

## Comparison of Clothing Gift Giving Behavior of University Students by Gender

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### Abstract

*The purposes of this study were to investigate and to compare the actual state of clothing gift giving behavior according to gender. A survey using questionnaire was conducted on 417 university students in the Cheongju area, Korea. The questionnaire was composed of questions concerning demographic factors, clothing gift giving behavior and purchasing behavior, and of multiple choice and 5-point scales depending on the characteristics of the questions. Frequency, descriptive analysis,  $\chi^2$ -test and t-test were used for a data analysis. Most of the students had experience of giving the clothing for a gift more than once during the year. They usually purchased the clothing for their parents and friends. The items of clothing were low purchasing risk items like sweater, T-shirts, underwear and shirts or blouse. The main reason for purchasing clothing gift for their parents and friends was based on mostly practical motivation.*

*Key words : gift giving, clothing gift, gender, university student.*

### I. Introduction

Gift giving is a common behavior found in almost all countries. It is an expression of gratitude, affection and interest, but more fundamentally, a social activity that serves to establish and maintain the relationship between gift-giver and gift-receiver. Giving also plays a distinct role in the family context. Gifts exchanged among family members can be treated as grants, which are one-way transfers given without expecting the recipient to reciprocate. Gift giving

in the family can be interpreted as a means for socialization of its members<sup>1)</sup>.

Whether in the East or the West, the reciprocal act of giving and receiving gifts has become a practice people engage in not just on special occasions such as birthdays, Christmas, and other holidays, but also during ordinary activities such as travelling or on business trips<sup>2)</sup>. The type of gift varies according to occasion, with the currently most popular items being selected for Christmas, items for personal usage for birthdays, and practical items for weddings<sup>3)</sup>. Also, lifestyle influences gift pur-

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<sup>1</sup> Nena Horne and Genitel Winakor, "Giving Gifts of Clothing: Risk Perceptions of Husbands and Wives," *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal* 13, no. 2 (1995): 92.

<sup>2</sup> Sanghyup Lee and Myunghee Park, "A Conceptual Framework for the Gift Giving in Consumer Behavior Research," *Journal of the Korean Home Economics Association* 30, no. 3 (1992): 257-270.

<sup>3</sup> R. W. Belk, "Gift-Giving Behaviors," *Research in Marketing* 2(1979): 95-126.

chasing-a finding that can be used for gift market segmentation<sup>4</sup>.

Clothing gifts include all kinds of garments worn on the body and given as gifts, and encompass clothes, hats, gloves and socks<sup>5,6</sup>. Clothing has been reported to be a frequently given gift among family members in several countries<sup>7</sup>. Clothing gifts are generally purchased for birthdays and Christmas<sup>8,9</sup>. In Korea, for example, unmarried women tend to purchase clothing gifts for occasions such as Parents' Day, while married women generally purchase clothing gifts when the need arises, such as when the weather changes<sup>10</sup>. The studies by Belk<sup>11</sup> and Cheal<sup>12</sup> found that half of clothing items selected for gifts were casual wear or sportswear, while one third was sportswear and shirts and 16% was sweaters<sup>13</sup>. Outerwear was chosen in relationships with relatively detached roles while underwear or accessories such as handkerchiefs and socks were selected in relationships with relatively non-detached roles<sup>14</sup>. In other studies, one-third of the clothing gifts most preferred by housewives in their 30s were shirts and accessories for their husbands<sup>15</sup>.

As such, clothing gifts make up a major proportion of gift items because such gifts have a stronger communication ability than others. They are more tangible and closely related to the body of an individual<sup>16,17</sup>. However, most of the existing studies on clothing gifts have focused on adult women<sup>18</sup>, with very little study of university students who are generally extremely interested in clothing.

Against this backdrop, this paper presents a study of university students in Cheongju designed to analyze their clothing gift behaviors, and also gender differences in gift giving practices, by studying clothing gift giving behaviors including per annum frequency, time of giving and receiver of clothing gifts, and gift purchasing behavior such as items, places and prices in clothing gift purchasing.

## II. Method

### 1. Subjects

The study looked at 417 university students enrolled in universities in Cheongju, and included 253 female students(60.7%) and 164 ma-

<sup>4</sup> Ho Bae Lee, "A Study on the Factors Affecting Gift Purchasing Behavior," *The Korean Journal of Marketing* 8, no. 2 (1993): 145-162.

<sup>5</sup> R. W. Belk, *Op. cit.*, 95-126.

<sup>6</sup> Eun-Joo Park, "A Paradigm for the Clothing Gift Giving Process," *Journal of the Korean Society of Costume* 27 (1996): 133-146.

<sup>7</sup> Nena Home and Genitel Winakor, *Op. cit.*, 92-101.

<sup>8</sup> R. W. Belk, *Op. cit.*, 95-126.

<sup>9</sup> D. J. Cheal, "The Social Dimensions of Gift Behavior", *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* 3(1986): 423-439.

<sup>10</sup> Mihyang Won and Eunjo Park, "An Effect of Clothing Situation on Store Choice Behavior," *Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles* 18, no. 2 (1994): 234-243.

<sup>11</sup> R. W. Belk, *Op. cit.*, 95-126.

<sup>12</sup> D. J. Cheal, *Op. cit.*, 423-439.

<sup>13</sup> Nena Home and Genitel Winakor, *Op. cit.*, 92-101.

<sup>14</sup> Mihyang Won and Eunjo Park, *Op. cit.*, 234-243.

<sup>15</sup> Eun Joo Park, *Op. cit.*, 133-146.

<sup>16</sup> Sanghyup Lee, *Op. cit.*, 257-270.

<sup>17</sup> Eun Joo Park, *Op. cit.*, 133-146.

<sup>18</sup> Su Jin Kim and Myung Sun Chung, "The Relationship between Risk Perception and Purchasing Behavior of Clothing Gift among Adult Women," *Korean Journal of Human Ecology* 1, no. 1 (1998): 126-142.

〈Table 1〉 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents (N=417)

Characteristics		N (%)
Gender	Female	253(60.7)
	Male	164(39.3)
Major	Humanities	102(14.4)
	Natural Sciences	166(39.8)
	Human Ecology	121(29.0)
	Arts	28( 6.7)
Age (years)	20 or less	15( 3.6)
	20 ~ 21	208(49.9)
	22 ~ 23	102(24.5)
	24 or above	92(22.0)
Friends of Opposite Gender	Yes	194(46.5)
	No	223(53.5)
Experience of Side Job	Yes	338(81.1)
	No	79(19.0)

le students (39.3%). A preliminary study was conducted in September 2002 and the findings from the analysis of the study results were used to refine the questionnaires that were subsequently used to conduct the main survey in November and December 2002. The characteristics of the respondents are shown in 〈Table 1〉.

## 2. Instrument

An appropriate questionnaire was developed after reviewing those utilized by previous study<sup>19,20</sup>. The questionnaires were composed of questions concerning demographic factors, clothing gift-giving behaviors and purchasing behaviors, and of multiple choice and 5-point scales(1 being 'not at all important' and 5 being 'very important') depending on the characteristics of the questions.

## 3. Data Analysis

The survey data were used to calculate fre-

quency, percentage, average and standard deviation according to the characteristics of the survey questions, and *t*-test and cross tabulation were also used to identify gender differences in clothing gift purchasing behaviors.

## III. Results

### 1. Clothing Gift Giving Behavior

This study examined clothing gift giving behaviors, including gift giving number, frequency, time and cause in order to discover respondents' gift giving behaviors.

As seen in 〈Table 2〉, 99.5% of respondents gave gifts (very often: 3.4%, often: 63.7%, sometimes: 32.3%), and female students gave more gifts than male students did. In terms of the number of times the respondents gave gifts in the past year, 36.3% indicated 4 ~6 times, and 29.1% indicated 1 ~3 times, revealing that two-thirds of respondents gave gifts 1 ~6 times per year. In addition, female students demonstrated a higher per annum frequency of gift-giving than their male counterparts. In terms of the number of times respondents gave clothing gifts, 61.3% indicated 1 ~3 times. The female students gave clothing gifts more often than the male students, with the former comprising 67.6% of this group and the latter 51.5%.

The results of the multiple response study of gift-giving occasions during the past year (Table 3) revealed that friends' birthdays were most common with 22.7%, followed by parents' birthdays (21.8%), Parents' Day (13.4%), and Christmas (8.5%), and the results did not show a meaningful difference by gender. However, a small gender difference was found in occasions for clothing gift-giving, which also allowed for multiple responses, with female students indicating an order of friends' birthday, parents' birthday, Parents' Day and anniversaries, while male students responded in the order of parents' birthday, friends' birthday, Parents' Day, Christmas and anniversaries. The receivers of the clothing

<sup>19</sup> Sanghyup Lee, *Op. cit.*, 257-270.

<sup>20</sup> Su Jin Kim and Myung Sun Chung, *Op. cit.*, 126-142.

〈Table 2〉 Gift Giving Behavior

Range		Female	Male	Total	Frequency(%)
Frequency of Gift Giving	Very often	9( 3.6)	5( 3.0)	14( 3.4)	15.1 ( $p<.01$ )
	Often	177(70.2)	88(53.7)	265(63.7)	
	Sometimes	66(26.2)	69(42.1)	135(32.5)	
	Never	0( 0.0)	2( 0.5)	2( 0.5)	
	Total	252(100)	164(100 )	416(100 )	
Gift Giving Number	1 ~ 3	52(20.6)	69(43.7)	121(29.5)	33.9 ( $p<.001$ )
	4 ~ 6	95(37.7)	57(36.1)	152(37.1)	
	7 ~ 9	51(20.2)	22(13.9)	73(17.8)	
	10 or more	54(21.4)	10( 6.3)	64(15.6)	
	Total	252(100 )	158(100)	410(100)	
Number of Clothing Gifts	0	24( 9.6)	49(30.1)	73(17.7)	29.9 ( $p<.001$ )
	1 ~ 3	169(67.6)	84(51.5)	253(61.3)	
	4 ~ 6	44(17.6)	26(16.0)	70(16.9)	
	7 ~ 9	7(20.2)	3( 3.9)	10( 2.4)	
	10 or more	9(21.4)	1( 0.6)	7( 1.7)	
Total	252(100 )	163(100 )	413(100 )		

gifts were, according to both female and male respondents, parents, girlfriend/boyfriend, friends, and siblings.

The reasons most often cited for giving gifts were 'to show affection' and 'for no particular reason' with 38.6%, followed by 'to reciprocate the receiver's present' (12.2%) (Table 4). The most common reasons the respondents gave for clothing gift giving were because they 'felt good when they saw the other person wearing the clothing gift,' followed by 'clothing gifts are practical,' and the responses varied by gender. The female students' reasons for giving clothing gifts were more positive than those of the male students (Table 5).

## 2. Clothing Gift Purchasing Behaviors

The results of the study of which clothing gifts university students choose and where they

buy them, and what criteria they apply in choosing the items are as follows.

For specific clothing gift items, 40.8% responded that they bought T-shirts, followed by sweaters/cardigans (40.2%) and underwear (28.3%). The gift items varied by gender, with female students buying sweaters/cardigans most often, followed by T-shirts, underwear, shirts/blouses and socks/stockings (Table 6).

As for clothing gift purchasing place, 28.0% responded that they visited department stores, followed by chain stores (18.8%), speciality stores (14.4%) and discount stores (9.4%). Responses varied by gender, with female students tending to make their purchases at department stores, chain stores and specialty stores, and male students visiting department stores, discount stores and designer boutiques. However, there was no gender difference in the price of

〈Table 3〉 Gift Giving Occasions and Receivers of the Clothing Gifts Frequency(%)

		Female	Male	Total
Gift Giving Occasions*	Friends' birthday	237(23.2)	122(21.9)	359(22.7)
	Parents' birthday	216(21.1)	129(23.1)	345(21.8)
	Parents' day	136(13.3)	75(13.6)	211(13.4)
	Teacher's day	60( 5.9)	38( 6.8)	98( 6.2)
	Christmas	83( 8.1)	52( 9.3)	135( 8.5)
	Entrance ceremony	55( 5.4)	14( 2.5)	69( 4.4)
	Valentine day	59( 5.8)	41( 7.4)	100( 6.3)
	Celebration	88( 8.6)	40( 7.2)	128( 8.1)
	Misc.	88( 8.6)	46( 8.3)	134( 8.4)
Total		1,022(100 )	557(100 )	1,579(100 )
Receivers of the Clothing Gifts*	Parents	148(32.7)	66(29.8)	214(31.8)
	Siblings	78(17.2)	27(12.2)	105(15.6)
	Opposite-gender friends	90(19.9)	55(24.9)	145(21.5)
	Friends of the same gender	86(19.0)	31(14.1)	117(17.4)
	Misc.	50(11.0)	42(19.0)	92(13.7)
	Total	452(100 )	221(100 )	673(100 )

\* Multiple response.

〈Table 4〉 The Reasons for Giving Gift Frequency(%)

		Female	Male	Total	$\chi^2$
Reason for Giving Gift	Show affection	104(41.1)	54(32.9)	158(37.9)	7.0 (N.S)
	Return present	35(13.8)	15( 9.1)	50(12.0)	
	No particular reason	85(33.6)	73(44.5)	158(37.9)	
	Others	29(11.5)	22(13.4)	51(12.2)	
	Total	253(100 )	164(100 )	417(100 )	

clothing gifts purchased, with 20,000 ~ 50,000 won being the most common cost of gifts purchased at 45.1%, followed by 50,000 ~ 70,000 won (16.4%) (Table 7).

As for the person who most influenced decisions in clothing gift purchasing, the female students indicated friends (38.0%), themselves

(35.4%) and family members (14.8%), while the male students responded themselves (35.6%), girlfriends (24.2%) and friends (15.2%), which reveals a difference by gender ( $p < .001$ ).

In addition, the results of an analysis of what respondents considered most important when purchasing clothing gifts using a 5-point scales,

**<Table 5>** The Reasons for Clothing Giving Gifts Mean

		Female	Male	Total	t-value
Reason for Clothing Gifts	I feel good receiver wearing clothing gift	3.97	3.70	3.87	3.26( $p<.001$ )
	Clothing gift is practical item	3.78	3.47	3.66	3.28( $p<.001$ )
	Everybody need clothing	3.81	3.38	3.65	4.63( $p<.001$ )
	I like clothing giving gift	3.50	3.27	3.41	2.20( $p<.05$ )
	I feel close friendship	3.32	3.27	3.30	0.49(N.S)
	The receiver will like clothing gift	3.23	3.01	3.15	2.09( $p<.05$ )
	Clothing gift can show off	2.31	2.45	2.36	1.49(N.S)

**<Table 6>** The Specific Clothing Gift Items Frequency(%)

		Female	Male	Total
Items*	Sweater/Cardigan	100(15.8)	35(11.1)	135(14.2)
	T-shirts	90(14.2)	47(14.9)	137(14.5)
	Shirts/Blouse	71(11.2)	32(10.2)	103(11.9)
	Muffler/Scarf	45( 7.1)	17( 5.4)	62( 6.5)
	Pants	60( 9.5)	25( 7.9)	85( 8.9)
	Under wear	68(10.7)	27( 8.0)	95(10.0)
	Socks/Stockings	51( 8.0)	21( 6.7)	72( 7.6)
	Gloves	25( 3.9)	26( 8.3)	51( 5.4)
	Handkerchief	33( 5.2)	16( 5.1)	49( 5.2)
	Hat	18( 2.8)	12( 3.8)	30( 3.2)
	Neck tie	17( 2.7)	9( 2.9)	26( 2.7)
	Others	55( 8.7)	48(15.2)	103(10.8)
Total		633(100 )	315(100 )	948(100 )

\* Multiple response.

'fit' (Mean 4.32) was the most important factor considered, followed by 'size' (Mean 4.31) and 'color and design' (Mean 4.15). The responses showed a meaningful gender difference, with female respondents placing more importance on fit, color and design, style and size than male respondents (Table 8).

#### IV. Conclusion

This study focused on university students in Cheongju to examine their clothing gift-giving behaviors. Gender differences in their behaviors were analyzed, and based on the findings the following results were reached.

〈Table 7〉 Clothing Gift Purchasing Place And Price of Clothing Gifts Purchased Frequency(%)

		Female	Male	Total	$\chi^2$
Place of Purchase	Department store	63(29.4)	38(32.2)	101(30.4)	23.1 ( $p<0.001$ )
	Designer boutique	9( 4.2)	14(11.9)	23( 6.9)	
	Chain store	55(25.7)	13(11.0)	68(20.5)	
	Speciality store	40(18.7)	12(10.2)	52(15.7)	
	Discount store	17( 7.9)	17(14.4)	34(10.2)	
	Outlet store	16( 7.5)	13(11.0)	29( 8.7)	
	Misc.	14(16.5)	11( 7.5)	25( 7.5)	
	Total	214(100 %)	118(100 %)	332(100 %)	
Price (won)	Less than 10,000	12( 5.2)	7( 5.5)	19( 5.3)	7.1 (N.S)
	10,000 ~ 20,000	35(15.2)	13(10.2)	48(13.4)	
	20,000 ~ 50,000	110(47.6)	52(40.6)	162(45.1)	
	50,000 ~ 70,000	31(13.4)	28(21.9)	59(16.4)	
	70,000 ~ 100,000	13( 5.6)	11( 8.6)	24( 6.7)	
	100,000 or above	30(13.0)	17(13.3)	47(13.1)	
	Total	231(100 %)	128(100 %)	359(100 %)	

〈Table 8〉 Purchase Consideration Factor for The Clothing Gift Mean

		Female	Male	Total	t-value
Consideration Factor	Fashion trend	3.74	3.70	3.73	0.43 (N.S)
	Fit	4.44	4.14	4.32	4.16 ( $p<.001$ )
	Style	4.13	3.82	4.01	3.92 ( $p<.001$ )
	Easy care	3.57	3.33	3.47	2.35 ( $p<.01$ )
	Comfort	3.84	3.61	3.75	2.36 ( $p<.01$ )
	Color/Design	4.22	4.04	4.15	2.70 ( $p<.001$ )
	Brand	3.09	2.97	3.05	1.27 (N.S)
	Price	4.04	3.83	3.96	2.53 ( $p<.01$ )
	Appearance	3.82	3.41	3.66	4.67 ( $p<.001$ )
	Size	4.44	4.11	4.31	4.45 ( $p<.001$ )

1. Most respondents gave clothing gifts 1~3 times a year, and female students favored

clothing gifts more than male students.  
2. The occasions for giving clothing gifts di-

ffered by gender, but the gift receivers were the same for both genders, with parents as the most popular response, followed by girlfriends/boyfriends and friends.

3. The most common reason for giving clothing gifts was 'because the feeling good to look at them used by the receiver,' but the responses showed a gender difference.
4. The clothing gift items most preferred by female students were sweaters/cardigans, while the male students favored T-shirts. The most common site for buying clothing gifts were department stores and chain stores among female students and department stores and discount stores among male students, which reveals a slight gender difference in responses.
5. For factors respondents considered when purchasing clothing gifts, fit was the highest-ranked response, followed by color and design, and style. The female respondents were found to place greater importance on these factors than did the male respondents.

On the basis of above results the followings were proposed as a conclusion. Most of the university students tend to buy clothing gifts for their parents and friends, and when they purchase the gift clothing the first consideration was the fit of the gift to the receiver as well as the feeling good to look at them used by the receiver. In those reasons the clothing gifts would be regarded as frequently chosen gift items. So it would be necessary to make the university students know how to choose good and inexpensive clothing products for gifts while the students usually have not enough knowledge

and experience to make gifts for others. Also if they can have access to the special collections which display consumer-oriented products according to the age group or gender, it would be very convenient for them to decide and purchase appropriate clothing gifts without spending extra time and cost for getting additional information.

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