

Potential for a Genderless Fashion Market

1. Motivation behind Research Paper

When I was little, I usually wore the clothes my mother bought. However, now I mostly go out to buy my clothes by myself. I went shopping for clothes alone many times, and I began to feel uncomfortable in the fashion market. When I buy clothes, I look at the design and decide what to buy. Sometimes the design I liked was men's clothes, so I was fitting for size in the men's clothes section. However, I got stares from people around me and the clerk told me, "We don't have women's clothing here." Since then, I have hated buying men's clothing in stores. This experience made me feel uncomfortable with the major split between men's and women's clothing categories, and the fashion market being split in two between men's and women's clothing. At this late, I think people can't enjoy fashion. I hope my essay will help to create a society where everyone can enjoy fashion.

2. Introduction

The relationship between fashion and gender norms is deep-rooted. Nowadays, most fashion markets are split between men's and women's segments. Society is changing with "gender-less" becoming a popular word and the goal of the SDGs "achieving gender equality" set. However, society is forever split into men's and women's. Why are fashion markets split into two segments?

Is it a distinction to split the fashion market into men's and women's or does it lead to discrimination? In this essay, I will show how fashion came to be split into men's and women's segments, how it affects the present, and how splitting the fashion market in half encourages discrimination. To do these things, I think I would like to go to fashion markets and see how they are split and research the official online stores.

3. Results and Analysis

First, I went to the GU Umeda store and the UNIQLO Osaka store because I would like to see for myself how clothes were displayed in the fashion store. The products were split into men's and women's sections according to the number of floors. Next, I looked at the floor map of the UNIQLO Harajuku store. The men's section is represented by blue and the women's section by pink. This is not the case only GU and UNIQLO, but most fashion brands are also split into men's and women's sections, splitting the market in two. And there is one more thing that I noticed. Men's wear is mostly pants style and women's wear is mostly skirts style. For example, there is a concept photo of 「Niko and...」that was published in winter 2020. The men model wear pants style and the women model wear skirts style. I think it was due to awareness that men wear pants and women wear skirts. I asked the seminar students, "Everyone is different, so we all support each other," the question why this current situation has not changed over time. As a result, most of the students said, "It has become the norm, and if we change it, we cannot keep up with the changes." However, is this really the way it should be? Are the splitting of the floor into men's and women's sections and the splitting of the floor map into pink and blue colors promoting discrimination, and not distinction? To explore this

question, I first looked into when the idea of pants for men and skirts for women came about.

Sato Ayumu said, in Japan, since the Meiji period, men were required to become brave soldiers under the influence of the "wealthy country and strong military" policy. Therefore, it seems that the feminine dress that had been popular until then was to be eliminated. In addition, as industrialization progressed during the Meiji and Taisho periods, the roles of men and women in employment and other areas gradually became more and more separated. Men, as producers, were allowed to wear only simple and sober clothes, as they did not have the right to express the wealth of their labour through their clothing. In contrast, women were allowed to express the wealth of their husbands and fathers with their clothing, which became more colourful and fashionable, establishing gender in clothing behaviour.

There is an English phrase, "Wear the pants in my family". This phrase is used to describe a person who has a power in the family, the father. The person wearing pants is a man, and the phrase came to be used in this way because of the image of a man having the most power in the family. In France, the ordinance was established by the Paris national police agency on November 7, 1800. The Police Ordinance contains the following preamble and five articles.

The Paris National Police Agency on November 7, 1800

The prefect of Paris police The Inspector General has been notified that many women are wearing cross-dressing. It is believed that no woman will give up cross-dressing of her own gender for any reason other than health reasons. Women

who crossdress are subject to considerable personal discomfort and insult from officers if they do not carry a special permission form that should be presented when necessary. The permit forms are supposed to be uniform, but to date, a number of different permits have been granted by a number of different authorities. After the promulgation of the Police Decree, all women who cross-dress without following the established procedures shall be deemed to have the intent to exploit cross-dressing. The Police Decree is as follows.

First, any authorization for cross-dressing granted to date by the Lieutenant-Governor or the Mayor of the Seine, the Mayors of the municipalities of Saint-Cloud, Sèvres and Meudon, or by the Police Department, shall be null and void. Second, all women who wish to wear male attire shall present themselves at the police station to obtain a permit. Third, a permit shall be issued only on the basis of a certificate from a doctor with an authorised signature, and a certificate from the mayor or police inspector stating the applicant's name, baptismal name, occupation and address. Fourth, the event that a woman is found to be wearing a cross-dressing outfit that does not comply with the aforementioned measures, she shall be arrested and taken to the Metropolitan Police Department. Fifth, police decree shall be published and promulgated in all parts of the Seine department and in the municipalities of Saint-Cloud, Sèvres and Meudon. It shall also be addressed to the commanders of the 15th and 17th Divisions of the Armed Forces and of the garrisoned units in Paris, as well as to the chiefs of the gendarmerie in the Seine and Seine-et-Oise departments, to the chiefs of the boroughs, inspectors and constables, who are to ensure that the law is carried out.

As stated in the police decree, "All women who wish to wear men's clothing must report to the police department to obtain a permit. As stated in the decree, women's freedom of dress has been taken away in France. These facts show that the idea of pants for men and skirts for women has taken root because of the image and the situation of the country. Even under such circumstances, there was one person who insisted on the freedom of fashion. It was Yves Saint Laurent, founder of the clothing and cosmetics brand YSL. According to Laurence Benaim, director of Stiletto magazine, the introduction of Yves Saint Laurent's "pantaloons" in 1968 helped to establish the pants style as an everyday wear as an alternative to the skirt for women. There is another figure who revolutionized genderless fashion. Audrey Hepburn, best known for such films as Roman Holiday. Although she was an actor by profession, she also had a major impact on the fashion world. She wore Sabrina pants in the movie "Sabrina the Beautiful". The pants she wore in the movie "The Beautiful Sabrina" became a fashion trend at that time, and the pants style spread to women's daily lives. Other examples include pantaloons in the late 1960s and early 1970s, genderless fashion known as femi men in the 1990s, skirts in 2016 , and 2020 From around this time, menswear-like and many others were taken up as trendy fashion by movies, magazines, and social networking sites. Despite the fact that this kind of genderless fashion has become popular in Japan, actors and influencers who wear genderless clothes are being slandered on social networking sites, etc. I thought that the current situation is that "masculinity" and "femininity" are being demanded in fashion. I thought that this was the case.

The 24 students were divided into eight groups, and one group presented their opinions. Two groups said, "It is discrimination because women look at me in a bad way when I am in the men's area and men in the women's area," and the other six groups said, "It is a distinction because the sizes are different and there is no choice," or "It is a distinction from the creator's point of view. The results indicate that most people consider it a distinction. Since people have different values and ways of thinking, it is natural that there are conflicting opinions. However, can we really say that the world will be a gender-equal world if some people suffer due to the opinions of the majority? So, I reexamined the question, "What should I do to enjoy the fashion I want to wear without being constrained by the opinions of those around me? The idea was to create a mixed market of men's and women's wear. Currently, men's and women's wear are completely separated in most markets, and we thought that this might make people feel uncomfortable. Therefore, we thought that by displaying items separately, people could enjoy shopping and fashion without worrying about the eyes of others, no matter where they are. The closest thing to such a market is a used select store, a so-called secondhand clothing store. Although men's and women's clothing is available, the merchandise is often arranged by item. When I visit thrift stores, I often see men trying on and buying women's clothing and women trying on and buying men's clothing. When I visited thrift stores such as Florida Americamura, West Coast ANCHOR Americamura, and KINJI BIGSTEP, I was advised by the staff to "wear men's items in larger sizes. I feel that at vintage clothing stores, one can enjoy fashion without being bound by the labelling of men's and women's clothing.

However, fast fashion brands such as UNIQLO offer products such as underwear. At the seminar exchange meeting I mentioned earlier, one person said, "There are things I don't want people to see, such as my underwear. We are thinking of selling such items on the Internet, but there are some disadvantages: it is difficult to get them quickly, and one cannot get a sense of size without seeing the actual items.

GU and UNIQLO, which you are familiar with, have many unisex and unisex products. When I searched for the keyword "unisex" in the official online store, I found 45 items at GU and a whopping 254 items at UNIQLO. (15:00, Sep. 30, 2022) Many people are unaware that there are unisex products like this. In fact, when asked at the time of the announcement, many people said they had never heard of it. However, there were some who told us that they thought they would try to buy the product now that they knew it existed. From this, we thought that spreading the word about stores and brands that carry the products would be the first step in spreading genderless fashion.

4. Conclusion and Future Problems

I asked the question and examined whether splitting into men's and women's segments is a distinction or discrimination. I received many opinions from a lot of people. I think splitting into men's and women's has been discrimination since the beginning of this research activity. In this essay, I introduced a gender-less fashion market that combined men's and women's as a solution. However, as I continued my research, I felt that creating this market may not be the only solution. It is not just a matter of men wearing women's clothing and women wearing men's clothing. I thought it is about choosing fashions that allow us to be who we are.

5. Reflection

I thought it was easy to find a solution right away. However, this activity has helped me to realise that when I try to solve one thing, many problems arise. I think this is one reason why these problems are not being solved. I felt that the best way to solve these problems is to continue to explore them without turning our eyes away from them. I hope that this essay will be the first step toward a society that can enjoy fashion.

6. Work Cited

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