

A Comparison of Impulse Buying Behavior and Credit Card Use between Korean and American College Students

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Abstract

Consumer's impulse buying behavior is extensive in everyday contexts. Credit cards promote spending by making the transaction simpler and by removing the immediate need for money. College students grown up in a credit card society attain cards at college's time and keep cards for 10 years over. In an effort to extend understanding of consumer behavior across cultures, this paper examines the cultural differences of impulse buying behavior and credit card use between Korean and American college students, and to investigate the relationships between impulse buying behavior and credit card use in each group. Data were obtained from student credit card users attending universities in metropolitan areas in Korea(N=154) and America(N=194). Data were analyzed using by Confirmatory Factor Analysis, MANOVA, MDA, and Regression. The results indicated there are significant differences of fashion-oriented impulse buying and credit card use between American and Korean college students. The impulse buying behavior is likely to increase for both Korean and American students who use credit cards for spending. Findings suggest that credit card use is important in predicting impulse buying behavior across these two cultures. Implications are drawn for the increasing global phenomenon impulse buying behavior and credit card use.

Key words: Impulse buying behavior, Credit card use, College students, National comparison; 충동 구매행동, 신용카드사용, 대학생, 국가간 비교

I. Introduction

Impulse buying is considered a pervasive and distinctive phenomenon in modern lifestyles and it has received increasing attention from consumer researchers and theorists(Rook, 1987; Rook & Fisher, 1995). Over the last two decades increases in

impulse buying behavior are a consequence of linked economic and social changes in advanced Western economies, including dramatic increases in personal disposable incomes and credit availability. Along with these developments in consumer spending, there are important shifts in the psychological, social and cultural significance of buying consumer goods which may be described by the stereotype of modern consumerism "I shop therefore I am" (Dittmar & Drury, 2000). Marketing

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innovations such as credit cards, cash machines, instant credit, 24-hour retailing, and telemarketing make it easier than ever before for consumers to buy things on impulse (Rook, 1987; Rook & Fisher, 1995). Prior studies on impulse buying frequently focused on the definitional element distinguishing impulse from non-impulse buying (Cobb & Hoyer, 1986; Piron, 1991; Rook, 1987), and provided a theoretical framework for examining impulse buying (Burroughs, 1996; Cha, 2001; Hoch & Loewenstein, 1991; Ko, 1993; Rook & Fisher, 1995; Rook & Gardner, 1993). Some studies attempted to develop and validate scales to measure the impulse buying tendency (Rook & Fisher, 1995; Weun et al., 1998).

Credit cards are seen as a convenient and relatively painless way to spend. Moreover, the use of credit cards lowers the perceived cost and begets further use. For example, consumers need the credit to make particular purchases, or consumers who are price sensitive may recognize the potential dollar savings involved in credit card use (Feinberg, 1986). College students have grown up in a credit card society and use this type of debt freely (Ritzer, 1995). Credit cards are a symbol of this age. Schor (1998) believes that easy credit is one of the causes of overspending. College students may see credit cards as a means of increasing their purchasing power while on a limited income. In addition, it may enable them to participate in activities that peers are engaged in and it may allow students to feel they belong even though they do not have the money to pay for the goods and services (Hayhoe, 2002).

Cross-national effects have been the backbone of international consumer behavior research. Maheswaran and Shavitt (2000) pointed out the importance of understanding the cultural context of consumer behavior in an increasing globalized marketplace. Comparative research not only helps business managers to better understand their foreign target markets, where consumers may differ significantly from their domestic counterparts, but it also may enhance our understanding of our own culture. Evidence of cultural dissimilarities may lead to different strategy implementations. Since impulse buying behavior

may be accelerated by the credit card use (Roberts & Jones, 2001; Kim, 2001a; Kim, 2001b), a need exists to investigate the relationship between impulse buying behavior and credit card use. Moreover, there has been little attempt to determine if national differences influence impulse buying behavior and credit card use.

The purposes of this study were to compare impulse buying behavior and credit card use between Korean and American college students, and to examine the relationship between impulse buying behavior and credit card use for these two nations.

II. Literature Review

1. Impulse Buying Behavior

In the modern marketplace, spontaneous urges to buy and consume often compete with the practical necessity to delay the immediate gratification that purchasing provides. Although impulsive behavior can occur in any setting, consumer's impulse buying behavior is extensive in everyday contexts. Impulse buying behavior can be defined as a sudden, compelling, hedonically complex buying behavior in which the rapidity of an impulse decision process precludes thoughtful, deliberate consideration of all information and choice alternatives (Bayley & Nan-corrow, 1998). Recently, impulse buying is treated as an individual difference variable, which is likely to influence the individual across situations (Rook & Fisher, 1995; Weun et al., 1998). Impulse buying may be explained when consumers buy products for a variety of non-economic reasons or hedonic desires, such as fun, fantasy, and social or emotional gratification. Buying impulsively feels a little freer and a little like doing something naughty, but relatively innocent (Hausman, 2000; Rook, 1987). Beatty and Ferrell (1998) suggested a definition of impulse buying tendency that distinguished between action and urge; the tendencies (1) to experience spontaneous and sudden urges to make on-the-spot purchases and (2) to act on these felt urges with little deliberation or evaluation of consequence.

Researchers suggested several types of impulse buying behavior of apparel products. Han et al. (1991) classified impulse buying behavior of apparel into four types based on Sterns separation: Planned impulse buying, Reminded impulse buying, Fashion-oriented impulse buying and Pure impulse buying. Ko(1993) identified that impulse buying of apparel products can be differentiated from reasonable unplanned buying on emotional preference or objective evaluation rather than rational evaluation. According to these results, unplanned apparel buying may be divided into three types: Reasonable unplanned buying related to objective evaluation and emotional preferences, emotional impulse buying connected with only emotional preferences, and objective impulse buying related to only objective evaluation. Cha(2001) provided, advancing the results of Kos research, that unplanned apparel purchase might be divided into four types by purchase evaluation process: Rational unplanned purchase, Emotional unplanned purchase, General impulse purchase, and Cautious impulse purchase.

The cues that trigger impulse buying can largely be divided into two dimensions: environmental and sensory factors(e.g., advertisements, visual elements, clothing and looks, food, price, promotional gifts, and music) and consumers feeling states(e.g., positive feelings, depressed feelings, feeling fat, and painful feelings). Wansink(1994) suggested that external cues may be specific triggers associated with purchases, involving marketer-controlled environmental and sensory factors, and internal cues may refer to consumers self-feeling, moods, and emotional states. Researchers(Eroglu & Machleit, 1993; Mitchell, 1994) have stated that atmospheric cues in the retail environment(i.e. sights, sounds, and smells) are important triggers that can influence a desire to purchase impulsively. Youn and Faber (2000) also identified high impulsive buyers as more reactive to factors reflecting external triggers, compared to low impulsive buyers. Additionally, marketing mix cues such as point-of-purchase, displays, promotions, and advertisements can affect the desire to buy something on impulse. Credit cards make it

easier than ever before for consumers to buy things on impulse(Rook, 1987; Rook & Fisher, 1995).

2. Credit Card Use

The market share of credit cards in the total dollar volume of consumer payment in the United States increased from 14.5% to 21.4% between 1990 and 1998. Between 1991 and 2000, consumers outstanding revolving credit(a category that includes installment loans as well as credit card debt) grew from \$247 billion to \$610.7 billion(Lee & Kwon, 2002). In Korea, consumers credit card payments, including installment loans, also increased from \$55 billion to \$235 billion between 1998 and 2003(KNFA, 2003). Therefore, 16% of total consumer spending was by credit cards in 1999; but by 2002, it increased to 56%(Anonymous, 2002). Widespread credit card use reflects consumer preferences regarding prearranged lines of credit while technological developments make it much easier for creditors to offer revolving credit(Durkin, 2000).

The college student market is of great interest to credit card marketers because it is felt that brand loyalty is low and long-term relationships are possible (Coulton, 1996; Roberts, 1998). Many students attain cards in their freshman year and thereafter remain loyal customers; many keep their first card for an average of 12 to 15 years(Hultgren, 1998; Warwick & Mansfield, 2000; Son & Hyun, 2003; "Seriousness", 2002). College students are viewed as a lucrative market since they have higher than average expected lifetime earnings and they are entering a major transition period that is a key time to change precious behaviors(Speer, 1998). Additionally, growing consumption through on-line purchases is making these consumers credit savvy. Credit cards are a symbol of this age. Credit cards make it easier than ever before for consumers to buy products and services on impulse(Rook, 1987; Rook & Fisher, 1995).

In America, between 70% and 80% of all college students have at least one credit card and most have an average of three credit cards(Jamba-Joyner et al.,

2000; Hayoe, 2002). In Korea, estimates of credit card ownership among college students, having at least one credit card, range from 30% to a high of 53%(Kim, 2001a; Kim, 2001b; "Possessing", 2001; "Seriousness", 2002). Easy access to credit cards eliminate the immediate need for money to buy something, cause consumers to overspend(Schor, 1998), and likely accelerate the development of impulse buying(Roberts & Jones, 2001). Thus, when compared to cash, credit cards lead to greater imprudence. Consumer researchers suggest that heavy credit card users have been found to be less price conscious(Tokunga, 1993), that credit card possession is related to buying higher priced items(Deshpande & Krishnan, 1980), and credit card possession and use is positively correlated with the anticipation and actualization of further use(Feinberg, 1986). Feinberg(1986) found that when college students were exposed to a credit card logo they were more likely to purchase, decide to purchase quickly, and spent more than students who were exposed to the same products without the presence of a credit card logo. He concluded that students are conditioned to associate credit cards with spending. Roberts and Jones(2001) also supported the facilitating nature of credit cards on consumer spending.

Most studies have examined the effects of demographic and economic variables on credit card use, such as age, income, education, occupation and marital states(Chien & Devaney, 2001; Kim, 2001b; Min, 1999; Xiao et al., 1995), and credit attitude (Davis & Lea, 1995; Hayoe et al., 2000; Hayoe et al., 1999; Kim, 2001a; Xiao et al., 1995). These studies measured whether consumers own or use credit cards or how often they use them or how many credit cards they own. An extant measure of irrational credit card use developed by dAstous(1990) was found to be unreliable in several studies that used college student samples(Roberts & Martinez, 1997; Roberts, 1998). Roberts and Jones(2001) developed the measurement for credit card use of college students through the focus group interview and literature search, and examined the difference between higher credit card users and lower credit card users

on money attitudes and compulsive buying. However, there is little research that considers the dimensions of credit card use for college students.

III. Method

1. Measurements

Questionnaire items were developed from a literature review. The instrument consisted of measurements for impulse buying behavior and credit card use. Demographic characteristics included gender, age, academic ranking, monthly income/allowance and number of credit cards owned. The questionnaire was developed in English and translated into Korean. The English instrument was translated into Korean by a bilingual native speaker and then back translated into English by another bilingual Korean person. The process was repeated until items were deemed conceptually equivalent.

Impulse buying behavior: Twelve items for impulse buying developed by Han et al.(1991) were used. Subjects responded to all items using a 7-point Likert-type scale(range: 1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree). *Credit card use:* For credit card use, Roberts and Jones(2001) twelve-item credit card use scale was used. Each item was measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale(range: 1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree).

2. Sample and Procedure

A relatively more homogeneous sample of undergraduate students is deemed to be desirable for a cross-cultural study(Yoo & Donthu, 2001; Yoo et al., 2000) and also minimizes random error that might occur by using a heterogeneous sample such as the general public(Durvasula et al., 1993). Additionally, college students are accustomed to a credit card society, attain cards generally during college, and keep their cards for 10 years or more(Speer, 1998).

Data were obtained from students enrolled at universities in metropolitan areas in Korea(Seoul, Changwon and Busan) and United States(Dallas,

San Antonio and Huston). Only Korean(N=154) and American(N=194) students who used credit cards were included in this study. The self-administrated questionnaire was given during a scheduled class period(Merchandising, Hotel Management, French, Accounting and Musical Composition etc.). Descriptive statistics for this sample can be found in (Table 1). The Korean and American samples consisted of college students who were female(67.5%, 77.7%) and male(32.5%, 22.3%) respectively, and were primarily 21-24 years of age(58.4%, 53.4%), and had a junior(37.0%, 29.9%) or senior(36.4%, 38.9%) standing. Most respondents had \$201-\$500 monthly income/allowance(35.1%, 53.2%) and either one or

two credit cards(75.3%, 69.9%) or three or four credit cards(16.2%, 22.2%) in the Korean and American sample respectively.

3. Data Analysis

For identifying dimensions of impulse buying behavior and credit card use, we preliminarily conducted exploratory factor analysis. Then, we performed a confirmatory factor analysis(CFA) using LISREL 8(Jöreskog & Sörbom, 2001) on the sample of Korean and American students to assess the measurement properties as recommended by Gerbing and Anderson(1988). The criteria for evaluating the goodness of model fit used the chi-square value and alternative fit indices, such as Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Normed Fit Index(NFI), Comparative Fit Index(CFI) and Root Mean Square Residual(RMR).

In order to determine if the Korean and American students differ with respect to impulse buying behavior and credit card use, multivariate analysis of variance(MANOVA) and univariate analysis were conducted for the variables. It has been demonstrated that using multiple discriminant analysis (MDA) in conjunction with MANOVA helps to determine the direction and intensity of each criterion variables impact on the overall group differences(Ho et al., 1997). For relationships of impulse buying behaviors and credit card use, multiple regression analyses were conducted between the two variables in each group.

IV. Results and Discussions

An exploratory factor analysis using principal component with varimax rotation was conducted to identify underlying constructs of impulse buying behavior and credit card use for Korean and American students. For impulse buying behavior, twelve items had loadings in four factors with eigen values of 1.0 or higher and accounted for 68.8% of the total variance. Ten items for credit card use resulted in three factors eliminating two items due to the same criteria and accounted for 75.0% of the total variance.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents.

	Korean Sample		American Sample	
	n	%	n	%
Gender				
Male	50	32.5	43	22.3
Female	104	67.5	151	77.7
Age				
18-20	6	3.9	73	37.6
21-24	90	58.4	104	53.4
25 and over	58	37.7	17	8.8
Ranking				
Freshman	10	6.5	21	10.8
Sophomore	31	20.1	39	20.1
Junior	57	37.0	58	29.9
Senior	56	36.4	76	38.9
Monthly income/ allowance				
Less than \$200	18	12.4	24	11.7
\$201-\$500	82	35.1	68	53.2
\$1001 and over	25	20.6	40	16.2
Missing	0	0.0	4	2.1
Number of credit cards owned				
1-2	116	75.3	135	69.6
3-4	25	16.2	43	22.2
5 and over	9	5.8	13	6.7
Missing	4	2.6	3	1.5
Total	154	100.0	194	100.0

A completely standardized solution of impulse buying behaviors and credit card use is shown in (Table 2). According to the results of confirmatory factor analysis, most items were highly loaded on their corresponding factors, which supports the independence of the constructs and provided empirical evidence of their validity.

CFA revealed the following fit statistics for *impulse*

buying behavior: $\chi^2_{(48)} = 209.31 (p = .000)$, GFI = .90, NFI = .93, CFI = .95, and RMR of .05. Each item loaded significantly ($p < .001$). All composite reliabilities are moderately acceptable with an equivalent interpretation to Cronbachs alpha. For *credit card use*, the ten items also were subjected to CFA. The fit statistics are as follows: $\chi^2_{(32)} = 140.07 (p = .000)$, GFI = .91, NFI = .93, CFI = .95, and a RMR of .07.

Table 2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Impulse Buying Behavior and Credit Card Use.

Factors and Items	Factor Loading	Composite Reliability
<i>Impulse Buying Behaviors</i>^a		
<i>Planned impulse buying</i>		.61
I decide what to buy while looking around the store.	.83	
I expect to find something I want to buy when I get to the store.	.50	
I decide what to buy only after I look around a store.	.49	
<i>Reminded impulse buying</i>		.78
I buy something if I think I need it, even though I went shopping for other purposes.	.84	
I buy something if it reminds me of an item I want.	.73	
I buy clothing I had looked for before, even though I went shopping for other items.	.64	
<i>Fashion-oriented impulse buying</i>		.87
I buy clothing with a new style if I see it.	.86	
I like to buy new clothing that just came out.	.85	
I buy to try out a garment with a new feature.	.80	
<i>Pure impulse buying</i>		.83
I buy anything I suddenly feel compelled to buy.	.84	
I cant resist buying clothing if I really like it.	.82	
I buy any clothing I like without a lot of thinking.	.71	
<i>Credit Card Use</i>^b		
<i>Debt</i>		.86
I worry how I will pay off my credit card debt.	.89	
I often make only the minimum payment on my credit card bills.	.80	
I use it to the maximum credit limit.	.76	
I use it to make a payment on another credit card.	.67	
<i>Credit</i>		.89
I am seldom delinquent in making payments.	.92	
I rarely go over my available credit limits.	.91	
I always pay it off at the end each month.	.74	
<i>Spending</i>		.90
I am more impulsive in shopping.	.96	
I spend more.	.92	
I am less concerned with the price of a product when I use a credit card.	.73	

^a Responses to "When Purchasing, I..." using a 7-point scale (1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree).

^b Responses to "When I use my credit card (s), ..." using a 7-point scale (1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree).

Each item loaded significantly ($p < .001$), and all composite reliabilities are acceptable.

For impulse buying behavior, the first factor, *Planned Impulse Buying*, represented buying behaviors, such as “to decide what to buy while or after looking around the store”, and “to expect to find something I want to buy”. These behaviors relate to shopping behaviors that have only buying intentions without planning to buy the specific product or brand, and that decide what to buy during or after looking around a store. The second factor, *Reminded Impulse Buying*, included items related to “thinking I need it”, “reminding me of an item I want”, and “looking for before”. These impulse buying behaviors occur when consumers without buying intentions find something they need or want. The third factor, *Fashion-oriented Impulse Buying*, consisted of three items: “clothing with new style”, “new clothing just now”, and “a garment with a new feature”. This type of buying occurs when consumers find the apparel product in a new style, design, or fabric and decides to buy it. The fourth factor, *Pure Impulse Buying*, contained three items characterized by “compelling to buy”, “can't resist buying”, and “without a lot of thinking”. This type of impulse buying is characterized by emotional evaluation without any previous thought or intentions for buying.

Comparing to results of Ko(1993) and Cha(2001)'s researches, Planned impulse buying and Reminded impulse buying are similar to Rational unplanned purchase, Fashion-oriented impulse buying has a similar feature to Emotional impulse purchase, and Pure impulse buying reveal a similarity to General impulse purchase. These findings show that the two types(Planned impulse buying and Reminded impulse buying) are differentiated from the others (Fashion-oriented impulse buying and Pure impulse buying) in that they connect to their needs or wants. These results support findings of Han et al.(1991) identifying dimensions of impulse buying behavior related to apparel products.

For credit card use, the first factor, *Debt*, included four items related to debt or payment: “to worry about how to pay off his/her credit card debt”, “min-

imum payment on bills”, “to use the maximum credit limit”, and “to use a payment on another credit card”. The second factor, *Credit*, represented issues related to maintain the credit, such as “to be seldom delinquent in payments”, “to rarely go over his/her available credit limits”, and “to pay off at the end each month”. The third factor, *Spending*, consisted three items pertaining to consuming(i.e. shopping): “more impulsive in shopping”, “spending more”, and “less concerned with the product price”. *Debt* appears the tendency opposite to *Credit* in relation to payments, while *Spending* is differentiated from other factors in terms of pertaining to consuming.

For comparisons between Korean and American students, the mean values for each group on the impulse buying behavior and credit card use are shown in (Table 3). The MANOVAs that tests for an overall difference between the two groups were significant for impulse buying behavior and for credit card use. Further univariate analysis of variance for impulse buying behavior indicated that only *Fashion-oriented impulse buyings* univariate F was significant; thus, American students are more willing to buy impulsively new style clothing, new feature garment and new clothing that just came out than Korean students. The univariate analysis of variance for credit card use revealed that the two groups were different in use of their credit cards, *Debt*, *Credit*, *Spending*. It implies that American students are more generalized upon credit card use in everyday life than Korean students(Warwick & Mansfield, 2000).

Multiple regression analyses were run to test the relationships between impulse buying behavior and credit card use. <Table 4> displays the predicting power of credit card use for each of the impulse buying types. For Korean students, *Pure impulse buyings* R^2 value was higher than other impulse buying types. This implies that credit card use, especially for spending, can predict the pure impulse buying behavior of Korean students much more than other types. Korean students who tend to use credit cards for *spending* are more likely to buy something reminded for need or want, a new style clothing, and something they suddenly feel compelled to buy. For

Table 3. Comparisons of Impulse Buying Behavior and Credit Card Use between Korean and American Students.

Factors	Canonical Loading	Univariate <i>F</i> value	Group Means ^a	
			Korean (<i>n</i> =154)	American (<i>n</i> =194)
<i>Impulse Buying Behavior</i>				
Planned impulse buying	.28	1.31	5.06	4.92
Reminded impulse buying	.64	2.89	5.05	4.84
Fashion-oriented impulse buying	-1.37	32.10***	3.68	4.61
Pure impulse buying	.44	.23	4.33	4.41
Multivariate <i>F</i> value		19.94***		
Wilks Lambda		.81		
<i>Credit Card use</i>				
Debt	-.10	26.58***	1.96	2.74
Credit	-.99	724.59***	2.54	6.07
Spending	-.17	12.87***	3.27	3.97
Multivariate <i>F</i> value		254.50***		
Wilks Lambda		.31		

^aBased on a 7-point scale from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7).

****p*<.001.

Table 4. Regression Analysis of Credit Card Use on Impulse Buying Behavior for Korean and American Students.

	Korean Students				American Students			
	Debt	Credit	Spending	R ²	Debt	Credit	Spending	R ²
Planned impulse buying	-.01	-.08	.05	.00	-.01	.25***	.33***	.13
Reminded impulse buying	-.06	-.07	.24**	.05	-.00	.20**	.45***	.20
Fashion-oriented impulse buying	.05	.09	.20*	.07	.10	.11	.41***	.19
Pure impulse buying	-.02	.00	.60***	.35	.02	-.01	.44***	.20

p*<.05, *p*<.01, ****p*<.001

American students, the R² value evenly revealed on impulse buying types, comparing to Korean students, reflects the generalization of credit card use for American students. American students with a greater level of credit card use for *credit* and *spending* are more likely to decide what to buy while looking around the store, and to buy something reminded for need or want. American students with more using credit cards for *spending* are more likely to buy clothing with a new style, and something compelled to buy.

V. Conclusions and Implications

This study suggests the four types of impulse buy-

ing behavior(Planned impulse buying, Reminded impulse buying, Fashion-oriented impulse buying and Pure impulse buying) and the three dimensions of credit card use(Debt, Credit and Spending) for Korean and American college students. It reveals the national similarities in Planned impulse buying, Reminded impulse buying and Pure impulse buying behaviors and differences in Fashion-oriented impulse buying behavior and total credit card use between Korean and American college students. Additionally, Korean students with a greater level of credit card use for spending are more likely to impulsively buy the apparel products of new style or new feature and to purchase something compelled to buy, while American students with tendency of

credit card use for credit and spending are more likely to decide what to buy while looking around the store, and to buy something reminded for need or want. Moreover, American students using credit cards for only spending buy not only new style apparels but also apparels compelled to buy. These results may be caused by the difference of retail environment in two nations. For example, credit card use in stores and consumer attitudes toward credit in Korea are less generalized than in the U.S. Discretionary and disposable incomes in Korea are lower compared to the U.S. Furthermore, American students are much more likely to routinely use credit cards for essential purchases, such as rent, food, gas, car insurance, tuition and books (Warwick & Mansfield, 2000), while Korean students may use credit cards mostly for luxury or semiluxury items, such as apparels, imported brands (e.g., bag, shoes, cosmetics), rather than groceries or other necessities, and for entertainment expenses (Son & Hyun, 2003; "Seriousness", 2002; "Possession", 2001). These differences in credit card use may explain the difference in relationships between impulse buying behavior and credit card use for each group.

Therefore, retailers and managers related to college apparel markets for two nations may provide their customers with the products to stimulate and to remind their needs and wants, and promote the atmosphere to encourage customers purchases. Since American students are more likely to exhibit fashion-oriented impulse buying behavior, retailers could provide special events (e.g. fashion shows, brochures) and exhibits. Credit card marketers for college students of two nations should increase their efforts to educate students on the proper use of credit cards before credit card use becomes a way of life; they should be especially educated in relation to financial advice in reaction to perceived or actual credit problems, maintenance of credit, and overspending by credit card use. The results of our study, extending the realm of study focusing on national differences in impulse buying behavior and credit card use, could provide some useful information for researchers and consumer products and service com-

panies related to impulse buying and credit card use in parts of the world where credit card use by college students is not yet as widespread as in the U.S.

Future research efforts should attempt to improve on results of this study. First, more representative samples are needed. Geographic locations other than metropolitan areas and comparisons among other nations excluding or including Korea and the U.S. should be considered to replicate the findings of the study. Second, impulse buying behavior may well stem from several different causes that include consumers inner states, as well as specific short-term states and environmental stimuli. The effects of the underlying personality characteristics and specific stimuli that trigger specific episodes of impulse buying seemed both logical and useful, and is deserving of further study. Third, they may be occurred inconsistency between attitude and behavior for impulse buying behavior and credit card use. In addition, since ownership rate of credit card differ between Korean and American students, future studies should be considered these effects. Fourth, since the relationship between impulse buying behavior and credit card use is identified, a further analysis should investigate the mediated variables between impulse buying behavior and credit card use, such as external cues (e.g. promotion, displays and sounds), moods, emotional states (e.g. positive and negative affect), consumers characteristics (e.g. shopping enjoyment and shopping behaviors or patterns), and situational variables (e.g. time pressure and amount of money). Fifth, since impulse buying behaviors may differ by product classification (e.g. suits, t-shirts, underwear etc.), it is suggested that further investigations examine impulse buying behavior related to a specific product and consumer group. Methodological variations will enhance our understanding of impulse buying phenomena and credit card use. Impulse buying is psychologically complex and often associated with sensitive emotional states. It may prove useful to employ projective techniques in tandem with more common interview or experimental designs and field survey. Finally, the increase in personal bankruptcies and debt among college students sug-

gest that they may not understand the cost of using a credit card or choose to ignore it. Research is needed that investigates the relationship between credit knowledge and credit use and compares it among other nations.

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요 약

현대 소비자들의 충동구매행동은 보편적이고도 뚜렷한 현상으로 소비자행동 연구가들에 의해 계속적인 관심을 받고 있다. 더욱이 신용카드와 같은 마케팅 혁신은 소비자들로 하여금 현금의 필요성을 없애 주고 거래를 간편하게 해 줌으로써 전보다 더 쉽게 충동적인 구매를 할 수 있도록 자극하고 있다. 본 연구에서는 한국과 미국 대학생들의 충동구매행동과 신용카드사용 사이의 관계를 알아보기 위하여, 한국(N=154)과 미국(N=194) 대학생 중 신용카드 사용자들을 대상으로 자료를 수집하였고 확인적 요인분석(CFA), 다변량 분석(MANOVA), 다판별분석(MDA), 회귀분석을 실시하여 자료를 분석하였다. 분석결과, 한국대학생과 미국대학생들은 충동구매행동 중 계획된 충동구매(Planned impulse buying), 상기된 충동구매(Reminded impulse buying), 순수충동구매(Pure impulse buying)에서 유사한 행동을 보였으나, 패션지향적인 충동구매행동(Fashion-oriented impulse buying)은 미국대학생이 한국대학생보다 더 많이 하였다. 신용카드사용이 일반화되어 있는 미국의 대학생들이 한국대학생보다 카드 빚 관련(Debt), 크레딧(Credit) 관련, 소비(Spending)를 위한 신용카드사용을 더 많이 하는 경향이 있었다. 충동구매행동과 신용카드사용의 관계에서 한국대학생의 경우 쇼핑 등 소비를 위한 신용카드사용 경향이 많은 사람일수록 상기된 충동구매, 패션지향적인 충동구매, 순수충동구매행동을 많이 하였다. 미국대학생들의 경우 크레딧에 신경을 쓰고 소비를 위해 신용카드를 사용하는 경향이 있는 사람일수록 구매의도만 가지고 점포를 둘러보다가 충동적으로 구매결정을 하고 구매의도가 없었어도 제품을 보는 순간 필요에 의해 충동적으로 구매를 하기도 하였으며, 신용카드를 소비에만 사용하는 경향이 있는 사람은 패션지향적이거나 순수한 충동에 의한 구매행동을 하는 것으로 나타났다. 본 연구는 한국과 미국의 국가간 비교연구로 대학생들의 충동구매행동과 신용카드사용에서 국가간 유사성과 차이가 있음을 밝혀줌으로써 국내외 마케터들에게 유용한 정보를 제공해 준다.