



Confucianism norms in the establishment of the miniskirt policy in South Korea in 1973

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ABSTRACT

After the Korean War ended in 1953, Western culture rooted in the United States dominated South Korean society. This study analyses the influence of Confucianism norms on the miniskirt policy in South Korea in 1973. The Miniskirt policy is one of the policies contained in the Minor Offences Act or *Gyeongbeomjoecheobeolbeop* which was passed in 1973. In this law, one of the violations is overexposure, which refers to women wearing miniskirts. At that time, the police usually carried a ruler on patrol and often stopped women who wore skirts to measure the length. If the skirt worn has a hemline of 17 cm above the knee, the woman will be penalized. This policy was made because the view of the miniskirt does not fit the norms and traditions of the Korean women clothing, which creates controversy. Therefore, the research question in this study is how Confucianism norms justify the miniskirt policy for Korean women. This study uses a descriptive analysis method with the help of literature study. This study aims to explain Confucianism norms as the influence of the establishment of the South Korean miniskirt policy in 1973. The results show that the establishment of the miniskirt policy in 1973 was triggered by Confucianism norms, especially dress etiquette for Korean women which were regulated by Confucian officials. This norm was re-emphasized during the Park Chung-hee era through this policy, where Confucianism was a value that was applied to his government to strengthen the identity of the Korean nation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

After the end of the Korean War in 1953, Western culture originating from the United States dominated South Korean society. Western culture entered through modernization in the forms of movies, magazines, culture and fashion (as explained by National History Compilation Committee Jo in the book entitled Korean Cultural History 3 in 2011). These things brought various impacts to South Korean society and became the starting point for people to be aware of Western culture. Thus, the lifestyle of the South Korean people began to change slowly. Western culture is seen as something foreign and very contrary to traditional South Korean culture and has resulted in the erosion of traditional Korean culture. This Western culture influenced South Korean society, from popular culture to how they dress.

The arrival of Western culture had a significant influence on the lives of South Korean people amid the developments towards modernization. This influence created acculturation, in which an understanding of a phenomenon occurred when a group of individuals with different cultures comes in and makes direct, continuous contact, causing changes in the original culture of one of the two groups (Kim, et al, 2003). Western culture originating from the United States came to South Korea, settled, and established significance in society. One of these influences can be seen in the development of Christianity, and health in Korean society (Kim & Wolpin, 2008; Lee, Sobal, & Frongillo, 2000)

Economic growths combined with international media and growing opportunities to travel abroad led to an influx of Western culture and a rapid rate of women learning and adopting Western fashion (as explained by Kim in the book entitled Comparison of the fashion adopted by young women in the United States and South Korea in the 1970 in 2002). In the 1950s, mass media began to circulate widely in South Korea, such as magazines and films from the United States. South Korean society is exposed to the lifestyle of celebrities in the United States through these magazines and movies. Singers who worked at the United States army station in South Korea also had a role in this. Moreover, women who got the opportunity to study abroad return home with Western influences in how they dress (Oh & Choi, 2017). In the eyes of South Korean women, this exposure creates a perception of new forms of clothing that were previously foreign to them.

Western-style clothing was widely adopted in the 1950s, marked by the first fashion show held in 1956 by Nora Noh, the first fashion designer in South Korea. Gradually, society adopted Western-style fashion until, in the 1970s, women in South Korea were more likely to wear clothes similar to Western culture. The characteristics of women's fashion in 1970s South Korea were very diverse, ranging from bell-bottoms to various skirts with different silhouettes and lengths, such as midi skirts, maxi skirts, and the famous miniskirts (Lee & Lee, 2015). According to explained by Merriam-Webster in the website entitled Miniskirt in n.d. (Merriam-Webster <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/miniskirt>), miniskirt is a short skirt worn by women with a hemline a few inches above the knee. Due to the short hemline, miniskirts tend to show women's legs and give the effect of long legs. Miniskirts are a form of clothing still widely used by the public even in the modern era.

Miniskirts began to be known and popular among the people of South Korea, especially female students and young professional women. It started with the famous singer Yoon Bok-hee who came home from the United States wearing a miniskirt in 1967 (Park & Thanommongkol, 2020). Female students and young professional women imitated the miniskirt fashion trend and, symbolically, it is stated that miniskirt is a form of female self-expression (Park, 2019). In

addition, miniskirts also symbolize freedom and resistance to the older generation (Kim & Kim, 2012 in Park & Thanommongkol, 2020). However, society cannot accept this because the miniskirt that comes from Western culture is very contrast to the traditional Korean women's clothing tradition (as explained by Kim in the book entitled Comparison of the fashion adopted by young women in the United States and South Korea in the 1970 in 2002). The popularity of miniskirts is contrary to Korean women's clothing norms and traditions, causing controversy among the society. The norms and traditions refer to the long-standing Confucianism teachings for South Korean society. Of course, the teachings of this thought and belief are not easily shaken because they have existed and prospered for a long time. Therefore, the government finally intervened, judging miniskirts as an inappropriate form of clothing and officially banning them through the Minor Crimes Act or *Gyeongbeomjoecheobeolbeop* in 1973 (Park & Thanommongkol, 2020).

This study was conducted to show how strong the Confucianism teachings influences back in the 1970s amongst the society, especially on social matters. The author tried to highlight the Confucianism teachings influences with a different approach and limiting the width of the study focusing on women and their clothing choice. Among the various clothing items that were on-trend in the 1970s, the author chose miniskirt, because that clothing item piqued the interest of South Korean women the most. The author also focused on society's responses towards miniskirt as a representative of society's views, while that responses also contributed to the establishment of the Minor Crimes Act 1973 for miniskirt. This study helps to acknowledge the importance of the long-standing teachings for society and their influence are essential factors for policy formation in South Korea in 1970s using a different perspective, which is women's clothing item, namely miniskirt as the study main focus.

Based on the description above, this research aims to explore how Confucianism norms justify the miniskirt policy for Korean women. Through such research question, this study aims to explain Confucianism norms as the influence of the establishment of the miniskirt policy in South Korea in 1973. This study uses the descriptive analysis research method to dig deeper into the topic using photos, posters, newspapers circulating in print media, videos, and archives for analysis. For research data, interpretation will be carried out through literature research using books, journals, articles from the internet, and others, as research support.

1.1 Fashion Phenomenon in Korea

Scientific discussions related to political, economic, social, and cultural phenomena in the 1970s have attracted the attention of many researchers, both Korean and foreigners. Korean women fashion phenomenon in the 1970s has attracted a number of Korean scholars to conduct the researches regarding this topic. The first literature review is from Kim (2003) regarding the Confucian view of the female body in the life of the consumptive South Korean society. This study explains how Confucianism, especially in the discipline and perception of the female body in the consumptive South Korean society, plays a major role by analyzing Confucian techniques and governance from the past and present.

Lee and Lee (2015) discusses the self-image and fashion of Korean women in the 1970s through socio-cultural aspects. This study describes the self-image of Korean women in the 1970s, which is divided into two aspects. In addition, this study describes the various types of clothing worn by Korean women in the 1970s and analyzes the meaning behind the clothing. Oh and Choi (2017) discusses the impact of American fashion on Korean fashion in the 20th

century. This study explains the great impact of American fashion on South Korean fashion due to various aspects such as the arrival of American missionaries, increased learning opportunities, media displaying fashion icons, and others. This results in similarities in the fashion between the two countries.

Lastly, research on fashion, unisex, and gender in politics in Korean fashion in the 1970-1980s by [Park and Thanommongkol \(2020\)](#). This study discusses the impact of the feminist movement, culture, and women's desires that influenced changes in Korean women's fashion in the 1970-1980 by analyzing the images and narratives of unisex clothing in print media. In contrast to previous studies mentioned, the author analyzed Confucianism norms in the miniskirt policy in 1973, caused by the popularity of the mini skirt in Korea. The author focused on how the miniskirt emerged and its popularity among young South Korean women to the establishment of the miniskirt policy in 1973, and society's responses to the miniskirt and Confucianism norms that control the way women dress.

2. METHOD

This article applies the theory of political culture. The political culture of each nation will be different, and the political culture of a society in a nation will differ from one generation to another. This article focuses on the political culture that developed in Korea during the 1970s government. According to explained by [Almond & Verba](#) in the book entitled *The Civic Culture-Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* in 1989, there are three types of political culture, namely: Political Culture for Parochial-Subject or called The Parochial Subject Culture, Political Culture on Participant Subjects or called The Subject-Participant Culture, Culture on Participant Parochial Politics or called The Parochial Participant Culture. According to Gabriel Almond, the third type of political culture, namely Parochial Participant Culture, is widely found in developing countries that are carrying out a political development. The 1970s period is widely known as the era of development in Korea, both politically and economically.

There are many articles dealing with the 1970s period in Korea, and generally speaking, they are about economic development. Different from the point of view of other articles, this article emphasizes the aspects of political culture in Korea in 1970 which focuses on the miniskirt phenomenon. The research method applied in this article is the descriptive analysis based on data sourced from various reference sources. The research method applied in this article is the descriptive analysis based on data sourced from various reference sources. The reference sources used are not only journal articles and books, but also archive sources accessed online from the Korean National Archive. The archive in question is an archive of miniskirt policies. In the process of interpreting the data source in the form of archives, the author translates the important parts related to the topic of this article.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Western Culture in the Fashion of Young South Korean Women in the 1970s

The Korean War between South Korea and North Korea ended in 1953. The end of this dispute certainly opened the door for new changes in South Korea. The significant change that most affected the life of South Korean people was the modernization that succeeded in shaping South Korea into the country we know today. Modernization also brings a new culture, that is, Western culture. Western culture, a culture originating from the United States, began to enter the lives of South Korean people at the end of the 19th century and began to spread widely after the Korean

War in 1950. This culture spreads very easily because the United States was one of the countries that helped South Korea during the Korean War. The modernization of South Korea was channelled through various things, as Park (2019) said that this period is marked by the advent of mass media, media commercialization, and the dissemination of contemporary items. It can be concluded that the mass media, such as television and magazines, played a major role in helping fuel the modernization of South Korea. Through the process of modernization in the 1960s, Western culture that is based on capitalism and commercialism has entered and created acculturation which ultimately dominates the society and affects the lifestyle of South Korean people (Yim, 2002).

The influx of Western culture started from imitation, which created a trend that was in line with the materialism of the United States capitalist social system and developed a consumer culture of economic structure (Choi, 2009 in Lee & Lee, 2015; Lim, 1972). The entry of various western cultures into South Korea, such as films, magazines, fashion, to lifestyle, pushed young South Koreans to imitate this lifestyle. This aspiration to imitate is caused by the increasing consumption patterns, access to popular media, and popular culture as explained by Kim in the book entitled *The Race to Appropriate "Koreanness": National Restoration, Internal Development, and Traces of Popular Culture* in 2018. They imitated hippie style, spent time in dance clubs and listened to pop, rock, and folk music. Another prime example is young women imitating Western culture in terms of fashion, where this had a major significance that triggered a change in South Korean women's fashion. These new cultures that the young South Koreans learned were exciting for them, but not to the government who had a different view. The government saw various western cultures as a threat to society. There is an opinion by Rhee in the book entitled *South Korean Popular Folk Music: The genre that defined 1970s youth culture* in 2020 which argue that the government criminalized fashion (such as blue jeans, miniskirts, and men's long hair), recreational activities (such as marijuana smoking), and music (such as folk and rock), portraying them as signs of moral and cultural degradation among youth.

That fashion is a mechanism for social individuals and social groups to change by adjusting in an orderly and integrated manner. This mechanism enables and assists collective adjustment to or in a rapidly moving world. Of course, Western culture that influences the style of dress of young South Korean women can trigger changes in society and affect its culture. Korean traditional clothing, namely Hanbok, which was originally an item of clothing commonly worn by young women, is no longer widely used for daily activities (as explained by Kim in the book entitled *Comparison of the fashion adopted by young women in the United States and South Korea in the 1970* in 2002). As mentioned above, they choose clothes that are more practical and popular, imitating what they consume through mass media. These changes occurred very quickly, over time. In the end, Western-style clothing became widely available, and the use of traditional clothing for daily activities slowly disappeared and was only used to celebrate important days (as explained by Kim in the book entitled *Comparison of the fashion adopted by young women in the United States and South Korea in the 1970* in 2002).

The fashion changes of young South Korean women from traditional clothing at that time were very diverse. Park (2019) stated that miniskirts, jeans, pantaloons, and hot pants were also popular among the younger generation in Korea from the late 1960s to the early 1970s, as part of the global fashion movement. According to (as explained by Kim in the book entitled *Comparison of the fashion adopted by young women in the United States and South Korea in the 1970* in 2002), wearing pants increased dramatically among young South Korean women,

replacing skirts for some. Pants, such as jeans, are trendy, especially bell-bottoms, which are often called pantaloons. These pants are usually combined with shirts or jackets, creating a sporty impression. Then, clothes commonly used by men such as pantsuits are also widely used. Young women usually wear a padded blazer with a shirt and tie to create a professional look. Young South Korean women still wear skirts, blouses, and dresses, but with different silhouettes. Mini-cut clothing, such as shorts and miniskirts, are also popular (as explained by Kim in the book entitled *Comparison of the fashion adopted by young women in the United States and South Korea in the 1970* in 2002). However, miniskirts attracted many attentions compared to shorts and were the most prominent trend in which young South Korean women were interested (Park, 2019).

Young women were imitating popular fashion trends due to increasing consumption patterns. However, there are also specific reasons why women choose to wear the clothes described above. The reason is to express one's identity. If examined further, there are social symbols in the emergence of a new variety of clothing, especially the very popular and controversial miniskirt (Park, 2019). (Kim 2014 in Park, 2019) stated that in a patriarchal, male-centered society, this is a manifestation of women's readiness to disclose themselves and engage more actively in society. Knowing its patriarchal system, South Korean society creates particular expectations and views on women. Through their clothes, women want to be recognized and participate more in society. In addition, the symbol of freedom and resistance to the older generation who grew up during the Japanese colonial era was also one of the reasons, as stated by Park and Thanommongkol (2020). Leaving the past through a change of dress can be counted as a contribution to the attainment of freedom. All of this is the result of the influence of the feminist movement, higher education and the younger generation's desire for gender equality and social participation (Park & Thanommongkol, 2020).

3.2 Society and Government Responses to the Young South Korean Women's Fashion Phenomenon in the 1970s

As mentioned above, the desire for freedom is the main factor that drives women to imitate and wear Western-style clothing, especially miniskirts. Young South Korean women try to challenge tradition by wearing these clothes (as explained by Kim in the book entitled *Comparison of the fashion adopted by young women in the United States and South Korea in the 1970* in 2002). However, the desire for freedom through clothing is not accepted by all levels of society, as seen from the society's responses and the government. Clothing such as miniskirts, has shocked South Korean society, especially conservative people because miniskirts are very contrary to the dress norms they know (Park & Thanommongkol, 2020). Controversy arose, and the society questioned whether that kind of clothing was suitable for young South Korean women. Various responses were expressed by the society openly, showing their disapproval of the new fashion worn by young South Korean women.

Miniskirt began to flourish in the 1960s, since the return of Yoon Bok-hee, a famous South Korean artist at that time. Yoon Bok-hee, who came home from the United States in 1967, got off the plane wearing a miniskirt and shocked the public as explained by MSG in the website entitled *[Talking about the old days] 60's Miniskirt Landing, Wear it and you would be Treated as a Nation Traitor* in 2020 (Youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0crNLRg-V6c&list=LL&index=8>). From an advertisement that reconstructed society's reaction at that time, it is stated that the clothes worn were not the clothes as it should be as explained by MSG in the website entitled *[Talking about the old days] 60's Miniskirt Landing, Wear it and you would*

be Treated as a Nation Traitor in 2020 (Youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0crNLRg-V6c&list=LL&index=8>). Not only that, Yoon Bok-hee's older brother, Yoon Hang-gi, expressed his opinion in an interview regarding Yoon Bok-hee's return. Yoon Hang-gi said, "Since we haven't seen each other in years, my little sister ran over with joy saying "Brother!". But when I saw her running, she was wearing a fur coat on the outside, but on the inside, I felt like I saw her running in only her underwear (referring to mini skirt). So of course I was surprised." public as explained by MSG in the website entitled *[Talking about the old days] 60's Miniskirt Landing, Wear it and you would be Treated as a Nation Traitor in 2020* (Youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0crNLRg-V6c&list=LL&index=8>). Yoon Bok-hee herself also has a story about the public's reaction to her clothes. In *Hangukbaengnyeon urinun ireoke saratda* by MBC, he said, "I was walking and there was a construction pit in front of me. A man suddenly fell into it while walking because he was staring at me." public as explained by MSG in the website entitled *[Talking about the old days] 60's Miniskirt Landing, Wear it and you would be Treated as a Nation Traitor in 2020* (Youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0crNLRg-V6c&list=LL&index=8>).

Lee and Lee (2015) compiled another reaction from *Chosun Ilbo* on seeing young women wearing miniskirts. It was said that miniskirts, which shortened as time went on, became targets for offense. At 3 pm, on August 26, 1969, a group of children and residents followed Cho Mi-Hye (23), a woman who was walking along in downtown Jeju wearing a miniskirt as short as 30 centimeters above her knees. This disrupted traffic, and Cho was eventually detained for 25 days (Lee & Lee, 2015). This reaction means that people are not used to such clothes. There is also a statement from the 1969 editorial magazine, in the *Our History* poster series, entitled *[miniseukeoteu dansok] miniseukeoteu, geuttaen jeongmal aseuraseulhaetji* in 2016 uploaded by *The JoongAng*. The poster included a statement such as, "Short skirts and sleeveless shirts are indeed an enchanting sight, but for whom are women spreading charm and dressing like that?" (as explained by *The JoongAng* in the website entitled *[Miniskirt Crackdown] Miniskirt, It Was So Close Back Then in 2016* (<https://www.joongang.co.kr/article/20906253#home>)). From this sentence, the sentiment of young South Korean women's clothing began to emerge along with the increasing popularity of Western-style clothing.

Similar to the society, the government also showed disapproval of Western-style clothing. The government's form of disapproval was channeled through the establishment of the policy on the clothing of young South Korean women at that time. In this context, the popularity of miniskirts and the rise of young women who use them caused the government to determine the minimum length size of the skirts used by women. This policy is contained in the Minor Crimes Act, passed on February 8, 1973, and announced through the newspapers one day before the policy took effect (Park & Thanommongkol, 2020). This policy in the Minor Crimes Act were approved by Kim Hyeon-ok, a Minister from the Ministry of Home Affairs, under President Park Chung-hee. The Minor Crimes Act is not a new law, but due to young people's increasing consumption of Western culture, the government felt that adjustments had to be made.

The adjustment was channeled through Article I Paragraph 44 of the Minor Crimes Act 1973, which is "A person who gives discomfort to others by wearing revealing clothes that show off an excessively intimate body in a public place" as explained by *National Archives of Korea No. EA0012046* in the website entitled *Minor Offences Act Brokerage Act in 1973* (<http://theme.archives.go.kr/viewer/common/archWebViewer.do?singleData=Y&archiveEventId=0049286758>). This policy refers to women who wear revealing clothing such as miniskirts. At

that time, the police on duty would bring a ruler to measure the length of the skirt. The prohibited type of skirt is a skirt that is 17 centimeters above the knee (Park & Thanommongkol, 2020). If a woman wears a skirt that does not comply with the policy, she will be taken to the police station for a follow-up. Although this policy is not in line with the original intention of the miniskirts usage by South Korean women, which is freedom, there is a reason for the establishment of this policy, as stated in the law. The reason is that this policy acts as a contribution to the elimination of decadent trends and deviations for the sake of establishing a good social order (as explained by National Archives of Korea (No. EA0012046) in the website entitled *Minor Offences Act Brokerage Act in 1973* (<http://theme.archives.go.kr/viewer/common/archWebViewer.do?singleData=Y&archiveEventId=0049286758>). The meaning of decadent trends and deviations was revealing clothing that was popular at the time, which was considered a threat to the feminine image of South Korean women (Park & Thanommongkol, 2020). Meanwhile, a good social order refers to the social order that was expected and wanted to be established by the government at that time.

As stated in the law, this new policy takes effect 30 days after the ratification. However, because this policy was announced one day before it came into effect, violations occurred everywhere on the first day it came into effect on March 10, 1973. The women have not improved their habit of wearing miniskirts (as explained by The JoongAng in the website entitled *[Miniskirt Crackdown] Miniskirt, It Was So Close Back Then* in 2016 (<https://www.joongang.co.kr/article/20906253#home>). Compiled from *DongA Ilbo* on March 10, 1973, in the *Our History* poster series by The JoongAng in 2016, a woman named Kang (23) who was delivering coffee orders at a cafe in Myeong-dong was arrested for wearing a very short skirt. The police are trying to explain the recently passed policy to Kang. However, Kang could not throw away the skirt she was wearing because she specifically custom-tailored the skirt, and she did not have the money to buy new clothes (as explained by The JoongAng in the website entitled *[Miniskirt Crackdown] Miniskirt, It Was So Close Back Then* in 2016 (<https://www.joongang.co.kr/article/20906253#home>).

There is also a satirical comic criticizing miniskirts published after the Minor Crimes Act was passed. This comic is usually published in *DongA Ilbo* with the title *Gobauyeonggam*. The satirical comic *Gobauyeonggam* that alluded miniskirt was published on February 9, 1973, exactly one day after the Minor Crimes Act was passed (as explained by National History Compilation Committee Jo in the book entitled *Korean Cultural History 3* in 2011). In the comic strip, a woman reports to the police because there is a policeman who keeps looking down at her skirt. However, the policeman defended that he was given the task of arresting the woman whose underwear was visible. Therefore, he tried to determine whether her underwear was visible or not. From this satirical comic, the visible underwear refers to the short miniskirt, as if the underwear is visible. The police in this comic strip represent the society's view of the controversial miniskirt, and the length of the miniskirt will continue to be questioned.

Through the various responses and opinions of the society described above, it can be said that people who are still conservative and have not opened themselves to changes disagree with a series of clothing for young South Korean women, especially miniskirts. This is because Western culture is contrary to traditions that have long been embraced by society, as explained by Kim in the book entitled *Comparison of the fashion adopted by young women in the United States and South Korea in the 1970* in 2002 stated, and it can cause dislike for the United States. In general, as quoted from Park (2009), non-Americans do not like the United States because of its

imperialism, military, and materialism. As previously explained, the influence of Western culture brought United States materialism in South Korea and developed a consumer culture among young people. This can be a reference for why some of the South Korean society do not agree with the Western culture because this culture triggers an increase in consumption patterns and materialism. This disagreement can be considered one of the beginnings of the anti-American movement in South Korean society at that time.

Anti-Americanism is a form of reaction to Americanization (Park, 2009). In South Korea in the 1970s, this anti-Americanism was a society reaction to the influx of Western culture. In the transition to the modern era, anti-Americanism began to spread in South Korea as explained by Mitchell in the book entitled *Strategy and Sentiment: South Korean Views of the United States and the US-ROK Alliance* in 2004 (<https://www.csis.org/analysis/strategy-and-sentiment-south-korean-views-united-states-and-us-rok-alliance>). Indeed, in the 1970s, the anti-American movement had not yet emerged publicly (Kim, 1994; Lee, 2004 in Park, 2009). The society has not openly shown their dislike of the United States. However, the society's responses to the mini skirt explained above is the beginning of their dislike towards the United States, which slowly turns into anti-Americanism. People are still in the phase of questioning and arguing about the new fashion for young South Korean women's clothing, mainly because these clothes have a relationship with the materialist lifestyle. Nevertheless, again, people do not want South Korean norms and traditions to change because of the influence of Western culture, which is contrary to the teachings they have known.

3.3 Confucianism Norms in the Establishment of the Miniskirt Policy in South Korea in 1973

A significant factor on why society and the government do not want Western cultural influences, such as miniskirts, to take over the society is their reluctance to change towards the South Korean norms and traditions, knowing that Western culture is not in accordance with the teachings that they know. This teaching refers to Confucianism, which people in Korea have long embraced. Confucianism is an ideology that dates back to the Joseon dynasty and has influenced and become a pillar for Korean society. This ideology continues to grow by managing various aspects of life embraced by all levels of society and teaching various values implemented in life. Some of the things taught by Confucianism and considered necessary are about virtue, harmony to loyalty (Yim, 2002). From Confucianism, Korean people's lives are always emphasized to maintain morals, to value spiritual life over material life (Yim, 2002). Because it has been acknowledged for a long time, Confucianism has become a characteristic of Korean cultural traditions. People are used to and recognize Confucianism as an orientation towards norms and traditions. Thus, Confucianism itself is the identity of the Korean nation. Therefore, the establishment of policies, such as the miniskirt policy, can be based on the realization that Western culture can threaten Korean cultural traditions, which refer to Confucianism.

The influence of Confucianism in the miniskirt policy can be analyzed through internal and external factors. For internal factors, it can be seen from Confucianism itself, which tends to show differences in the roles of men and women through existing norms, especially during the Joseon dynasty. Men are considered to have a more dominant role than women, based on men's involvement in all aspects of daily life. In contrast to women, according to the Confucianism's view, the laws of nature give women a lower position than men (as explained by Deuchler in the book entitled *The Confucian transformation of Korea: A study of society and ideology* (No. 36) in,

1992). It is said that women are seen as bodies, namely mere bodies that can give birth to a child (Kim, 2003). Moreover, women must also create an optimal environment for their potential children. Therefore, women are also trained not to behave and think carelessly because this can affect the potential children in their bodies. In addition, women play a significant role in managing their children and households. With this, women are only valued for their reproductive roles, family roles, and bodies as objects (Kim, 2003).

From the point of view explained above, there is an attempt to control women's bodies that leads to protecting and hiding them, as if they were invisible (Kim, 2003). Kim (2003) stated that in the past, women had to stay at home as much as possible in order not to be seen. This is because women are only viewed as a body that others should not see. Attempts to hide a woman's body can also be seen from the way women dressed at that time. Confucian officials stated that the females must be dressed in a certain way so that not just anyone can see, even if only at a glance (as explained by Deuchler in the book entitled *The Confucian transformation of Korea: A study of society and ideology* (No. 36) in, 1992). Also, at the beginning of the Joseon dynasty, Confucian officials established a rule that stated that women were required to wear a head covering to hide their face, and it should not be removed (as explained by Deuchler in the book entitled *The Confucian transformation of Korea: A study of society and ideology* (No. 36) in, 1992). Due to the necessity not to show their bodies, women layered their clothes, so their bodies and curves were not visible (Kim, 2003).

Confucianism teachings, especially the rule for women to hide their bodies, are not in line with why young South Korean women wear miniskirts. As previously explained, young women in the 1970s had the goal of achieving freedom and self-discovery through clothing. Miniskirts symbolize women's self-expression to show and place themselves in a social environment. Women want to be recognized and have a significant role in society. The aspirations of these young women are contrary to Confucianism norms, which require women to stay at home and wear layers of clothing to hide their bodies. Confucianism and the aspirations of young women in the 1970s to have a more significant position in society by wearing revealing clothes such as miniskirts are, of course, two very contradictory foundations. The teachings of Confucianism are still very attached to conservatives and the older generation in society; therefore, there is undoubtedly a fundamental rejection of these aspirations and clothing.

For external factors, the influence of Confucianism in the establishment of the miniskirt policy can be attributed to the presidential government at that time, namely the Park Chung-hee government. To identify how Park Chung-hee governs, it is best to know his life background first. As explained by Kusumadewi in the research entitled *Confucian values in Park Chung Hee's era and its influences toward South Korea's economy development 1961-1979* in 2013 stated that Park Chung-hee grew up in a low-income family and received military education because, at that time, Japan was currently ruling Korea. This influenced Park Chung-hee's understanding of power and administration. In the end, his educational background built a mindset that correlated to the teachings of Confucianism, especially in his political ideas. This characteristic of Confucianism can be seen in his thoughts and how Park Chung-hee governed. This is because the education that he received was similar to the Confucian values that existed and grew in Korea (As explained by Kusumadewi in the research entitled *Confucian values in Park Chung Hee's era and its influences toward South Korea's economy development 1961-1979* in 2013).

Since the end of the Korean War in 1953, the division of Korea into two different nations has resulted in the fragility of the South Korean economy and identity. Park Chung-hee, like

other presidents, has aspirations to revive South Korea. With these aspirations, Park Chung-hee combined the teachings of Confucianism with Western-style democracy, and these two things became a reference for leading and reviving South Korea as explained by Kusumadewi in the research entitled *Confucian values in Park Chung Hee's era and its influences toward South Korea's economy development 1961-1979* in 2013. Park Chung-hee's goal is to revitalize the country's economy by understanding and adding Western elements that he felt were necessary for progress. However, he did not allow Western culture to enter entirely and eliminate the identity of the South Korean nation, as he had known and believed. Therefore, Park Chung-hee remains firm by establishing the identity of the South Korean nation through the emphasis on traditional culture and ideas. Park Chung-hee's government focused its attention on traditional culture and ideas to establish nationalism through the revitalization of traditional characteristics, and the foundation of these characteristics was Confucianism (Yim, 2002).

Park Chung-hee, who was already familiar with the teachings of Confucianism, eventually channeled these teachings into his government, with the intention of forming the South Korean national identity. Not only that, the teachings of Confucianism that have long been applied in Korea also influenced the ideology and views of the Korean people, which eventually became traditions, identities, and national identity. With the two things explained above, Confucianism is felt to have a significant role and is considered necessary to exist and thrive in society. One way for the teachings of Confucianism to always exist is to use these teachings as a reference in the formation of policies to filter out the entry of foreign influences (As explained by Kusumadewi in the research entitled *Confucian values in Park Chung Hee's era and its influences toward South Korea's economy development 1961-1979* in 2013). Therefore, the teachings of Confucianism can be used as a criterion for policy formation (Xie et al., 2021; Yim, 2002). This can be seen from the Confucianism elements in a series of policies that Park Chung-hee has made to reject Western culture, one of which is the miniskirt policy in the 1973 Minor Crimes Act.

4. CONCLUSION

The existence of Confucianism elements in the establishment of the miniskirt policy can be studied through the observations of Park Chung-hee's government at that time. Park Chung-hee had a mindset based on the teachings of Confucianism that he earned from his childhood. His aspiration to revive South Korea led Park Chung-hee to combine Confucianism and Western-style democracy as the foundation of his government. He tried to understand and picked Western elements that he feels are necessary for progress while maintaining national identity by forming a nationalist character using traditional Korean characteristics, Confucianism. In addition, the use of Confucianism teachings in policy forming is also applied. With this, Confucianism can be seen in the formation of miniskirt policy because Confucianism can filter out the influence of Western culture, which is seen as contrary to Confucianism norms and the national identity that Park Chung-hee emphasizes.

The Confucian elements contained in the formation of the miniskirt policy in Korea in 1973 show that the political life of a country cannot be separated from culture. The results of this study strengthen Gabriel Almond's theory of political culture, especially the type of political culture called The Parochial Participant Culture which is widely found in developing countries. Social life and government, which the older generation is most involved in who still adhered to the teachings of Confucianism became a strong factor for the rejection of the use of new form of clothing such as miniskirt and outright rejection of the aspirations to create freedom of

expression for South Korean women at that time. Therefore, the author concludes that the miniskirt policy establishment in 1973 was triggered by Confucianism norms, especially in the dress etiquette for women. This norm was re-emphasized during the Park Chung-hee era through this policy, where Confucianism was a value that was applied to his government to strengthen the identity of the Korean nation.

The author is aware of the shortcomings related to this research. Other aspects that are not discussed in this study, such as the background aspects of South Korean women's lives in the 1970s, the evolution of South Korean women's clothing from year to year, and other policies related to the efforts to reject Western culture, are hoped to be conducted further in other research.

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