

## 2007 Summer Women's Street Fashion in Shenyang, China<sup>+</sup>

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study is to analyze women's street fashion in Shenyang and to understand the regional design preference. The city, Shenyang is not only known as the one of three major northeastern province in China, but also known as the city where large numbers of Korean fashion companies have launched in.

The observation focused mainly on young/young adults and missy in Oe Market and ZungJie(中街) which are the most busy streets in Shenyang. A digital camera or a camcorder were used to take photos of these women. In addition, video captures or photos were analyzed by three fashion experts. Finally, the photos were classified by item and data was coded for statistics and reviewed through frequency and percentage.

As a result, it was found that most young women in Shenyang liked to wear a casual style such as easy t-shirt, denim pants or skirt and a feminine style such as a one-piece dress in summer. Top items that were favoured by young women in Shenyang were t-shirts and blouse types, while they favoured to wear denim pants of indigo blue for bottom items. Frequently found colors among these womens' clothing were white, black, vivid blue, red and red purple. I strongly believe this study will provide basic but significant information for the establishment of design and marketing strategies to the Korean fashion brands, who is trying to access Chinese fashion market.

**Key Words** : street fashion, China, Young, Young adult, Missy

### I . Introduction

In mid-1990s, Korean fashion industries have met with difficulty in developing their fashion marketing due to IMF and in fact lots of Korean fashion industries are still struggling with the same problem. To overcome this difficulty,

Korean fashion companies have turned their eyes to foreign markets especially in China and such movement of Korean fashion companies has proceeded quite quickly. It is likely that more Korean fashion companies will be launched into Chinese markets around the time of the Beijing Olympics 2008<sup>1)2)</sup>.

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The reason why Korean fashion companies have chosen to access Chinese market is because China is now a world's largest fashion production base and consumption market. Unfortunately, however, Korean fashion companies in China are facing difficulties because of the lack of systematic and exact information<sup>3)</sup>. The Chinese market is very special in a way that differs greatly in climate, culture, customs and economic growth according to area because of a vast open territory<sup>4)</sup>. For this reason, the individuality of the particular area associated with market environment should be taken into consideration. Likewise, fashion products appear differently in consumption levels, favorite styles and trend adoption in each area. Thus, it is very important to plan, design fashion products and decide a marketing direction that suits the nature of certain area consumers as well as satisfying the consumers in those particular areas<sup>5)</sup>. Accordingly, the analysis of the most common fashion style in the area can be important as a basic material which has to be preceded.

Specifically, three northeastern provinces in China such as Liaoning, Jilin and Heilongjiang has a intimate historical and geographical relationship to Korea and are also wide in exchange. The consumers in Liaoning, Jilin and Heilongjiang are characterized by the preference of Korean and Japanese style, and being sensitive to trend and a refined style<sup>6)</sup>. They have high recognition of Korean brands and this leads more companies to be moved<sup>7)8)</sup>.

Accordingly, this study intends to analyze and grasp favourite design of women's street fashion in Shenyang(深陽) that is one of three major cities of northeast in China where Korean fashion companies are actively moving. Basically, this study helps to provide a basic

materials for establishing design and marketing strategy in Korean fashion's access to China.

## II. Method

For the observation area of this investigation, the largest wholesale market in the northeast was chosen which is situated in Shenyang, the capital of Liaoning. The subjects were observed over two days from 22th of July to 23th of July in 2007, mainly in the Oe Market and ZungJie(中街) areas which are the typical downtowns in Shenyang. Oe Market is a large shopping district consisting of four parts; east, west, south, and fashion city. This area contains over six thousands stores in wholesale or retail businesses and it has an average of more than 300,000 visitors per day. ZungJie(中街) is also known as a famous fashion street with a large floating population<sup>9)</sup>.

The observation subjects were young/young adult and Missy. According to domestic market grouping, junior(13-18 yrs), young(19-22 yrs), young adult(23-25 yrs), missy(26-35 yrs), madame(36-70 yrs) classified<sup>10)</sup>. Therefore, When we analyzed Shenyang street fashion, young & young adult put together and madame excluded, as young and young adult is not classified by unaided eye. The observation method used was to take photos using a digital camera or a video camcorder. To provide a large variety of subjects, observations were conducted twice in a day between 8a.m until 10a.m and 5p.m until 7p.m. Those with fashion style that were unable to interpret and those who were photographed more than once were excluded. As a result, 1,000 photos or video captures were analyzed. Three graduate school students majoring in fashion design analyzed

each of them by item and coded them as statistical data.

The SPSS 12.0 software package was used to analyze materials and frequency while cross-tabulation analysis was used to arrange the materials. The examination items of street fashion in Shenyang are shown in <Table 1> Classification was established based on the previous researches<sup>11)12)</sup> and Munsell color system.

### III. Results

Women's fashion preferences in Shenyang were classified according to their style, item and color. The style analysis focused on the styles worn by the subjects. First of all, the style analysis was conducted according to casual and formal. Casual style was divided into basic, easy and sports style while formal style was divided into classic and feminine style. In this way, observation the subjects' style weight was

analyzed. The item analysis was conducted on tops, bottoms and dresses, and the relationship between item frequency and fashion style was examined. Finally, color analysis examined the frequency of hue and tone, and the relationship between color and fashion style.

#### 1. Result of Style analysis

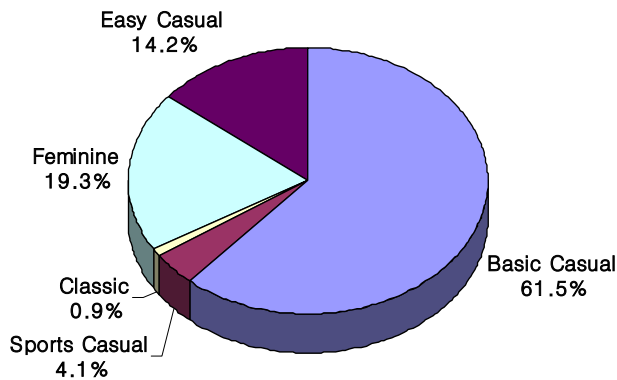
The fashion styles of people in Shenyang included Basic casual <Fig. 1> 615 (61.5%), sports casual <Fig. 2> 41 (4.1%), easy casual <Fig. 3> 142 (14.2%), classical <Fig. 4> 9 (0.9%) and feminine <Fig. 5> 193 (19.3%). Since this study focused mainly on young adults and junior miss women, the casual style showed dominance. A total of 79.8% of the subjects were found to wear casual style including easy casual, sports casual and basic casual. This result corresponds with Chinese people's preference for casual style reported in the previous researches by Son & Kim<F2000><sup>13)</sup>, Kim & Lee(2001)<sup>14)</sup>, Oh & Bae(2005)<sup>15)</sup> and Cheon & Bae(2006)<sup>16)</sup><Table 2>.

<Table 1> Survey Item of Street Fashion in Shenyang, China

Survey Item		Contents													
Style		Casual									Formal				
		Basic			Easy			Sports			Classic		Feminine		
Item	Top	Jacket			Blouse			T-shirts			Knit		Jumper		
	Bottom	Denim Skirt			Denim pants			Skirt		Pants		Leggings			
	One-piece Dress	H-silhouette				A-silhouette					X-silhouette				
Color	Hue	Red	Red Yellow	Yellow	Yellow Green	Green	Blue Green	Blue	Purple Blue	Purple	Red purple	White	Gray	Black	
	Tone	Vivid			Pastel			Dull			Dark		Neutral		



<Table 2> The percentage of Style



**2. Result of Items analysis**

The item analysis was conducted according to top, bottom and one-piece dress items.

**1) Top Items**

The most common item found was a simple

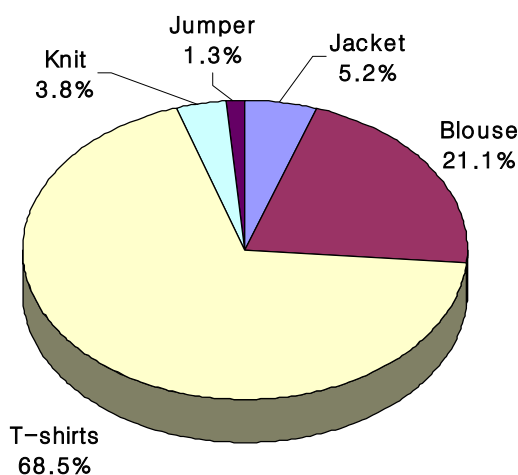
T-shirt (68.5%) simply because of the weather being so hot, followed by blouse (21.1%), jacket (5.2%), knit (3.8%), and jumper (1.3%) <Table 3>. The main top item was sleeveless including a half length sleeve and a camisole.

The most common style of the T-shirt was tight style along with denim or cotton pants and

skirts<Fig. 6>. Some of others dressed T-shirts with cargo pants<Fig. 7>. A feminine blouse was matched with mini skirts, giving a feminine outlook <Fig. 8>. A loose blouse was matched with cropped pants, giving a easy outlook <Fig.9>. Jacket style was matched with formal pants or skirts, showing classic or feminine style <Fig. 10>. A casual jumper was matched with similar style items, evoking a sporty outlook <Fig. 11>. Most of the top items were short length or sleeveless.

When the styles of top items were examined, all of them including T-shirts, jackets, blouses, knits, and jumpers were dressed in a basic casual style. Jackets T-shirts, and Jumpers were dressed in a sports casual style and jackets, blouses, and knits were dressed in a feminine style. Some jackets and blouses were dressed in a classical style. All top items but jumpers were dressed in a easy casual style<Table 4>.

<Table 3> The percentage of Top Items



<Fig. 6> Short length or Sleeveless T-shirt



<Fig. 7> Sleeveless & layered T-shirt



<Fig. 8> Feminine Blouse



<Fig. 9> Loose Blouse



<Fig. 10>  
Classic Jacket



<Fig. 11> Sports Jumper

## 2) Bottom Items

In bottom items, 76.8% wore pants such as denim pants while 21.0% wore skirts. In the rest of the styles, 2.2% wore leggings along with pants, skirt or one-piece dress<Table 5>. The pants mainly involved long denim or cotton pants and some wore mini or knee pants<Fig. 12, 15, 17>. The skirts mainly involved denim or cotton skirts and mini skirts were 62.8% and knee skirts were 29.4%. This suggests that the preferred item among the women in Shenyang is some sort of skirts<Fig. 6, 13, 22>. The relationship between bottom items and fashion style was analyzed.

Let us have a look at the most common bottom items that were worn by the women in Shenyang. Like Korean women, the most frequently worn item by Chinese women was denim pants<Fig. 12>, denim skirt, cotton skirts, training pants and cargo pants in casual style<Fig. 13, 14, 15>. Unlike Korean women, however, Chinese women wore gauze leggings, not cotton leggings with mini skirt, denim skirt, half or cropped cotton, or denim pants. Most of the leggings were cropped style with a ribbon on it <Fig. 16, 17>. These gauze leggings seems to show Chinese women's fashion taste that emphasizes sexiness.

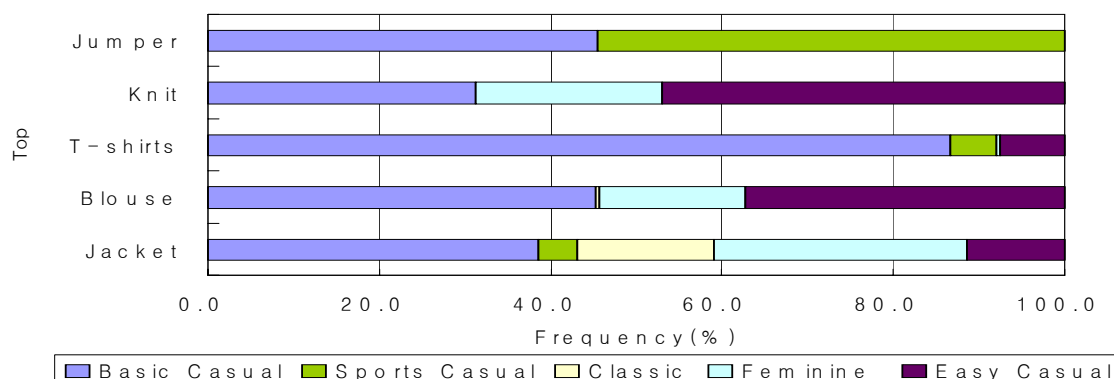
Denim pants and denim skirts were showed easy casual than hiphop or skinny style. And feminine style was mostly showed in skirts<Table 6>.

## 3) One-piece Dress

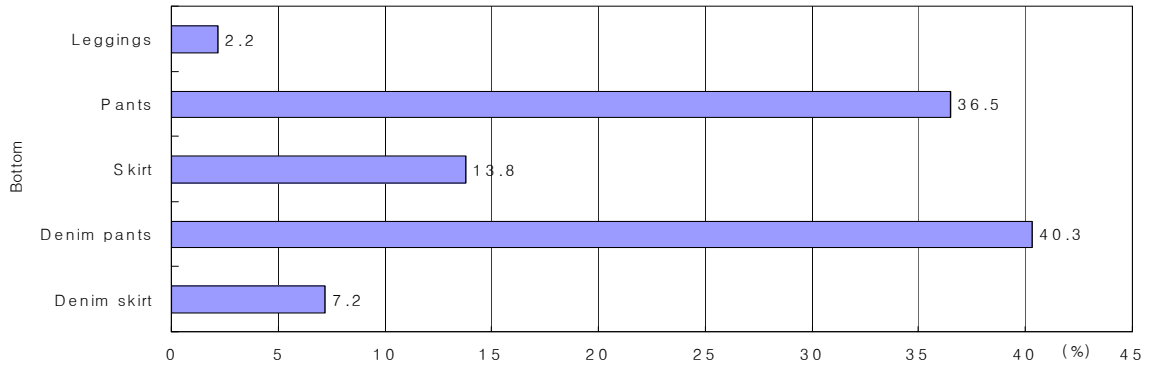
Out of 1,000 subjects, 161 (16.1%) wore one-piece dresses. The silhouettes of one-piece dresses include X-silhouette (n=68, 42.2%), A-silhouette (n=66, 41.0%) and H-silhouette (n=27, 16.8%) <Table 7>.

X-silhouette and A-silhouette had a similar frequency, suggesting that Chinese women preferred

<Table 4> Style analysis of Top Items



<Table 5> The percentage of Bottom Items



<Fig. 12> T-shirt & Denim Pants



<Fig. 13> T-shirt & Mini length Denim Skirt



<Fig. 14> Training Pants



<Fig. 15> Short Pants

feminine design of a simple color, beads or ribbon, clean primary color match, or colorful pattern one-piece dress in general<Fig. 18, 19, 20>. Some of the sleeveless one-piece dress with a cardigan or a jacket were also found. The length of the one-piece dress that these women desired was knee(70.1%) and mini (25.4%).

In terms of the relationship between a one-piece dresses' silhouette and style, feminine and easy casual style were mainly found<Table 8>. Furthermore, H-silhouette was found to be dressed in various casual styles or classic styles.

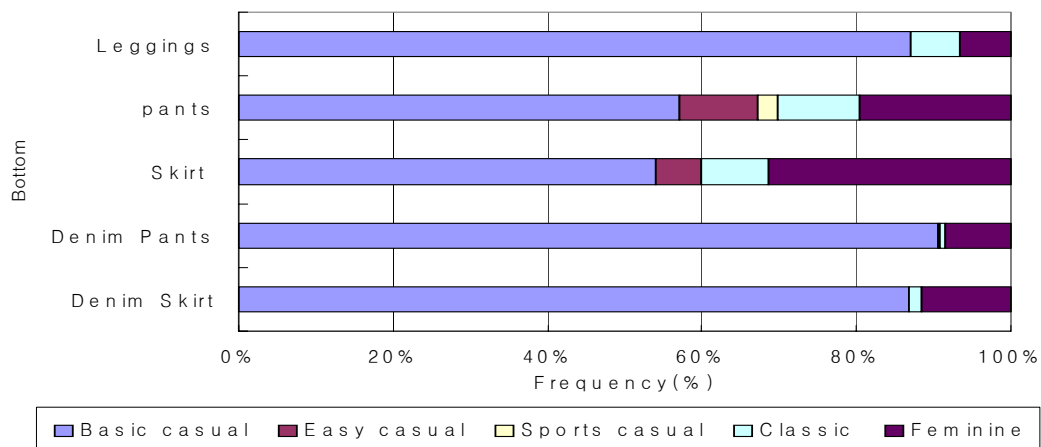


<Fig. 16> Skirt & Netting Leggings

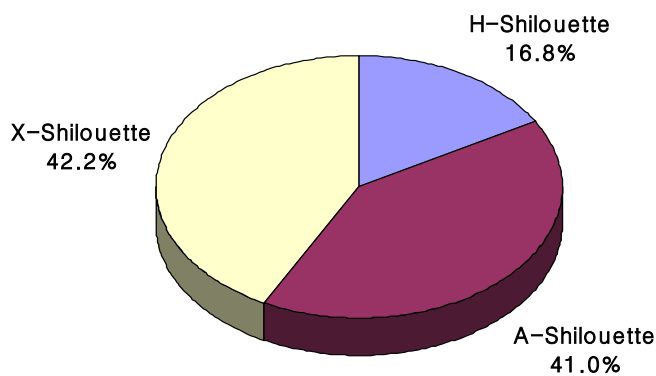


<Fig. 17> Knee length Leggings

<Table 6> Style analysis of Bottom Items



<Table. 7> The percentage of One-piece Dress Silhouette



<Fig. 18> X-silhouette One-piece Dress



<Fig. 19> A-silhouette One-piece Dress



<Fig. 20> H-silhouette One-piece Dress



### 3. Result of Color analysis

#### 1) Top color

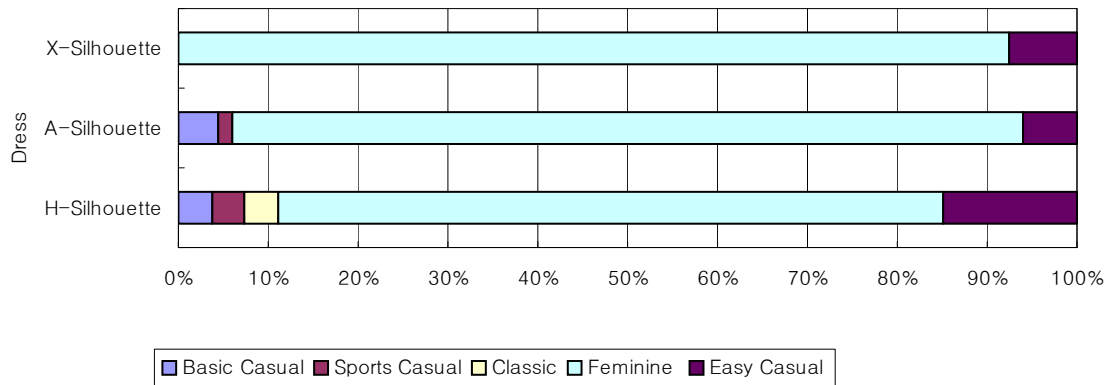
The most popular color in top items among the women in Shenyang was neutral, especially white and black. In terms of chromatic colors, red, red purple, blue and beige including yellow system often appeared. With the colour of red and red purple, a pastel tone that was mixed with vivid colors and white was preferred<Table 9>.

Specifically, red or white T-shirts or blouses

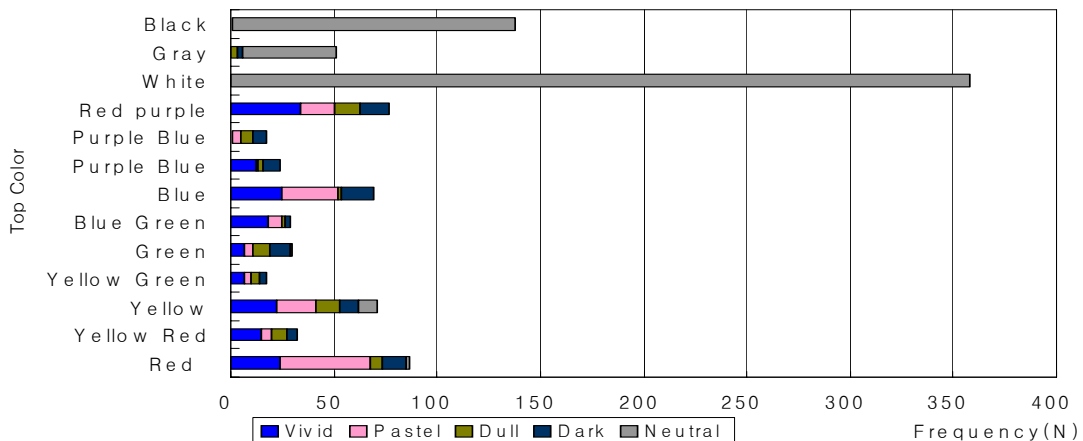
were matched with blue denim pants or white cotton skirts<Fig. 21, 22>. Although vivid red color appeared more frequently in Chinese streets than in Korean streets, the frequency was not significant. In addition, the colour of green seemed to be preferred and dark green was used as a point color<Fig. 23, 24>.

A relationship between the color and style of the top items were analysed <Table 10>. The color of white and red purple were most popular in a casual style, while red, blue green and purple blue were popular in a feminine style.

<Table 8> Style analysis according to One-piece Dress Silhouettes



<Table 9> The frequency of Top Item Color & Tone





<Fig. 21>  
Red or White T-Shirt



<Fig. 22>  
Red Blouse

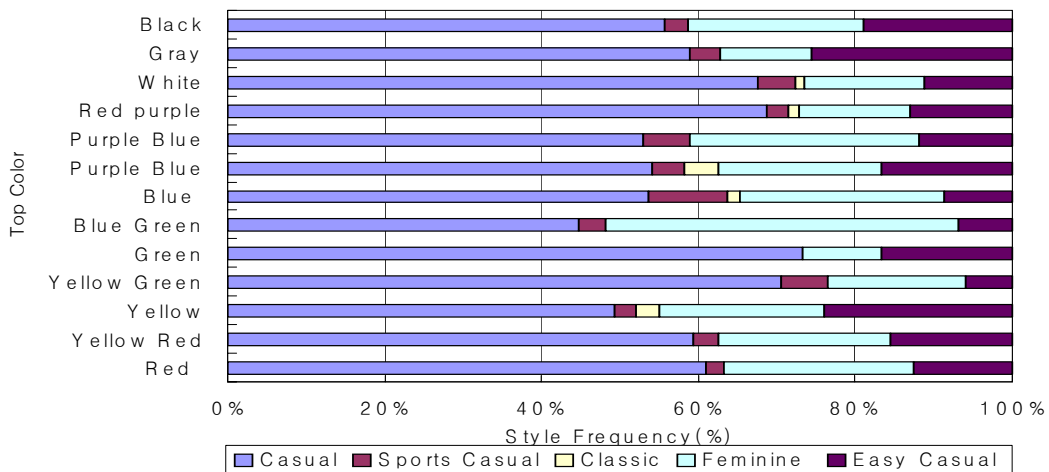


<Fig. 23> Dark Green Sleeveless One-piece Dress



<Fig. 24> yellow green T-Shirt

<Table 10> Style analysis according to Top Color



2) Bottom Color

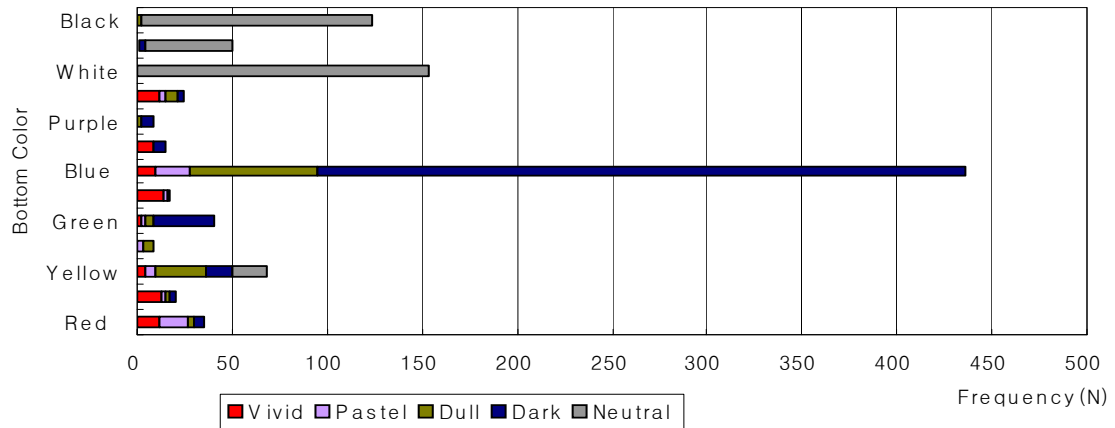
Since denim pants were the most popular item among the bottom items, washing treated indigo blue color was dominant, followed by white and black. Pastel tone of yellow system (beige) also showed fairly high popularity <Table 11>.

In regards to the colors of the bottom items, dark blue long denim pants, cropped denim

pants and mini denim skirts were frequently worn. These items were mostly dressed with T-shirts and jersey blouses, representing a basic casual or easy casual style <Fig. 25, 26, 27>.

A white cotton skirt was matched with orange knit wear which gave a feminine and easy look <Fig. 28>. The beige formal pants with the same color as top also complete a formal style <Fig. 29>.

<Table 11> The frequency of Bottom Item color & Tone



<Fig. 25> Indigo Blue Denim Pants



<Fig. 26> Dark tone Denim Pants



<Fig. 27> Dark tone Denim Pants



<Fig. 28> Orange top & White Skirt



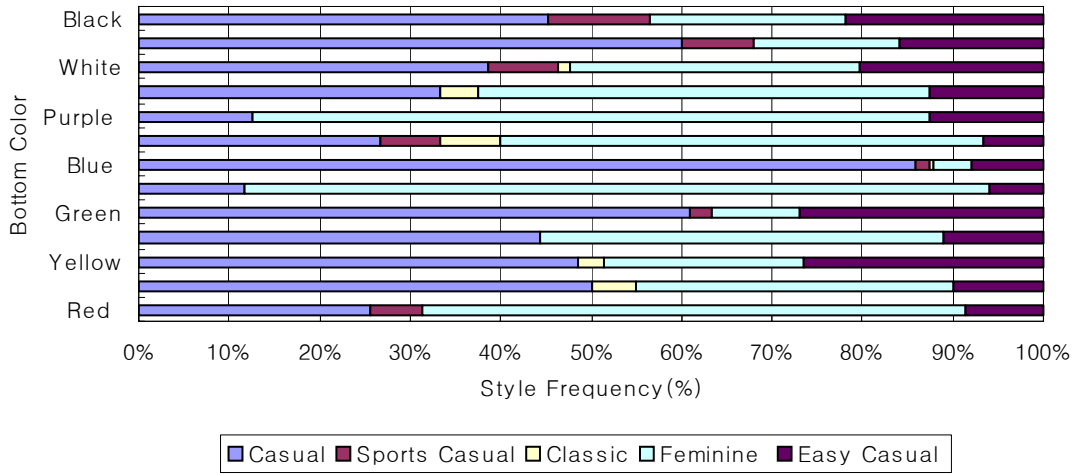
<Fig. 29> Beige Formal Pants

In the relationship between the style and the colour of bottom items, blue, gray, and green were popular in casual style, and purple blue, blue green, purple, and red were popular in feminine style. Furthermore, green and yellow were popular in easy casual style<Table 12>.

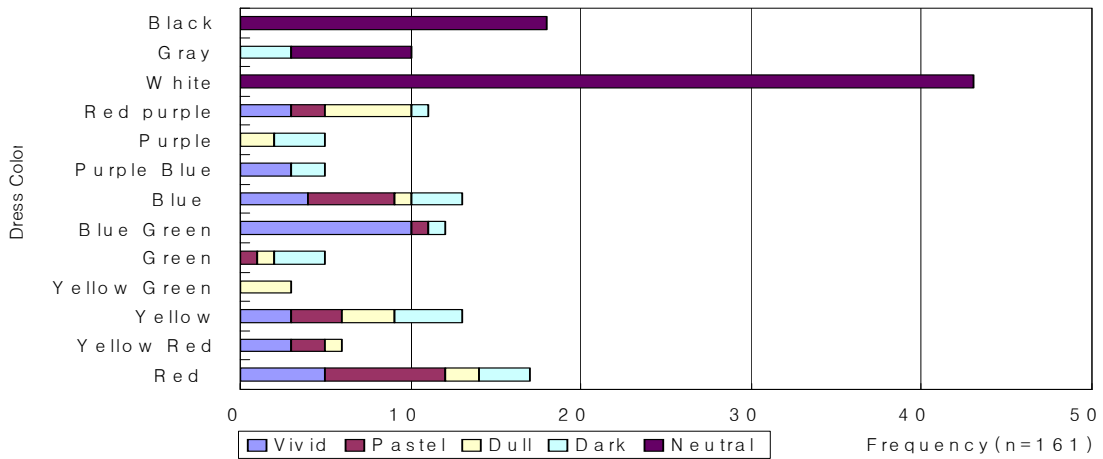
3) One-piece Dress color

In one-piece dresses, neutral colors such as white and black were the most popular of all. Blue green was applied with a vivid tone, while blue and red were applied with a vivid or pastel tone. In general, one-piece dresses were found to be applied with vivid and pastel tones<Table 13>.

<Table 12> Style analysis according to Bottom Color



<Table 13> The frequency of One-piece Dress color & Tone





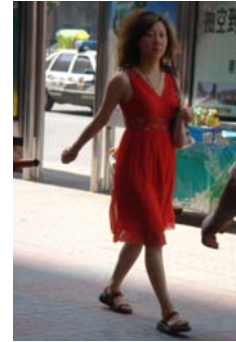
<Fig. 30> Feminine Style Black One-piece Dress



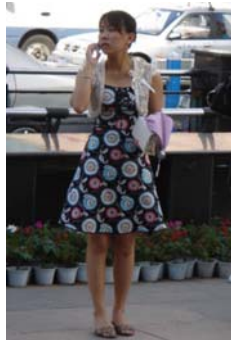
<Fig. 31> White One-piece Dress



<Fig. 32> Simple White One-piece Dress



<Fig. 33> Vivid Red Feminine One-piece Dress



<Fig. 34> Patterned One-piece Dress

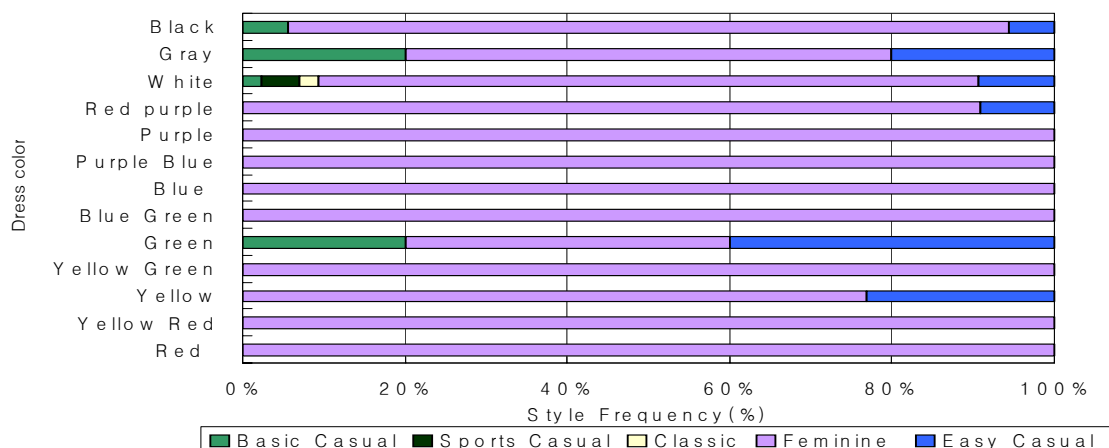
Basically, white, black and red one-piece dresses were popular. The color of Black being

the representation of a feminine style<Fig. 30> and white being used in a pocket or a belt as a point with its focus on simplicity<Fig. 31>. On the other hand, many women chose to wear a very simple white one-piece dress without any decorations<Fig. 32>.

A strong vivid red one-piece dress produced sexiness that came from the color and femininity from X-silhouette at the same time<Fig. 33>. A colourful vivid blue one-pieces with geometric patterns as well as neutral and vivid one-piece dresses were also worn<Fig. 34>.

In the relationship between the color and the

<Table 14> Style analysis according to One-piece Dress Color



style of one-piece dresses, most of the colors represented a feminine style. However, the color of gray and green utilized a casual style, and green, gray, and yellow were used to evoke a easy casual style<Table 14>.

#### IV. Conclusion

The intention of this study is to provide a basic material for establishing fashion design or marketing strategy by analyzing women's street fashion in Shenyang. The city, Shenyang is one of the three major northeastern provinces in China and have been influenced by the access of Korean fashion companies.

The findings were as follows:

In regards to the most popular fashion style, women in Shenyang preferred a simple and basic casual style(61.5%). This basic style was presented with T-shirts, denim pants or denim skirts. For feminine style, a blouse and a knitwear were often dressed with skirts or a one-piece dress.

In investigating the frequency of fashion items, top and bottom were found to be 83.8%, while one-piece dress reached 16.2%, suggesting that the women in Shenyang preferred active style of clothing. Most of the half-length or sleeveless T-shirts or blouses were dressed with full-length denim pants, pants or mini skirts. A X-silhouette or A-silhouette was the common silhouette that women in Shenyang chose for one-piece dress to show feminine outlook. A uniquely remarkable item was mini-length pants or skirts or one-piece dress that was matched with leggings. The frequency of a one-piece dress showed fairly high rate due to seasonal influence in Shenyang.

In regards to the color, neutral colors such as black and white were popular preferred in top

items, when red, red purple, or blue were popular that had vivid or pastel tone. Bottom items were mostly denim type. Thus, washing treated indigo blue showed the high frequency rate as well as white and black. Again, the tone of vivid on white pastel seemed to be preferred among these women due to seasonal influence. Although vivid red color was noticeable, the frequency rate was not remarkable compared to the one in Korea.

Such results utilizes the fact Shenyang women preferred easy, convenient casual style such as T-shirts, denim pants or skirt and feminine style such as one-piece dress. The materials these women favoured was denim with indigo blue, white, black, vivid blue and red.

It is obvious that sports casual brands are advantageous in Shenyang fashion markets since most women in Shenyang not only preferred feminine, casual and slim-look, but also preferred neutral, vivid, pastel tone of the color.

To feminine style brands that are launching into Chinese market, sexy/feminine style is strongly recommended.

The survey was limited within the particular area, Shenyang. Therefore, this result is not general trend in China. However, because of rapidly changing fashion trends and the growth of Chinese fashion market, the results of this study should be an excellent source of information for anyone in the Korean fashion industry trying to access to the Chinese market or to understand the fashion trends of Shenyang. Continued research should be conducted on the fashion trends in China and how these fashion trends are affected by regional and seasonal factors. Further studies should also be analyzed with the lifestyles and consumer trends of women residing in these areas to see if there is a positive effect caused

by the entry of the Korean fashion industry to the Chinese fashion market.

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