

Gender Neutrality and Identity in Popular Culture

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Abstract

In the last few decades, gender identity has undergone extensive alterations in an attempt to destroy the traditional gender binaries. From fashion to textile designs and even visual culture industries, the genderless movement has drastically changed marketing strategies and branding. Notably, the number of genderless individuals is increasing on a daily basis, leading to the emergence of genderless [popular culture](#). Modern consumers usually express their identities through their preferred brands; hence, adopting androgynous brands can become a lucrative opportunity for marketers. Scholars affiliated with cultural studies are interested in studying pop culture dynamics, including new subcultures.

Understanding why genderless culture has gained popularity in recent years is critical in the evaluation of genderless culture. This paper, therefore, links several theories, such as gender theories, cultural liberalism and cultural globalization, to offer a concrete theoretical underpinning of genderless popular culture. Further, the paper introduces the reader to works of theorists and writers such as “Infrapolitics of Subordinate Groups” and borrows some concepts from William’s culture is an ordinary book. Additionally, comprehensive scholarly reviews of genderless culture have been provided. The paper is also rich in case studies of industries where genderless have structured their strategies. Genderless culture, although not widely accepted, is a new vibrant pop culture that perhaps “there is no alternative to it.”

Introduction

Culture encompasses many meanings, but at its center lies the values, beliefs, and conventions of a particular group of people. Popular culture is thus defined by social systems which encompass beliefs, practices, and objects. It comprises media sources, entertainment, language conventions, and fashion trends, among others (Danesi & Marcel, p. 35). Mass culture and folk culture usually relate to popular culture. Other authors depict popular culture as a series of activities aimed at satisfying some people and producing some meaning for them. To understand human behavior concerning values, feelings, and actions, one has to consider the cultures they make and how the cultures alter their behaviors. Popular culture studies aim to examine the meanings placed upon cultural practices and form a foundation of interactions between society, culture, and individuals. Popular culture is viewed as goods and objects built and propagated by the mass market, as ideologies from certain people or as

an expression of one's sexuality, class or ethnicity.

Over the past few decades, identity identification behaviors have become rampant, especially in Western countries. The society has had several instances of condemnation of gender stereotypes. Moreover, there is a rise in cross-gendered behaviors as previous gender boundaries are being eroded. A more fluid and softer acceptance of gender has taken over society. The drastic change in gender identification has occurred as a result of the convergence of sex roles. The global acceptance of transsexuality, for example, of a former Olympic champion in the fields of the decathlon, Caitlin Jenner, to Bruce Jenner, is proving a paradigm shift in gender identity. The traditional depiction of men as breadwinners and females as nurturers is slowly fading away. In such a case, women are becoming "masculine" and men "feminine." People are now more likely to identify themselves as genderless than before.

The popularity of unisex is mounting on a daily basis. The genderless move has affected fashion, textiles and visual culture jointly. Classical design industries have long been termed as perpetrators of gender stereotypes, aesthetic tastes, and roles. A new design trend is emerging, backlashing against pink feminism codes and blue masculinity codes. Genderless fashion and design become a musical celebration providing choice and freedom to consumers. Currently, we are witnessing a call back to simplicity in androgynous, which celebrates design in individuality.

Identity is one of the contemporary contexts in any art class. Identity encompasses issues such as gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, and age. Identity describes the personal psychological relationship to specific social group systems (Danesi & Marcel, p. 46). It is, however, a unified feature of somebody and plays a part in the concept of someone's life. Mostly, it is raised purposely to explain the individuals that struggle with creating the meaning and reason why the culture is significant and some social systems crash with the experiences of individuals. This research paper aims to explore the rise of genderless popular culture in recent years. Genderless in this paper will be depicted in several industries in which it is evident. The paper blends popular culture theories, works of some theorists or writers and various scholarly articles to present a vibrant subculture movement - genderless culture. Moreover, the paper gives specific industries and companies in which unisex culture has become paramount.

Theoretical Frameworks of Genderless Popular Culture:

Gendered Theories

The history of gender theories dates back to several centuries ago. However, in the 19th century and 20th century, the arguments become part of public conversations. Gender theories revolve around gender stereotypes, body image, sexuality, perpetuating patriarchy, female body exploitation, and

homophobia (Connell, p. 74). The film theory is one of the gender theories. It is through films, television, music, celebrities, and adverts that classify different genders. Movies bestow gender stereotypes and propagate the wrong ideas. For instance, becoming single is calling for doom, and marriage brings ultimate happiness. Films like “Mr. Jones and Mr. Smith” promote the alpha male, while “The Myth” portrays women as the weaker sex. However, modern film makers are deconstructing gender labels via films and movies.

Gender labels are also present in advertising. For instance, home products are associated with homemakers; the female body is used to market male products, stereotyping women’s beauty with beauty products and enhancing male masculinity. [Queer theory](#) is also found under gender theories and can be used to explain the rise of genderless culture. Queer theory connects gender and sexual orientation and stands for non-fixation of the sex categories and gender (Stormhøj & Christel, p. 150). In this sense, gender and sexual orientation should be unsolidified and unbounded by the conventional beliefs of gender. Sexual orientation thus gets constructed in social settings just like gender. Queer theory is explained as the movement beyond social constrictions of male or female, straight or gay and masculine or female (Stormhøj & Christel, p. 166). On the contrary, the theory focuses on the instabilities of these classifications and stresses several identities. Queer theory discloses the gender classification and removes gendered roles and beliefs. Therefore, what is seen as masculine can be performed by women, while what is viewed as feminine can be played by men. This raises the issue of transgender or genderless cultures.

The transgender theory takes into consideration gender identities and constructs them around the experiences of transgender-identified people. In other words, being transsexual challenges the socially constructed norms regarding gender. Therefore, transgender individuals excel on the point of destroying gender binaries and thus can portray prejudice.

Liberal Pluralism and Cultural Liberalism Theories

The word liberalism encompasses aspects of freedom such as freedom of expression, association, speech, conscience, press and religious practices. Liberal pluralism thus focuses on creating understanding, mutual, non-judgmental and tolerant behaviors in society. This forms the foundation on which genderless culture thrives. Liberal pluralism means freedom of choice of sexual orientation, attire, political opinions, lifestyles and physical appearance. Liberal pluralism focuses on advocating for constricted political control, which is supported by democracy and capitalism (Tomasi & John, p. 144). The theory relies on the conviction of self-choosing inner goodness and discipline.

Therefore, individuals of all different stands and opinions must be respected. The theory postulates a confident approach towards mass media as a symbol of representing diversity. In this case, media is subject to audience demands. Here, the main concept applicable in the case of genderless culture form is artistic liberty. Expressive liberty seeks to favor some individuals and groups to live their lives as per their wishes and to do what gives them meaning in life. Expressive liberty is an extension of

what we call the free exercise of individual rights.

Cultural liberalism, on the other hand, comprises of culture that is made up of different races, ethnicities, religions, nationalities and a subculture such as unisex culture (Tomasi & John, p. 128). The theory looks at the society with kind eyes. Individual freedom is thus paramount to stand against cultural-imposed uniformity and norms. International human rights and democratic laws back the movement. Article 19, for example, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, "Every person has the right to freedom of expression and opinion...". People are thus required to respect other people's cultural or individual differences. Society is required not to impose explicit codes of behavior on different people. Of interest here is the act of defending the moral rights of those who fail to conform to set norms. Nonconformists, such as genderless identified people, have the freedom to express their identity without affecting anyone. What happens when cultural liberalism and liberal pluralism converge? The situation causes the development of new ideologies in the society, such as "no absolute truth," and all opinions are valid and relative. This argument defines postmodernism. Cultural liberals and liberal pluralists assume no lifestyle or identity is superior to the other. Critics argue that Cultural liberalism creates societal elitism and canons within the popular culture subcultures.

Theory of Cultural Globalization

Cultural globalization is considered an aspect of sharing various concepts and values worldwide, thus promoting global public relations (Crane et al., p.16). It has been the primary culture since historical times to be shared globally. The Internet and social media platforms enhance cultural globalization. The act of people interacting in various places and platforms facilitates the determination of personal identity. Positively, cultural globalization enhances the development of a particular society; it increases perception between individuals and raises connectivity among folks in the community. Also, the collaborations between different people aid in the enhancement and achievement of cultural interchange and foster tolerance while reducing fights among people. However, in negative perception, cultural globalization leads to the erosion of people's way of doing things, leading to cultural tension. It can also cause misunderstandings due to clashes among individuals, increase the crisis of identity and make people resist change in society.

Besides, the process of cultural globalization is determined by the use of culture that has been broken down and affected by internet usage, intercontinental movement of people and media in popular culture, among others. Cultural globalization has facilitated product exchange and personal colonization that historically is known to have cultural implications in the world. However, the circulation and movement of culture allow people to engage in international public relations. Therefore, the development of the social relationship that moves across continents and regions is not evidenced by material things. Cultural globalization can be said to include the formation of interrelated and shared beliefs and data with which individuals relate to their collective cultural identities (Storey & John, P. 43). Thus, cultural globalization fosters international connectivity among

various cultures and residents.

Additionally, configurations of cultural globalization become a means of dispersing several theories and concepts from one region to the other (Diana et al., 18). Despite the impacts of cultural globalization in a political and economic aspect, several effects are witnessed in the social relations. However, public inequalities contribute greatly to the expression of race, social class, and ethnicity. Over the past five years, a great change in trend has been observed cutting across the internationals. Moreover, pop culture and social media facilitate and enhance the development of particular attitudes pertaining to race ideas, therefore leading to stereotypes. Modern technology leads to globalization and the development of towns and facilitates the relocation of individuals from one place to another, and this affects today's fashions and styles in popular culture.

Infrapolitics of Subordinate Groups by James Scott

In chapter seven of his book *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, James Scott introduces the concept of “infra-politics of subordinate groups.” Scott argues that subordinate groups often devise tactics to resist some political or cultural phenomena that can go unnoticed by those in power (Scott, p.89). This is what Scott calls infrapolitics. Application of infra politics in the study of social groups and movements leads to the provocation of social mobilizations against widely accepted political or social actions. Infrapolitics is thus best understood through recognition of what lies behind public collaborations as well as the political sphere (Scott, p. 77). The query of whether an individual is conforming to mobilizations aimed at making a little political mark as compared to popular mobilizations becomes paramount in this polysemy. Political underpinnings do not ideally form some social movements.

The notion of infra politics originates from anthropologists who find interest in the subaltern population. These populations normally carry out their movements in discrete ways rather than venting their disappointments in conventional ways. Subaltern populations aim at gaining legitimacy, which, in a way, they become deprived (Scott, p.45). These social movements uphold dignity while challenging the traditional instituted groups. The idea grew appealing to the sociologists in contemporary years in France, who became accustomed to the understanding of subjectivities aimed at describing the political riots and rebellions of the time. The concept of infra-politics has been adopted in many disciplines, including popular culture studies and ethnomusicology.

This paper borrows the concept of infra politics from James Scott to understand the rise of unisex culture in the world today. Frequently, society classifies gender identity into two: male and female. In this case, genderless lack recognition, leading to rising of genderless movements in support of their identity. The focus of cultural mobilizations offers an opportunity to understand the connection between sociology and popular culture studies. Infrapolitics as a form of social mobilization brings a typically productive challenge to the already established social norms and traditions.

Researchers and popular culture scholars often apply infra politics in the study of cultural and social

representations via the lens of political foundations of personal practices and collective groups. The cultural studies focus on subordinate groups, such as those who identify themselves as genderless and have been deprived of their recognition in the social mainstream (Scott, p.148). For instance, in queer theory studies, the critical culture is being criticized by upcoming groups that portray rebellious behaviors. Genderless proponents are thus such a beneficiary of different social discourses.

Culture Is Ordinary by Raymond Williams

According to Raymond Williams, culture is something that has developed from the working class and the masses. He describes the culture as not something that is created by elite categories. Therefore, culture can be obtained in the residence of individuals which aims at entertaining people by various means (Williams, p. 91). For instance, one type of culture expressed in the houses of people includes a grandmother telling stories to her grandchildren concerning some terrifying ghosts and the delightful men who struggle to combat the monsters who salvage the beautiful princess. This way the grandchildren become frightened and later entertained throughout the tale. According to Raymond Williams, culture is found to have two various aspects. Firstly, it is found to be the entire way of living, while secondly, culture is the art and education.

Raymond claims that it is the collective meanings that make a society. He says that every community has several features, contains its shape and has its reasons for living. While an ideal society is generated, the individuals found in that particular society include similar characteristics. These characteristics can be the possession of similar opinions and the same nationality among others. The second part of culture, according to Raymond Williams, is the inventions and creative effort in the process of art and literature. A good example Williams described is the teashop found in Cambridge. Williams identifies that individuals who could go to the teashop had the same characteristics of the same gender and equal knowledge of art. Williams' culture is ordinary and is applied in popular culture studies to discuss emergencies and attributes of cultures (Williams, p.109). In this sense, culture is usual in any social movement, given it has similar values and convictions.

Scholarly Reviews on Unisex Identity

Androgyny in Western Culture by Emily Eldridge, 2013

Eldridge's (2013) research on androgyny in Western culture provides an analysis of unisex fashion and its future trend in Western culture. The research highlights a significant understanding of the views placed upon androgyny, particularly in Western countries. The research is thus helpful for unisex clothes brands, marketers, fashion watch companies, designers and researchers doing a study on popular culture. The research findings create a perfect knowledge concerning the impacts of popular culture especially concerning fashion industries and consumer perceptions.

Emily Eldridge argues that our upbringing and the influence of media are the cause of the formation of ideologies on what females and males wear. Typically, a female wears a dress while a man puts on trousers. The type of clothing thus defines gender roles. The findings of the research found that the distinctions regarding gender clothing persist to be the dominant feature (Emily, p. 90). The 96 percent of males responding did not accept wearing female clothing as they claimed to be inferior and would not be allowed culturally and socially. However, the majority of females responding, 88 percent of them, accepted to wear men's clothes and argued to prefer the fitting and styles of men as they appeared to be more comfortable. This indicated that androgyny is widely accepted as the women feel more endowed and free in menswear.

According to this research and the earliest research, a lot of stress on androgyny has been put in Western culture. The study aimed to research the androgyny of the past Western culture to identify its relevance and the reasons behind it. Western cultural androgyny may facilitate an understanding of the current condition of androgyny. The study found that in the early fifteenth century, some terms were used in Italy to depict the female and male gender (Emily, p. 102). The term fairer sex meant a woman, while stronger sex signified male gender. The emphases were made for the stronger sex. The calf and thigh play signified masculinity. The virile leg was made with trappings and tight fabric cut. The leg was culturally signified as strong and powerful, explaining the view of trousers as masculine wear for stronger sex.

However, in the eighteenth century, fads became an interchange between the segmentation of class and sex. It indicated the gender one could belong to. The women dressed luxuriously to be admired by the opposite gender, a factor that made King Louis 16 dress on ribbons and laces, among others. He was an embodiment of effeminate and indicated that it was conventional for males to dress like women and remain powerful. The king, therefore, implied that genderless was the key issue in the society. During the research by Emily Eldridge, the respondents aired out different feelings on how the media grip the issue of androgyny (p. 199). Some people said that the media was biased toward women, some argued that it was a positive thing, others saw it to be confusing, while others viewed it as stereotypical. The findings of the research show that people take androgyny as biased towards females, where it is recognized positively than in males. Moreover, some individuals get confused and do not understand androgyny at all.

Furthermore, the study focused on how people understand the relationship between androgyny and pop culture. Some people identified it as an artistic identity, while others thought it was associated with equality. Also, some think the relationship was stereotypical, small percentage believed it as a negative relationship, while others viewed it as a desirable, trend and a statement. The findings were identical, showing that media are stereotypical and have a tendency to improve trends that occur in music and movies (Emily, p. 173). Also, some icons in pop culture are effeminate and tomboyish.

Additionally, when the question was posed to the respondents about their thoughts about androgyny as a fashion, some said it represents equality in gender. Other people saw it as a lifestyle instead of fashion, others as a trend within a short period, while others said it was increasing gender socialism.

The findings concluded that the relationship facilitates gender variations. However, androgyny is seen widely accepted by females than men. It showed that androgyny is considered a fashion trend (Emily, p.98). Thus it is believed to foster equality in gender. Also, it is seen to empower females, challenge men to take care of their appearance and borrow stereotypical characters from women.

Androgynous Fashion: Breaking Gender Stereotype by Ashima Khurana

Ashima's (2015) research focuses on androgynous fashion in India, an extension of influence from the Western culture. The research explored female and male mixed views on clothing. Androgyny is the state of being genderless regarding femininity and masculinity.

The research argues that Indian designers are taking the Androgyny design to the next level in that there is the emergence of unisex ethnic wear. Some of the two designers that are the leading ones sent the models of men to another level by designing the Anarkali suits and lehenga skirts. The male models belonging to designer Modi appeared in anarkalis that extended to their feet (Khurana, p. 72). The Anarkali possessed a female touch of shawls around their waist. Most of the people glanced the men in the new fashion (skirts), and found the appealing appearance to the androgyny. Therefore, these designers invented the genderless style and emphasized that the dresses were not restricted to women only. Also, the study identified females to have abandoned their mode of clothing and entered the world of wearing male clothes like boyfriend jeans and blazer dresses, among others. However, the research found out that only men confidently of their skin and the masculine could wear the female-dress clothing.

However, the study established the revolution in the metrosexual men. It identified the metro man as similar to the novel man. Although similar considerations about the New Man and Metrosexual occur, a very minute difference exists between these two. The New Man exemplifies the changes that have happened in the behavior of males, while the Metrosexual aims at exploring the distinctiveness and way of living. The New Man focuses more on examining the way sociocultural and genderless aspects have affected males; for instance, nowadays, women go to work and provide basic needs for the family while men stay back at home taking care of the children. On the other hand, Metrosexual becomes more apprehensive with the fad, physical appearance and other aspects of life. Therefore, the increased changing pattern of shopping among men has generated their interest in feminine wear (Khurana, p. 87).

The clothing designers work tirelessly to bring new gender-neutral ethnic clothing. However, western culture is a major influential factor in the development of genderless clothing. Evidently, the Indians have the cultural tradition of gender identification. However, a slow, gradual change is occurring. The acceptance of women adopting masculine is relatively higher compared to males accepting the female character. The tradition recognizes men who adopted female features and ways of doing things as homosexuals. Besides, the effort of women in generating career-oriented characters has

facilitated them to walk out of the traditional culture of feminism.

According to the research, the genderless fad has made its path regarding clothing like pants, shirts, boxers, and scarves, among others. Mainly, the dhoti-kurta in India has been the most appealing fashion to both males and females, becoming the primary source of comfort and ethnicity in society. The main reason for accepting dhoti over others like sarongs is that it is widely acceptable; hence, the cultural norms of the community become preserved (Khurana, p. 67). However, women have adopted menswear, while men delay accepting female clothing as part of their fashion as they consider it to be inferior. The females, therefore, don't care about ditching their traditional profile and choose to adopt menswear, factoring in that men's clothes make them comfortable and protect them from issues like rape.

Genderless Fashion

Fashion serves as a communication tool for expressing personal feelings, personality, tastes, and preferences to the world. Fashion involves modifications, novelty, the issue of time and the person wearing the item. Connell (p. 88) explained the influence of fashion as a procedure of combined selection whereby the designers collect the interests of a particular group of individuals according to the time the taste occurs. Besides the production of many new styles, the choices made by the inventive customers and the idea of customers expressing their interest enhance motivation to the manufacturers. Fashion designers and clothing brands indeed develop reservations that are highly needed by those people who have been isolated in society. Therefore, some old regulations of conformism have to be progressively challenged both from approval and in the market.

Clothes and dressing fashion act as a critical tool for modern customers' intellect of identity. Moreover, the criticism of somebody's clothing and one look is considered to be personal compared to the criticism of someone's car. Clothes offer a significant association between someone's looks and their own identity. However, people can purchase a new commodity to identify a specific category or for the expression of their nature (Butler and Trouble, p.74). It is evident that some individuals feel happy in dressing for their appearance and gain courage from dressing the way others do.

Besides, some individuals struggle to dress like the people who are wealthy and fabulous in society but not like the poor ones. Therefore, it explains how fashion can offer identity, both as a symbol of power and an equalizer of appearance. Further, a trending fad can be seen as a system and connection to relationships. The look way dressing appears in the body can be taken as a visual language to other individuals. However, a study by Davis (1992) accomplishes that considering fashion to be a code and not a word is appropriate. The system recognized should consist of aspects like age, occupation, status, and tastes in styles.

Today, the issue of fashion and clothing has taken a turn in the genderless. Most clothing does not identify the gender of an individual. It is not astonishing to see men in womenswear or women in menswear in recent years. A great step towards genderless fashion has happened as expansions in

men's clothing outpaced womenswear. Recently, a study by Warner and Shields, 2013 showed that regular auctions of menswear increased to a rate of 1.9 percent in 2013, compared to that of womenswear, which was 1,6 percent in the same year. It is evident from a business point of view that the change toward genderless groupings for clothing and fashion has been a benefit in the menswear market. The menswear market owns a considerable amount of cross-gender demand such as a drop-shoulder crewneck sweatshirt.

Case Studies

Katharine Hamnett, who is a designer in Britain, has been exploring and developing gender-neutral clothes. She recently displayed a collection of unique genderless sweatshirts, shirts, and silk suits (Connell, p.45). Katharine states that when women wore traditional masculine clothes, such as military-themed clothing, they felt that they were appropriating the power of males. She further says that women today feel equal to men since they feel more comfortable with themselves and have the freedom to choose their favorite clothes.

Further, Bethnal brand manager Chloe Crowe in London says that on opening the pop-up outlets, both men and women who are couples had a chance to purchase jeans wears which could be shared by both of them. The London-based genderless company was founded in the year 2014 by Clement Melissa. Melissa's interest inspired the starting of the company in the aspect of why men's and women's clothing lines were different. Bethnal specializes in making genderless, straight, skinny and comfortable clothes with similar cuts for both males and females. The Clever pattern of cutting clothes allows the designer to create different styles and fittings for different people. (Connell, p. 69).

Additionally, Bethnal offers simplified styles and designs that define a customer's personality but not his/her sex. The company has been rising because of the popularity of gender equality and rejecting gender-based binary. A study conducted by the Fawcett Society in 2017 showed that more than 68 percent of young adults believed that gender is not based on binary. During the time of launching Bethanals, there were minimal gender talks, but since then several brands and companies have availed some unisex clothing. Crowe adds that genderless clothing has achieved a significant market and there is a massive demand for it.

Moreover, Tanmay Saxena, who is a designer and founder of LaneFortyfive company, adds that since no individual can look at the food and suggest a man or woman eat it, the same case should apply to gender. She designs some unisex clothes, including shirts and waistcoats. Both men and women who purchased her items were equal in number. This is because the design of the clothes is similar, be it style cuts, fabrics used and the fitting in the body of either person (Butler, p. 98). She says she could admire the men's wear that was partitioned so smartly with short sleeves and she could not get one in the female shops and clothes companies.

Therefore, out of the disappointment of not getting the shirt she liked in the market, she decided to open a company that served and produced different types of fashions that could fit both men and

women. In that company, she focuses on making something she can wear and still another person can wear, regardless of gender.

GFW, which is the shirt clothing company designed some three fits of the body. The shirts are made to fit a variety of body sizes, irrespective of gender. The company launched its brands on the online platforms a few years ago and later opened a retail shop in Hove. The company now sells a significant number of clothes to every person, be it a woman or a man. The company emphasized the issue of genderless in fashion by making sure that it serves the community by creating unisex clothing.

Genderless in Textile Designs

Textile design encompasses a diverse operational field operating in a globalized competitive industry. Designers in the textile industry must consider the design, innovation and manufacturing skills applied to the final product. The textile design offers an extensive synopsis of essential concepts and advances made in the textile industry. Practical case studies provide a glimpse of a changing textile design industry (Connell, p.108). Textile design is a fundamental point of reference for design developers engaged in fashion-related sectors and interior design. Textile design is also critical for learners and researchers interested in making advances in the textile industry. The world today is past binary beliefs, and this avails tremendous opportunities for brands and design companies. Brand developers have to win the minds and hearts of modern consumers via psychographics, which includes issues such as clarity of opinions, current attitudes as well and interests regardless of gender. Generation Z believes that design is either incredibly creative or acutely simple. Design reveals a person's personality and offers a platform for consumers to express their identities. The genderless market is becoming popular, and therefore, contemporary designs factoring in genderless is inevitable.

Case Study

Unisex bathrooms are one of the recent designs that big corporations are taking into consideration. Google, for example, has adopted genderless bathrooms together with conventional ones to ensure every individual feels safe, comfortable and included in society. People who identify themselves as genderless thus have the option to choose gender-neutral bathrooms while at the workplace (Ross, p. 47). Bathrooms form part of a solution to address gender inclusivity in workplaces. A gender-neutral bathroom includes a toilet usable by people of different genders.

The facility helps to prevent the embarrassment witnessed as people walk around looking for their biological gender-based bathroom. Also, genderless people are saved from the discrimination they normally go through in gendered restrooms. Further, a genderless toilet reduces sexual harassment in the workplace. Gender inclusivity in both public and office space premises makes people feel accommodated and continues to scale universal design conversations. Masculinity and feminism stereotypes are being redefined and buried in the post-gender world. The human aspect involved in

this movement needs to create an inclusive design comfortable for different individuals and that enhances their individualism.

Genderless Identity in Visual Culture

The genderless visual culture is expressed by the use of various images and language. The genderless culture becomes conveyed via the sketching of some photos that are not gender biased. Further, the genderless signs and symbols attached to several presentations still express the visual culture. The gender equality seen in design compares to the '1990 disability act'. The challenges of the disabled were solved through a change in attitude towards the disabled. Buildings were not accessible using wheelchairs (Butler, p. 134). The exterior and interior designs of buildings had to change to grant access to the disabled.

Currently, a subversion is happening, making designer rethink their sampling, appropriation and application techniques. They have to include a visual language in the design. For instance, wearing outfits that transcend binary divisions by selecting body-fitting clothes suitable for anybody (Chapek, p. 46). Trousers, for example, are made without zips on the waists, while tops are made loosely to conceal body parts. Customers are treated with the choice of their favorite color. Visual culture may include removing gender-based interior signs put on clothing, spaces, and goods. Genderless visual language involves using a language that upholds genderless to move away from the gender-biased visual culture. This is achieved through changes in words, including symbols and signs captured in visual images. There is a need to add a unisex signage arrangement for bathrooms.

Case Studies

The UNIQLO's store format offers a holistic shopping environment, with its interior displaying gender-blending images. The womenswear is on the right while that of men is on the left. Additionally, UNIQLO utilizes similar fittings and fixtures in both the male and female zones. Further, the company has genderless changing rooms in most of its stores. The signage language used reflects a genderless notion (Chapek, p.5). The mannequins are the only visible signs that you are either in the male or female category of clothes.

Avoc company in France came up with the idea of runway shows in 2013. Despite the move being criticized by some people, Avoc was able to change the cultural view of things. The mixed-gender runway shows help to unify male and female wear. The collection of clothes is based on similar language, aesthetics, and creativity. The company aims to arrive at a balance between femininity and masculinity. The company works with one creative direction and visual culture to permit people to make clothes.

At John Lewis, visual culture has taken a new shift. The UK-based store is the first significant store in the country to remove girl and boy labels from children's wear. The step is viewed as an attempt to

reduce gender stereotypes associated with clothing companies. The company has introduced new labels called Girls and Boys or Boys and Girls, which will be ascribed to its brand clothing for newborns and children below fourteen years of age. Further, unisex color walks are being introduced in the store (Connell, p.82). All gender-based designs have been taken away from the children's wear and the departmental stores. The head of children's wear in the company, Bettis Caroline, noted that the company was on the move of abolishing gender stereotypes and providing a wider choice and variety to its customers. John Lewis adds to the list of other companies, such as Zara, ASOS, and Selfridges, which are practicing genderless shopping. This proves that unisex retail reflects a cultural paradigm shift to break gender stereotypes but not promote a trend.

Conclusion

Genderless culture, a strong pop culture, particularly in Western countries, is spreading rapidly across the globe. Metrosexuality and feminism drive the rise of genderless as a result of the globalization of culture and cultural liberalism. Gender identities are often seen through clothing. Designers, brands and other marketers can thus take advantage of the genderless movement to add more revenues. This research paper has explored the rise of genderless popular culture in recent years. The research paper adds a contribution to the existing knowledge about genderless popular culture, which is scanty. Interdisciplinary research focusing on genderless culture is necessary particularly to understand the effects of genderless social deconstruction and the possible biological impacts of men in skirts.

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