

**A study on the development of fashion jewelry using abalone shells  
as a marine culture product  
- Education program in cooperation with the marine industry in Mokpo area**

Kyoung-Hee Cho, Mokpo National University, Korea

Keywords: abalone, cultural, jewelry

## **1. Purpose of the program**

Thanks to its underwater artifacts and abundant marine resources, the port city Mokpo has recently emerged as a “new marine tourism city” in Korea. Mokpo has added the “construction of the international marine and leisure tourism industrial city” into the list of its main projects and has supported various related programs, pushing forward marine resource development and utilization policies and marine culture programs.

Department of Fashion and Clothing at Mokpo National University has studied to develop a variety of marine culture tourism products by offering the 'Marine Culture Tourism Product Development' course as part of the cooperative programs with support from the city's regional marine specialization project. This study is to develop fashion jewelry as cultural products using abalone shells. Given that marine culture tourism products to represent the region have been desperately needed with the growing number of tourists traveling to the sea, it is expected that the result of this program will improve the quality of marine culture tourism products in the region.

## **2. Overview of the ‘Marine Culture Tourism Product Development’ program**

### **1) Definition and the scope of item development**

Marine Culture Tourism Product Development refers to the use of marine resources as raw materials or the development of cultural tourism products that represent the image of the ocean. Items to be developed are mainly fashion accessories such as fashion jewelry, bags and scarves, which tourists can easily buy, among which we focused on developing various fashion jewelry products in 2020.

### **2) Participants in the program and operation method**

The participants in the program were eight students in their third year from Mokpo University's Fashion and Clothing Dept. and four graduate students majored in ceramics at the Dept. of Advanced Materials Science & Engineering. For one semester from September to December 2020, they gathered once a week for idea exchanges, team building and meetings, material experiments, design and sample production.

## **3. Characteristics of abalone shells as a material for cultural tourism product**

- 1) Abalone shells are a raw material that satisfies the production of marine culture products as a resource of the sea itself.
- 2) Abalone shells have a high formative value as they have marbled patterns, natural colors, and three-dimensional textures and can be transformed into various shapes and widely used for decoration purposes.

- 3) As abalone shells can be processed for refinement and cut into various sizes, they can be used as a fashion accessory material.
- 4) The possibility of commercialization is high because of the low material costs and affordable prices as a cultural tourism product as abalone shells are recycled.

#### 4. Image Concepts and Features of fashion jewelry

The project was focused on exploring the beauty of abalone shells that have changeable color and waved pattern and simultaneously the visual perception of a bewitching fashion jewelry shape. Qualities of this concept to be expressed through the fashion jewelry included natural, elegant, sensual, splendid and brilliant.

#### 5. Process of making fashion jewelry using abalone shells

- 1) Wash abalone shells and purify and process them to prevent smell.
- 2) Dry it naturally in the sunlight.
- 3) Cut into a desired shape and slice it thinly.
- 4) Trimming with smooth lines on the rough edges
- 5) Polish it with an enamel coating agent.
- 6) Drill a hole in the abalone shell pieces wherever you want with a tool according to the design.
- 7) Design the shape of the fashion jewelry
- 8) Make a fashion jewelry product by connecting all the materials with a chain or ring.



#### 6. Fashion jewelry products



#### 7. Outcomes and Expected Effects

- 1) The Program for Cooperative Education with Regional Industries has contributed to the utilization and recycling of marine resources, as well as improving the quality of local cultural tourism products.
- 2) The outcomes of the program have become key cultural tourism products in the region by promoting them through marine culture tourism organizations and exhibiting during marine culture festivals held in the region.
- 3) The program has helped revitalize marine tourism projects and is expected to provide workforce needed for product development and add jobs
- 4) The program is expected to contribute to regional specialization projects in the future in that it is a cultural tourism product development that combines the region's unique material and cutting-edge material processing technology.

**References**

Korea Tourism Organization (2018). Monthly: Tourism and Market Trends, Seoul: Korea Tourism Organization

Orsech, Gabriele (Edited)(2017), Next Look, Styles & Accessories A/W 2017, Overath: Fashion Snoops.

Ko, Ok-ja (2007), A Study on the Export Strategies of Cultural Products in Jeju, Master's thesis: Graduate School of Business at Jeju National University