



Marketing and Strategy Analysis of Inclusive Clothing

Qisen Chen^(✉)

Anhui Polytechnic University, Wuhu 241000, Anhui, China
2021004158@poers.edu.pl

Abstract. In today's society, the popularity of small-size clothing has brought "body shame" and "body anxiety" for most women. This also makes most women lose themselves and develop in an unhealthy direction. The emergence of inclusive clothing has alleviated women's anxiety, brought confidence to women, and promoted the progress of the times, allowing everyone to have a variety of possibilities and their own beauty, as well as diversifying the aesthetics of society. And with the globalization of the epidemic, the prevalence of working from home has made everyone pay more attention to the comfort and practicality of clothing. This paper analyzes the market value, consumer groups and marketing strategies of inclusive clothing by combining real-life cases, and concludes that inclusive clothing has a large consumer group, a lengthy market prospect, and the clothing concept can resonate with consumers, and has a high market value in terms of social attention. The trend of inclusive clothing is not obvious now, but the market has a lot of room for improvement. I believe that in a few years, inclusive clothing will be a big hit.

Keywords: Inclusive clothing · Female figure · Marketing strategy

1 Introduction

Nowadays, there is a trend that with the evolution of fashion, the size of women's clothing gradually tends to be small, short and tight, which will increase the exposure area of the body. Such clothing has extreme requirements on body shape and weight, so it makes people have a sense of physical shame [1], thus limiting the audience, which also leads to many women's physical anxiety. Such fashion trends forming an unfriendly weathervane, and people who are originally well-proportioned are not satisfied with the status quo. They will get sick figures through extreme methods such as dieting and excessive physical training. While those who are plump or slightly overweight will have an inferiority complex because of their unfit size. Under this social phenomenon, when designing women's clothing, certain designers will take physical shame into account to make the clothing style more inclusive of the body.

In the context of the globalization of epidemic, home office and home sports have become the norm, so the practicality of home-based clothing increases, and at the same time, it has a sense of comfort and beauty. The category of clothing, such as home wear,

is collectively referred to as inclusive clothing, and their sizes include large sizes and extra-large sizes or above. By wearing more fitting and comfortable clothes, women can subjectively ignore all kinds of physical differences with an objective condition. This does not amount to self-deception but is a manifestation of the pursuit of life liberalism. After all, the first appearance of clothing is to hide the shame and keep warm. With the development of the times, people's spiritual world has become richer and richer, and their aesthetic awareness has increased. Perfect clothing must bring beauty and comfort to people simultaneously rather than confine people's bodies. Based on the above situation, combined with marketing concepts and mass consumer psychology, and guided by market demand, it is concluded that the above categories of clothing may be future fashion trends and market trends.

This paper refers to the research on "all kinds of clothing and women's figure" at home and abroad, analyzes the market value brought by inclusive clothing by combining consumer psychology and women's psychology, and gives marketing strategies and suggestions on how to improve the market value and increase market sales. The author hopes that inclusive clothing can expand the market scope and bring confidence and strength to more women and let everyone be themselves.

2 The Connotation and Characteristics of Inclusive Clothing

2.1 Connotations of Inclusive Clothing

In 19th-century Europe, women used girdles to accentuate the fullness of their breasts and to enlarge their waist-to-hip ratio. Most of the materials used for girdles were leather, whalebone, wood, and even steel plates, which were stiff and did not fit the body structure, and in some cases, led to death from deformed ribs piercing the internal organs [2]. It is no exaggeration to say that women of that time were trapped in such a deformed aesthetic, proud of their morbidly thin waists and ashamed of their thick ones. It was a fetter on the female body and a mental shackle of the times. And by extension, the morbid aesthetic still exists in today's society. Brandy Melville (BM) [3], a brand that has become popular in the last two years, has been selling "body anxiety" behind its usual "small size" design and "one size fits all" marketing strategy. Its consumer group is limited to the size of the clothes, and those who do not reach the size standard are not considered consumers. BM-style clothes are short, tight and mostly reveal a lot of skin, and the consensus is that a body that can wear BM-style clothes is a good body, so much so that a morbid height and weight chart has appeared on the Internet to define BM girls.

Gradually, "thinness" has become the test of beauty, and women are losing themselves. And those who are not thin enough gradually develop body shame. One of the main reasons for body shame is the development of low self-esteem and the psychological damage caused by negative external voices. The connotation expressed by inclusive clothing is the antithesis of these pathological aesthetics. It gives women the power of confidence. Inclusive clothing presents a diverse aesthetic. The inclusiveness of clothing can collide with different styles of clothing to create something different and exciting, and

inclusive clothing emphasizes that each person is a unique being and that there are infinite possibilities for everyone. Inclusive clothing encourages women to love themselves and be themselves.

2.2 Characteristics of Inclusive Clothing

The main feature of inclusive clothing is that it is suitable for people with A, H, O, and X-shaped bodies. The silhouette of the clothing is smooth and slim, with simple lines, and is highly inclusive of the body, and the style is versatile so that people can get both beauty and comfort through clothing without the need for painful weight loss. Inclusive clothing is available in a wide range of sizes, mostly from XS to XXL, catering to nearly all people. Inclusive clothing offers comfort and practicality, with the potential to adapt flexibly to changing scenarios and meet the needs of leisure, work, health, and social interaction at the same time [4].

3 Analysis of Inclusive Clothing Audience Group

3.1 Consumer Psychology Analysis

Danny Goldstein, women's wear strategist at Fashion Snoops (FS), an advanced trend forecaster, said in an interview, "Consumers are looking for brands that are inclusive and make them feel accepted for their size. To appeal to these consumers, major brands are encouraging and helping consumers pick the right size at a time by expanding their product size range, creating comfortable and flattering products, and using a diverse range of fitted models to showcase their products [5]." In recent years, people can find that European and American women are becoming more and more confident and powerful. Therefore, they do not need to wrap themselves in clothes to show off; they can be themselves and dress mainly for comfort, which is when they need to choose inclusive clothing. The prevalence of new media, which has led to the spread of topics such as "rejecting body anxiety" and "accepting your body", has made them more interested in showing off their bodies on online platforms.

3.2 Obese Group

In addition to this aspect, the issue of overweight and obese is one of the reasons why consumers tend to favor inclusive clothing. In 2020, approximately 2.6 billion people worldwide will be overweight or obese, representing approximately 38% of the world's population. According to the World Obesity Federation, current trends suggest that by 2035, the number of people who are overweight or obese will reach 4.2 billion, or approximately 51% of the global population at that time; of these, nearly 2 billion will be obese, accounting for approximately a quarter of the global population. The number of girls who are obese will reach 175 million, an increase of 125% compared to the number in 2020 [6]. Besides, according to a survey by the American Psychological Association and the Harris Poll, 42% of American adults gained more weight than expected during the epidemic, so they will be more willing to buy plus-size clothing [7].

3.3 Female Group

Moreover, in recent years, with the “her economy” [8] trend, which reflects the focus of consumer groups on women, is very conducive to increasing the value of the market. Female consumers focus on the practicality and quality of products but also on satisfying their own emotional pleasure. They prefer products that resonate with their own psyche. Women place great importance on the fit between the three perspectives in brand philosophy and product selection and tend to show a stronger preference for brands that respect women and help them. The contemporary female population is very resistant to being defined by a certain type of stereotype, and they prefer a versatile style. Inclusive clothing focuses on helping every woman to have more possibilities. Multiple combinations of classic styles showcase each individual’s taste and personality. And inclusive clothing offers women the ability to escape from a monstrous aesthetic while gaining beauty and comfort.

4 The Value of Inclusive Apparel in Global Marketing

4.1 Women’s Topics

According to a report by Future Market Insights, the plus-size apparel market will be valued at US\$601.7 billion in 2022 and is expected to reach US\$1,044.3 billion by 2032 [5]. This shows that plus-size clothing has high growth and potential market value and is likely to capture a larger market share in the future.

In today’s time, the topic of women is gaining more and more attention. As the social status and economic strength of female consumers continue to improve, women have more and more voice in brand consumption. The change in moral and aesthetic consciousness and the development of feminism in modern society have led to a gradual shift from the object of the gaze to the self. This is a time when women are no longer just looking for fashion to please others but also to please themselves. In addition, the consumerist trend also brought women and the body closer together [9]. The product concept of inclusive clothing revolves around the woman, such as the social concern and has a great market value.

4.2 Globalization of the Epidemic

The sudden arrival of the epidemic caught every country by surprise. It caused incalculable damage to mankind, restricted travel, caused an economic downturn, etc. At the same time, the epidemic was an opportunity for mankind to reflect and to find new understanding and exploration in life again. The majorization of inclusive clothing such as home wear, casual wear, sportswear and pajamas is the product of designers combining the characteristics of the current times with clothing that leads mankind towards a healthy and enjoyable abundance. In the epidemic, people are starting to work from home, and this has a huge market value. The home office trend is impacting on the traditional professional wear market, and with this trend, casual wear with a sense of comfort and sophistication has emerged. This force is driving a new generation of business casual. To name a few examples, Maison Margiela has delved into home and office

wear with boxy casuals, layered with hooded sweatshirts and shirts for a more tailored and sophisticated look; WHOLEGARMENT has adopted 3D printing technology to create seamless knitwear, which improves comfort and fit. Minimalist clothing is also a type of inclusive clothing in terms of shape, where the simplicity of the garment without complications highlights the person themselves, not the clothes. It perfectly flatters the figure without stealing the limelight.

5 Analysis of Marketing Strategies for Inclusive Clothing

5.1 Sustainable Development

In domestic and international clothing markets, inclusive clothing is a market that is easy to be ignored by brands, because it does not cover a large enough crowd, belonging to that part of the long tail demand, with the rise of the Internet, this niche demand slowly gets some satisfaction, but the overall market is not yet standardized, the brand is also relatively scattered. Therefore, inclusive clothing is used for greater market potential and can be marketed through the following aspects.

In the first place, the quality requirements of inclusive clothing should be up to standard and implement the concept of “sustainable development” [10]. According to consumer psychological analysis, it is concluded that consumers generally have the psychology of seeking truthfulness, the high practicality and comfort of inclusive clothing, which can attract a large number of loyal customers who pursue simplicity and generosity [11].

5.2 Star Effect

Secondly, the implementation of “star effect” for marketing is also a mean. According to the consumer’s emulation psychology, consumers have a herd-like motivation to buy, the core of which is “not to be left behind”, they are sensitive to social trends and the surrounding environment, always want to follow the trend. This is where celebrity endorsements are needed. For inclusive clothing, a large part of the audience is plus-size girls, so customers can ask celebrities with high social media profiles and a large body to endorse them, such as Naomi Watanabe, Ashley Graham and Tess Holliday. By using celebrities to carry their products, customers can gain a large following and increase sales [12]. Most importantly, customers can promote the idea of inclusive clothing through celebrities’ retweets on social media platforms, with their own opinions and support. This will not only increase the sales of the product, but also spread the positive energy of the message so that every girl can be confident in being herself.

5.3 Philosophy

Use inclusive clothing concepts to strike a consumer resonance with specific groups. The rising social status of women has made them a powerful consumer group. To capture the consumer mentality of women, the most eye-catching thing is to speak up for women. The world’s prejudices give women a sense of ‘shame’, both psychologically and physically,

and it's up to brands to push back against that shame. The body modification of inclusive clothing greatly reduces women's body shame, and the confidence it brings reduces mental shame. This product concept is in line with the marketing strategy and is highly feasible. Using the name "Appreciate Yourself, Accept Yourself", it tells women to put their own feelings first and to accept and appreciate their imperfections. Women don't have to worry about their body shape or the little bit of fat on their body, they have to believe that they are beautiful and instead of bringing "anxiety" to women, they should be relieved from the pressure of the world. This is what inclusive clothing brings to women, it doesn't cover the body completely, but rather it flatters the figure, thus avoiding the shortcomings. Such a brand concept underlines the brand's tone of voice and will be a lasting hit with the female population.

5.4 Models

For the models of inclusive clothing, it is necessary to ask people with different body types to show the clothes, so as to give the clothes more different possibilities and maximise the absolute inclusiveness of the inclusive clothing. Nowadays, more and more brands are employing plus-size models, such as Rihanna's lingerie brand SAVAGE X FENTY, which abandoned the traditional models with slender bodies and used models of different shapes and sizes at New York Fashion Week 2019 [13], and they showed themselves freely on stage, presenting a thousand different beauties and performing an extraordinary fashion show. The show was an extraordinary fashion show. This show directly impacted people's eyes, breaking the stereotype of thinness as beauty and bringing people into a new era of diversified aesthetics. With such a deep-rooted concept, the brand's website search hits rose, brand keywords on the Internet also increased, and sales skyrocketed. So the use of plus-size models allows consumers to see more clearly the diversity and inclusiveness of the brand, and more importantly, the brand attitude. The concept of guiding women to focus on themselves and recognizing their self-worth is truly engraved into the brand's DNA, and consumers can be encouraged to exude confidence when wearing inclusive clothing.

6 Conclusion

Inclusive clothing aims to let every woman find clothes that fit her and eliminate "body anxiety". The concept expressed by inclusive clothing shows the progress of an era of thinking, including but not limited to the growth of individualism and the rise of free will. Inclusive clothing is conceptually a garment that is suitable for all body types. In terms of design elements, the silhouette and lines of the garment can modify the figure; not only will it not wholly cover the characteristics of the constitution, but it also can sufficiently express the formation of each person, highlighting the characteristics of each person. This also allows people to look at the shortcomings of their own body shape and accept them, so that they can build on their strengths and avoid their weaknesses. Regarding market trends, each figure has its own outstanding characteristics. Thus, the consumer base for inclusive clothing is huge. From the marketing strategy, in the digital era, it is necessary to spread the concept of inclusive clothing to attract more followers, and

expand the market through the publicity of people with great social exposure. However, inclusive clothing has certain limitations. Although inclusive clothing is said to modify the body, but this also tends to make people ignore their health, if they do not care about the body at all, they may slowly become obese people, which causes great harm to the human body. Although it is said to be confident, it is also to be built on health. The author hopes that the future size range of inclusive clothing can be determined according to the BMI index, so that women can be themselves in health. The author believes that after many years, inclusive clothing must be a big trend.

References

1. Sun Yue. A study on the relationship between contemporary women's fashion and body shame [D]. Beijing Institute of Fashion, 2021. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.26932/d.cnki.gbjfc.2021.000071>.
2. Li, Baohua & Shang, Hongjuan. (2022). The rise and fall of the Victorian female girdle and its shape characteristics [J]. *Western Leather* (12), 35-37.
3. Brandy Melville. <https://us.brandymelville.com/>
4. Behin Hiei." A study on the trend of clothing design concept and style in the post-epidemic era [J]." *Tianjin Textile Science and Technology* .05(2022):13–16. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.13518/j.cnki.tjst.2022.05.002>.
5. Ami Cross Border, 2023. inclusive sizing, can it be a high potential business strategy for apparel category sellers in the future? https://www.sohu.com/a/643254121_121660617
6. Li Qingyun, 2023. World Obesity Federation: Half of the global population could be overweight by 2035. <https://m.huanqiu.com/article/4Bxn2J84Apw>
7. Tencent Web. Americans Report Unexpected Changes in Their Weight and Increased Alcohol Consumption. 2021. <https://new.qq.com/rain/a/20210313A06ZEC00>
8. Huang, Cong. The construction of women's self-awareness by new media in the context of "her economy"[J]. *Sound Screen World*,2022(05):101-103.
9. Sun Yue. A study on the relationship between contemporary women's fashion and body shame [D]. Beijing Institute of Fashion, 2021. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.26932/d.cnki.gbjfc.2021.000071>.
10. Li Yurui, Wang Qiuyue. Research on sustainable clothing brand marketing strategy[J]. *China Market*,2021,No.1094(31):10–11.DOI: <https://doi.org/10.13939/j.cnki.zgsc.2021.31.010>.
11. Zhao Ran. Analysis of marketing strategy based on the change of consumer psychology [J]. *Modern Business*,2022(20):18-20.DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14097/j.cnki.5392/2022.20.057>.
12. Ma Jie. Analysis of the "star effect" strategy in media marketing [J]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.19932/j.cnki.22-1256/F.2022.10.044>.
13. NOWRE, 2019. Rihanna with Savage x Fenty Fall 2019 Collection at Fashion Week. <http://test.nowre.com/fashion/451006/rihanna-xie-savage-x-fenty-2019-quijixili-liangxiangshizhuangzhou/>

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

