

## Comparison of Decision-Making Styles Between American and Korean College Students in Purchasing Sports Products

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### Session 11: Marketing Poster

Thursday, May 31, 2007

4:00 PM - 4:55 PM

Research topics in the area of consumer decision-making styles are becoming more popular in recent years among the ever increasing consumer behavior studies (e.g., Hafstrom, Chae, & Chung, 1992; Lysonski, Durvasula, & Zotos, 1996; Wang, Siu, & Hui, 2004). In fact, there is a need to better understand consumers' decision process and shopping behavior so that advertisers and marketers can employ appropriate strategies in marketing segmentation and product positioning. However, the majority of these studies were aiming at investigating consumer decision-making styles in general products; and there were very few studies devoted to the comparison of shopping behaviors between different cultures. The purpose of this study was to examine and compare the decision-making styles in purchasing sport products between American and Korean college students. The Revised Consumer Styles Inventory (RCSI) included the modified version of the 8-factor Consumer Styles Inventory (Sproles & Kendall, 1986) and the Endorsement factor (Brown & Stayman, 1992; McCracken, 1989) since celebrity endorsement has a strong influence on consumers' buying behavior (Brooks & Harris, 1998; McCracken, 1989). Participants were college students from a university in the southern region of the United States (N=372) and a university in South Korea (N=205). ANOVA analyses revealed that there were significant differences between the American and Korean college students in all nine dimensions of the RCSI.

Overall, the American students had higher mean scores than the Korean students in the following five dimensions: Brand ( $F = 32.66, p < .001$ ), Leisure ( $F = 77.65, p < .001$ ), Impulsiveness ( $F = 21.13, p < .001$ ), Confusion ( $F = 54.88, p < .001$ ), and Endorsement ( $F = 245.76, p < .001$ ). On the contrary, the Korean students had higher mean scores in Quality ( $F = 205.66, p < .001$ ), Fashion ( $F = 158.22, p < .001$ ), Price ( $F = 45.59, p < .001$ ), and Habit ( $F = 21.92, p < .001$ ) than their counterparts. The results indicated that American college students were more willing to pay for name brands (Brand) sport products or sport products that were endorsed by celebrities (Endorsement), even though they were overwhelmed (Confusion) by the wide assortment and varieties. Furthermore, American students enjoyed shopping (Leisure) and usually bought sport products based on impulse (Impulsiveness). In contrast, the Korean college students would like to purchase elegant (Fashion) good quality sport products in an affordable and reasonable price (Price). Moreover, the Korean students were loyal to their favorite brands and would like to shop the same store over and over again (Habit). In conclusion, the RCSI provided an additional dimension (i.e., Endorsement) in assessing decision-making styles among college students. This study broke new ground in examining cultural differences among undergraduates in purchasing sport products and thus provided crucial information for advertisers and marketers in formulating their marketing plans in local and international markets.