashion stores in the past is raised on main item without regard to season, it is shared 40% of merchandise. The knitwear out numbers the woven by a ratio of six to four in world fashion trend of clothing, it looks to be continued this composition and the prospect of woven materials oppositely look to be withered. At this point of time that is continuously increasing the demands about knitwear in accordance with change of consumer's wants and popularization of sports leisure. It should seem to prove very significant that analysis consumer's behavior about knitwear intended for the youth group. As trade between the countries has recently expanded, it is also widening the range of manufacturer's economic activity. Therefore, in this research the purchasing behavior about knitwear of consumers will be compared in U.S and Korea and analysed according to demographics of each country, intended for female college students who especially have the buying potentiality in the fashion industry and are also sensitive to individuality and fashion.

## II. Methods

### 1 Instrument

The questionnaires for this survey consisted of items about knitwear purchasing behavior, including sources of information(5-point scales for 14 questions) about knitwear, evaluative criteria(5-point scales for 17 questions), attributes(5-point scales for 13 questions) and type of store preferred for knitwear, preference and buying intention of knitwear. And it is included

experience purchasing of foreign-made knitwear, and the nation of the highest and lowest quality knitwear they think, and age, major, year in school, income, clothing expenditure, in demographic variables.

## 2 Data Collection and Analysis

The final sample used in this study consisted of 119 female college students in the U.S. and 150 female college students in Korea aged from 18 to 33.

The data was collected during May and June 2003. ANOVA, Duncan's multiple range test, Percentage, Frequency were employed, the Statistical Package for social science(SPSS), version 9.0, was used to generate these values.

## III. Results and Discussion

Knitwear Purchasing Behaviors of Female College Students in U.S. and Korea Respondents in the U.S. and Korea had a high preference for knitwear, and the respondents in the U.S. preferred knitwear more than the respondents in Korea.

Sources of information about knitwear that are important, are "Purchasing experience and Purchasing advices(family and friend)", and value "Shop displays", "Magazine advertisements", and "Catalogs" The significant difference was shown in "Fashion show" "Advice of salespeople" "Mail advertisements", and "Internet". The respondents of the U.S. was shown higher than of Korea in Fashion show, Mail advertisements, and Internet, respondents of Korea was shown higher than respondents of U.S. in Advice of salespeople.

The result of the *t*-test to evaluation criteria of knitwear between both of the countries was significantly different. The respondents of the U.S considered "Price", "Good fit", "Comfort", "Quality of construction", "Fashionable", "Pleasing", and "Sexy" among evaluation criteria more importantly than respondents of Korea, "Fiber content", "Harmony", "Origin", "prestige" was considered by respondents of Korea more importantly than the respondents of the U.S.

Store attributes that were considered important by both countries were Price level, Variety of products, and Display of merchandise. The result that analyzed the difference between the two countries to store attributes, respondents of the U.S. consider "Dressing facilities", "Price level", "Frequency of special sale price", "Store locatton", "Brand names", and "New fashion" more importantly than the Korean. The respondents of Korea considered "Friendliness of sales personnel", "Product knowledge of sales personnel", and "Layaway payment plan" more importantly than the respondents of the U.S.

It was shown there are many respondents with purchasing experience of foreign-made knitwear, specially respondents of U.S.(77.3%) with purchasing experience of it are more than them of Korea(62.7%).

## IV. Conclusions

Recommendations to manufacturer and retailer of knitwear who target the consumers of Korea were as follows. Korean respondents' with a buying intention of upper garments such as, t-shirts, twin sets, cardigans, and sweaters was high, but the buying intention of pants, skirts, and suits was low. In terms of knitwear information, Korean respondents importantly considered the purchasing experience and advice of family ands, Shop display, was considered more than the advice of salespeople for the respondents of the U.S. By evaluate criteria, they importantly considered design, good fit, and color, and also considered fiber content, harmony with other clothing, origin, and prestige more than the U.S. respondents. In terms of the places knitwear purchased, Korean respondents shopped at the Bonded shops, Department stores, and Speciality stores By Store attributes of knitwear, Korean respondents importantly considered the variety and display of product, the price level, and the friendliness of sales personnel. The outlook for the industry of knitwear looks to remain bright, there should be a continuous effort to research and invest in consumer satisfaction of knitwear.

### Reference

- Gajar, B. J. (1998, Feb.). *Women's Wear Tricot, American Sportswear & Knitting Times*. pp. 22-23.
- Hofstede, G. (1993, Feb.). *Cultural constraints in management theories, the Academy of Management Executive*. pp. 81-94.
- Leventhal L. (1998, July). *Knit fabric, American Sportswear & Knitting Times*. pp. 14-16.
- International Textile News (2003, Sep. 01). <http://www.itnk.co.kr>.