

A Study on Personal Adornment Associated with Sexual Orientation and Psychological Characteristics

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The culture of gay people has been understood in social, marketing dimensions, etc. There is the increased tendency that gay people are recognized as important customers. Also gay people have been accepted in the subculture of clothing and textiles, and many have researched their unique personal appearance. It has been argued about homosexuals in several fields such as politics, economy, culture, etc in all over the world. Therefore it is necessary to research the differences between gay people and heterosexuals.

The objectives of this study are to investigate the difference between psychological characteristics, hair style preferences, and the use of cosmetics in accordance to sexual orientation and to test the relationships between psychological characteristics and hair style preferences, and the use of cosmetics.

The method of this study was survey research. The subjects were 536 men (heterosexual: 353, gay: 183) of 20's and 30's living in Seoul and its metropolitan area in Korea.

The data were analyzed by frequency, percentage, t-test, Pearson's correlation coefficient, one-way ANOVA, two-way ANOVA, and Duncan's multiple range test.

The results of the study were the following:

In hair style preferences, there was a significant difference according to sexual orientation and age. Gays liked a short hair style, a bobbed hair style, the tail hair style in front of ears, a bleached and a dyed hair style better than heterosexuals, and 20's a bobbed hair style, the tail hair style in front of ears, a bleached and a dyed hair style more than 30's. As a whole, 20's and 30's men liked a short hair style and general hair style more than the other styles. On the interaction effect according to the sexual orientation and age, gay men in their 30's liked a short hair style more than men in their 20's. And heterosexuals in their 20's disliked a long hair style more than men in their 30's. Gay men in their 30's disliked a long hair style more than men in their 20's. In general the long hair style was disliked by both heterosexuals and gays.

There was a significant difference in the use of cosmetics according to sexual orientation and age. Gays had higher use level of perfume, coloring cosmetics, and

products for hair adornment than heterosexuals. Men in their 20's had higher use level of product for hair adornment than men in their 30s. As a whole, men had high degree of use of milky lotion, skin lotion, hair jell and mousse.

There was a significant difference in hair style preferences according to job. Heterosexual professional men preferred general hair styles. Homosexual service and sales clerks preferred the tail hair style in front of ears. Heterosexual service and sales clerks preferred bleached and dyed hair styles. In general, gay men preferred short hair styles more than straight men. In professional men, heterosexuals liked general hair styles better than did gays. Among service clerks, sales clerks, and students, gays liked the tail hair style in front of ears more than heterosexuals did. And among professional men and students, gays liked bleached and dyed hair styles than heterosexuals did.

There was a significant difference in the use of cosmetics according to job among gays. The service clerks and salesmen group of gays had the highest use level of coloring cosmetics, but office workers had the lowest. Among students, gays used more perfume than heterosexuals. Among professional men and service and sales clerks, gays had a higher use level of a perfume than heterosexuals.

In heterosexuals, the higher ability anxiety and miscellaneous anxieties group liked the tail hair style in front of ears, and had higher use level of coloring cosmetics. The higher level of self-esteem group liked short hair styles, and general hair styles for men, and had higher use level of milky lotion and skin lotion. In gays, the higher level of ability anxiety liked a bobbed hair style, a long hair style, and a tied hair style. The higher level of miscellaneous anxieties group had a higher use level of coloring cosmetics. The higher level of self-esteem group liked short hair style. That is, heterosexual and gay men that had high ability anxiety and miscellaneous anxieties were apt to have higher levels of use of coloring cosmetics, or like unique hair styles.

Over all, gays liked unique characteristic adornments better than heterosexuals. Service clerks, salesmen and students among both heterosexuals and gays enjoyed the most personal adornment, but office workers preferred a conservative looking style. In the same job, there was a significant difference of personal adornment according to sexual orientation among service clerks, salesmen and students. That is, gays had a higher use level of personal adornment than heterosexuals. But in the case of office workers, heterosexuals and gays alike used fewer personal adornments.