

# A Study on Design Features of Unisex Young Casual Wear

Hyun-Soon Kim

Dept. of Fashion Design, Daegu Mirae College

## 유니섹스 영 캐주얼웨어의 디자인 특성에 관한 연구

김 현 순

대구미래대학 패션디자인과  
(2001. 6. 29 투고)

### ABSTRACT

본 연구에서는 유니섹스 영 캐주얼웨어의 국내브랜드를 중심으로 고찰한 후 그 디자인 특성에 대해 살펴 보고 한 시대의 패션현상을 규명하고자 하는데 그 목적이 있다. 연구방법은 국내 패션시장의 유니섹스 영 캐주얼웨어에 대한 디자인 특성을 살펴보기 위해 신세대의 하위문화와 국내브랜드 시장조사를 통한 유니섹스 영 캐주얼웨어의 동향에 대한 일반적 고찰을 한 후 영 캐주얼웨어의 브랜드를 디자인의 차이에 따라 분류하고, 그 디자인 특성을 컬러, 소재, 스타일, 아이템별로 구분하여 분석하였다. '00 S/S, '00 F/W의 유니섹스 영 캐주얼웨어 브랜드를 중심으로 고찰해 보고자 패션 정보잡지와 인터넷의 패션사이트를 검색하였다.

유니섹스 영 캐주얼웨어의 브랜드별 시장조사를 통한 그 결과는 다음과 같다.

1. 영상매체, 대중음악, 스포츠, 스타문화로 나타난 신세대의 하위문화는 탈중심성, 탈국경화, 의미의 해체 등의 포스트모던적 문화현상이며, 유니섹스 영 캐주얼웨어는 자유와 개성을 추구하는 신세대의 라이프 스타일을 잘 반영한 하위문화의 복식양식으로서 현대 패션에 영향을 미치고 있다.
2. 기성복업체는 신세대가 가지고 있는 새로운 욕구와 감성을 겨냥한 브랜드를 개발하고 판매촉진을 위해 전력을 다하는 과정에서 신세대의 하위문화를 반영한 유니섹스 영 캐주얼웨어의 일반적인 복식양식을 형성하였다.
3. 국내시장의 유니섹스 영 캐주얼웨어는 디자인 특성에 따라 컴포터블 캐주얼웨어, 스포츠 캐주얼웨어, 힙합 캐주얼웨어로 구분된다.

Key words : 컴포터블 캐주얼웨어(comfortable casual wear), 스포츠 캐주얼웨어(sports casual wear), 힙합 캐주얼웨어(hip-hop casual wear), 하위문화(subculture), 신세대(new generation)

## I. INTRODUCTION

The society based on multimedia and information has brought diversity as it was created and developed by the new people who have different lifestyle and views of life from those in the past. These social changes created the new generation for targeting in terms of market sector and the culture of this new generation emerged as the most important issue in mass culture of 1990s.

Smith defined fashion as a reflection of social change. Within any society there are three types of patterns that engage change: socioeconomic patterns, political patterns, and cultural patterns.<sup>1)</sup> Social Change may occur in the cultural environment. It involves changes in knowledge, artistic and literary styles, ideas and beliefs, and modes of behavior. As it relates to fashion change, other changes occurring within a society create an environment that stimulates a society need for innovations in clothing. Clothes express the spirit of the age, it follows that we can use changing fashions as an indication of a changing society.<sup>2)</sup> Fashion does indeed communicate, but not in the manner of speech or writing: what it communicates has mostly to do with the self, chiefly our social identity as this is framed by cultural values.<sup>3)</sup> As part of a society's material culture, fashion can effectively be studied as an example of cultural change.

The new generation wants a unique identity to differentiate themselves from the existing generation, and this trend is expressed in their clothing, hair style, and cultural tastes. Their unique subculture has been a sweeping influence on overall fashion trends. They are also analyzed to have their own unique value system to match their unique appearance, which can also differentiate them from the existing generation.<sup>4)</sup>

In particular, according to many studies, the new generation is self-oriented and place emphasis on their unique characteristics.

While the ready-to-wear market has become depressed after the so called IMF crisis, the unisex young casual wear market targeting the new generation has recorded continuous growth. They are found to be the central generation that has the biggest effect on moving fashion. Since they actually lead modern fashion trends with their strong purchasing ability and fashion leadership, fashion-related companies regard their market as a very important market segment. They have become the center of attraction of the ready-to-wear market, which reflects the overall culture and situation of a society.

Understanding unisex young casual wear's market will aid in the study of fashion change of new generation. In unisex young casual wear's market, how this subculture of new generation is interpreted through the fashion process and use of clothing products needs exploration. However, most studies have been on the fashion awareness and street fashions of the new generation. There have been few studies on the ready-to-wear markets.

In this regard, this study aims to explore domestic brands of unisex young casual wear, the characteristics of their design, and further to clarify the fashion phenomena of the postmodern era. This study will consider the trends in unisex young casual wear using market surveys on domestic brands and the subcultures of new generation as its methodology to explore the design features on unisex young casual wear in the domestic fashion market. Then, it will classify young casual wear brands according to differences in design and analyze the design features for each color, material, style and item. (Table 1) The researcher will surf fashion sites on the Internet

and read fashion magazines in order to explore which unisex young casual wear brands were popular in 2000 spring/summer and 2000 fall/winter.

## II. THE GENERAL CONSIDERATION

### 1. The subculture and fashion

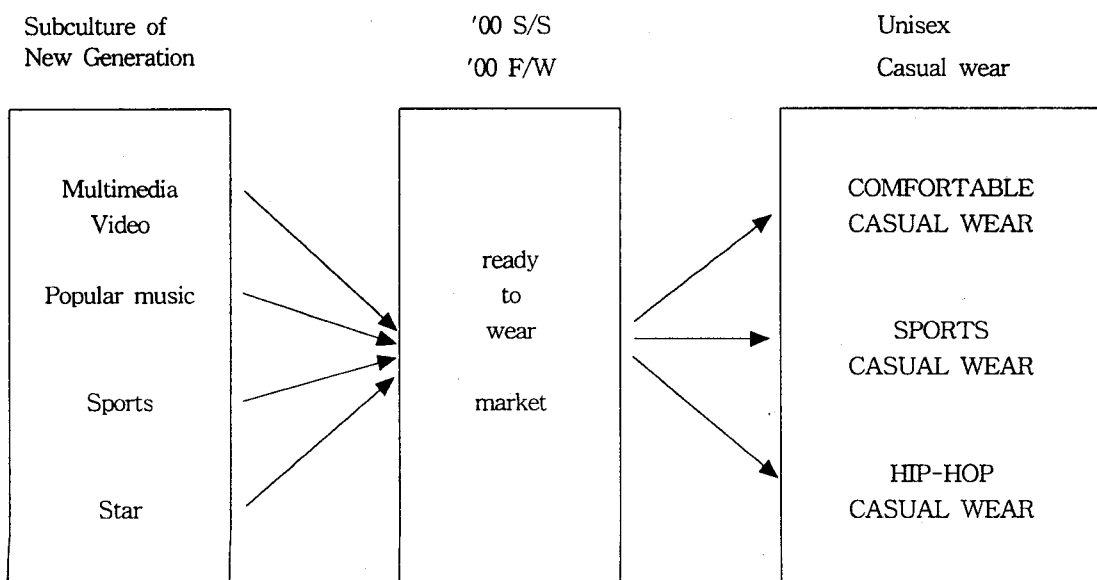
Culture is viewed as the distinctive way of life of a group of people. Cultural influences not only affect the form which changing fashion objects take, but also affect the speed of the change within a society. A culture in a society is not one unified entity, but has various forms of subcultures which are prescribed by lifestyle, behavior, value system, problem and conditions of each subgroup.

With regard to the definition of subculture, Hartley<sup>5)</sup> defined the subculture as comprising the positions and conflicts that specific social groups face in the social and historical structure of a

wider culture. Williams<sup>6)</sup> defined the subculture as a specific lifestyle that expresses certain meanings and values in behavior. According to Brake<sup>7)</sup>, culture shows the aspects in which subcultures, arguing the justness of their lifestyles, value systems, behavior will resist the mainstream culture. In addition, Swingwood<sup>8)</sup> mentioned that capitalism creates a variety of consumers with diverse culture and that consumption is therefore diverse.

Fashion change exists within a board cultural context. Most significance is the increased visibility and influence of youth subcultures.<sup>9)</sup> Many of their ideals of social equality, anti-materialism, environmental concern and practicality rather than status symbolism have been communicated to the mass population.<sup>10)</sup> Eventually the unique style of a subculture may be noticed by the larger population and admired for its creativity, artistic excellence, or appropriateness to current life-styles. The style can emerge from its subcultural origin and diffuse into the larger

<Table 1> The method of study



population.<sup>11)</sup> In Behling's fashion change model<sup>12)</sup>, fashion influences move in an upward form from the street via the youth. This diffusion could occur by the Subcultural Innovation Theory referred to as a trickle-up process.<sup>13)</sup>

Society values youthful images, encouraging the diffusion of young styles to older segments of the population. The youth culture has long been identified as a distinct cultural segment of postmodern society. The new generation favors innovation and change, making the youth culture a natural testing ground for new styles, and much of fashion merchandising is directed at youthful tastes. The ready-to-wear market mechanism may take control, as mass production makes the object available throughout consumer markets. The fashion-conscious young are often active adopters and leaders of some mass-marketed fashion trends.<sup>14)</sup> These conditions combine to propel young consumers to the center of fashion leadership.

From this aspect, the subculture is formed by modifying the mainstream culture with their own form as the reaction of subgroups to the existing mainstream culture. The subculture becomes a leader of fashions by its ability to invent new styles. Several features of postmodern society favor subcultural leadership in mass market. The fashion of postmodern has been created by youth subcultures which have different value systems and life styles, different from the past. In particular, the fashion is swayed by new generations who put emphasis on the individual personality and pursue changes continuously. They deny the existing value system and fixed idea on apparel, and pursue unique fashion with their own sense and manners.

## 2. The subculture of new generation

The new generation have acquired new tastes and emotion as they grew up under the social and cultural changes of 1980s.<sup>15)</sup> They form its own subcultures through the process of selecting the mainstream culture and giving meaning to it. They also has the cultural potentiality and the cultural changes they accept have sweeping influence on the society. The subculture by new generation may be considered to youths who share a uniquely identified pattern of values and life-style. And their subculture is the mainstream culture that leads fashion of the postmodern era. Multimedia video, popular music, sports, and stars are often part of the popular culture which influences the form of their fashion.<sup>16)</sup>

### 1) Multimedia video

The new generation has grown with up the ~~fields, multimedia and video games~~<sup>17)</sup> ~~include~~ ~~They also~~

form the most important market in the multimedia video industry. One of reasons why the culture of the new generation become the main focus of popular culture in 1990s is that they are the best in adapting to image-oriented cultural situations, which emerged with IT revolution. The most representative postmodern multimedia video culture of the new generation can be seen in MTV, various product commercials and electronic games.

MTV not only combines the internal worlds of the youth with different race, language and culture from different countries, but also demonstrates the functions combining them to same music and fashion in external structures. With the start of MTV, music and fashion began to go hand in hand for younger teenage group.<sup>18)</sup> Along with MTV, other television program has

influenced fashion. MTV broadcasts one short video clips after the other, changing continually using de-centrality rather than making the viewers absorbed in one story.<sup>19)</sup> Music video breaks down the boundaries among various genres, and makes individual image content meaningless. Cultural features of electronic games are the culture of simulation and pastiche. Games are certain type of fictional worlds and can be storied or changed within programmed scope according to the intention of the user.

The preference on the senses of consuming the atmosphere and image, over the value of the product, and the expression of resistance to the existing generation and denial of unification of new generation coincide with the trends of multimedia video culture. Also, multimedia serves as a stage on which new designs can gain social visibility. This shows the postmodern cultural features which has no entity or unified centers, and show up as consumption tendencies which prefer emotional aspects, such as image, rather than the practical value of product. That is, new emotions of the new generation are related to the features of the multimedia video culture they enjoy.

## 2) Popular music

Popular music plays the most important part role in the element of identity of subculture, and represents the culture of new generation. Teenagers learn to recognize particular values and specific orientations to social life, encouraging self-definition. These representations may also act to link the young to the adult world, a form of anticipatory socialization.<sup>20)</sup> The new generation also wants to have their own world through popular music, which is not invaded by others. Popular music is mainly hip-hop, reggae and dance music. Originally, this music comes from

black slums and expresses their complaints and resistances to society. It forms the mainstream of modern popular music and becomes the subculture of the world.

Strong rap music with a fast beat is a particular way of saying something. R stands for Rthme and Rhythm, and P means poetry and politics. The symbolic meaning of Rap is the expression of strong complaints to the existing generation, and represents the postmodern disorganization of linguistic meaning which delivers rhythm first than words. It features a sense of fast rhythm and exceptional narration. In addition, the exaggerated body and dance movements pursue free and dynamic physical features, and this means the freedom from the existing value system of existing generation. That is, the pursuit of physical features means resistance to authoritarianism, the rediscovery of the body as freedom from all ideologies, and appears in all veins of cultures.<sup>21)</sup>

Reggae music originated from the folk music of Jamaica in 1960s and widely accepted by the new generation as the music that expresses the unique cultural identity of the followers of Rastafarian movement, which was popularized by young West Indians in Britain and United State in 1960s and 1970s. Rastafarian people expressed the identity and self-respect of black people, refused to be absorbed in European society, and insisted on getting back to their African roots.<sup>22)</sup> They followed the Ethiopian emperor whose real name was Ras Tafari, wore red, yellow and green clothes, which represented the colors of Ethiopia, and sang Reggae music, expressing the group identity.<sup>23)</sup> Rap music entered domestic as a commercial product, and formed one subculture through the process of selecting and accepting by new generation. This is the consumption type of a given cultures.

These popular musics of the new generation were globalized through MTV and showed the crossed national boundaries. Popular music can be analyzed as a form of expressing and relieving desires which has been suppressed by normal rules and restrictions. The new generation pursues their identity of resistance to the value systems of existing culture and targets singer as their sexual symbols. In addition, they are enthusiastic about the popular music, since it provides a way to relieve stress and physical oppression and shows their desire through physical behavior.

In this regard, the tastes of popular music can be regarded as the inclinations of the new culture and resistance to the existing culture. The construction of their own imaginary worlds through popular music can be analyzed to mean resistance to the existing culture and the pursuit of identity through popular music as a means of escaping from the daily life. That is, popular music is the expression of the new generation of physical feature, de-centrality and image-oriented attitude.

### 3) Sports

The general public can enjoy sports due to the improvements in the standard of living, the expansion of leisure time and the growth of cities. The expansion of leisure time forms the objective conditions for the general public to directly participate in the sports.<sup>24)</sup> Martin Jacques suggested that modern time is the era of sports, and sports dominates all areas of life and dominates the culture in 1990s as rock dominated the culture in 1960s and 1970s.<sup>25)</sup> In the late 20th century, sports became so widely popularized that everyone enjoyed them, and the demand for sports wear and goods rapidly increased.

People don't only watch sports games, but also them cultural meaning and style as they spend

their leisure time and money. Sports were possible due to the value and meaning of products, the formation and development of city spaces, and allows the general people who watch sports to consume to their tastes by producing social activities and mental presentation. Sports are the target of the individual to enjoy their free time in the private sector, as well as a target directly related to products and changes of capitalistic production in the public sector.

Sports can be commercialized in the changes of life styles.<sup>26)</sup> Sport does not just remain as sports, but has huge influence on overall areas of cultures such as business, politics, arts, TV, fashion and designs. Modern sports have emerged as being symbolic on the street, on TV, and in newspapers and magazines. In 1990s, sports and leisure became one part of life which cannot be overlooked in life styles of modern people and came to stay as one genre of fashion trends. Sports which can be utilized as popular entertainment are related to TV media and provide great entertainment through TV. As various sports programs became big events, it creates the idol of youth. Mass media, in particular, TV culture presents the image of sports hero as ideal type and influences on the trends of clothes. Sports have become more popular, fashion has been influenced more by sports wear.

The conception of sports wear also expanded from the clothes related to specific sports to the wider casual wear market. The sports wear worn by the athletes has influenced the clothing worn by professional and amateur athletes in the sports as well as on non-sports wear which draws its inspiration from sports apparel.<sup>27)</sup> The forms of sports also diversified to include street basketball, rollerblading, skateboarding and snowboarding. The pattern of postmodernism prefers sensible things and puts focus on the appearance of the

new generation who enjoy street basketball while listening to Rap or hip-hop music, and wear suitable clothing for this atmosphere.<sup>28)</sup> The new generation satisfies their restricted bodies' desire through sports.

#### 4) Star

In the 20th century, broadcasting and entertainment through mass media reflect the society of the time and have sweeping effects on overall aspects of society and culture. Its effects on the fashion cannot be ignored. As the phenomenon of general subculture which appears in the popular culture of capitalism, selects specific stars and accepts them in their cultures. They are very assertive and have tendency to express their desire and mind-set to differentiate their cultural tastes from those of others. Fan clubs bind people of the same or similar ages, the same tastes, and those who share the aggressive attitude of accepting popular music. They want to pursue something new and with their own unique character, while maintaining the identity within the group people with similar ages.

In recent years, the music video has spurred the fashion influence of music star. Popular stars leading the popular culture have big influence on the cultural fashion and provides the model of appearance, behavior and style. The new generation prefers the style and image of a specific star and become who they want to be in order to fulfill their desires. Music and dress offer growing adolescents a means of self-definition. Although the influence of music on fashion is complex, it primarily stems from the musical performers often serve as fashion change agents.<sup>29)</sup> In particular, they confirm their identities by purchasing various products to imitate the clothing, bags, hair-style, etc. of entertainers. The style of stars of the new generation is the expression of freedom which

normal people cannot practice in their lives.

Besides sports stars are also an ideal type that new generation wants to identify themselves with. Sports stars are a symbol of identity. The frantic fever of new generation on sports, focusing on street sports, encouraged the new generation to enjoy running shoes or T-shirts of sports stars. Running shoes and T-shirts which are preferred by stars play a symbolic role to all teenagers of the world. Sports stars become people who the new generation wants to be like and regarded as a successful image and consumption type. The costumes worn by stars do much to legitimize and popularize current fashion trends.

In addition, Stars generate profits for companies. To the new generation, a star is an ideal type of person who is gorgeous, heroic and sexy, and is an important target who can sway the success or failure of businesses in the modern culture industry.<sup>30)</sup> Stars are utilized in CF or advertising model to stimulate the consumption and sales of products, as an important link that encourages the desire of consumers to purchase. Star brand marketing using these stars is widely utilized as a method to improve the image of companies and brands. Apparel companies have used star marketing through existing entertainers as a short-term mean, to maximize the advertising effects to the consumers who are in line with this trend. On the other hand, recent star marketing is utilized as a long-term promotion strategy to improve the image of brands and company.

As mentioned above, the features of subculture of the new generation can be expressed as the concepts of resistance, personality, freedom, individualism and sensual hedonism. The subculture of new generation are not created by voluntary desires and production capacity, but

expressed as their new desires and emotions, which are different from the consumption of products as given by the existing system, which was introduced from the western world and commercialized in the domestic market.

New generation with strong personality, is not only accustomed to existing media, but also all heterogeneous elements of the restoration and up-to-date trends are combined using various new media such as mobile phone, PC game and Internet. The needs of postmodernistic communication appears, which accommodate everything of the world. That is, Sports, dance, fashion and Internet freely cross the boundaries of various cultures. This can be regarded as the postmodern cultural phenomena, such as de-centrality, de-nation, diversity and dissolution of meaning.

In addition, new generation is enthusiastic about the music mixed with Reggae and hip-hop, which in turns has influence on the fashion, one factor of culture and creates the boom of casual wear. Ready-to-wear companies should form unisex young casual wear of new generation while developing and promoting the brands, targeting new emotion and sense that the new generation has. In the postmodern era when the individual lift-style becomes more important, apparel companies should closely examine the power of this mania and look into the subcultures of new generation.

### 3. Trend of unisex young casual wear

After the late 1980s, domestic fashion has witnessed unisex young casual wear transcending the boundaries of sex due to the globalization. It is very popular, and fashion companies have accelerated the development of unisex young casual wear brands. As the import was liberalized

in full in the middle of 1990s, various kinds of famous casual brands have advanced into Korean market including Benetton, Calvin Klein. While these brands aggressively launched their products into the market, targeting the young in their 10s and 20s with various designs and price, the domestic casual wear began to be shaken due to nationwide economy crisis which brought the bailout package from IMF.

After IMF, the market of unisex casual wear has put focus on the middle and low-priced market, considering the reasonable purchasing patterns of the consumer. This increased the sales of middle and low-priced brands, including GIORDANO, SPOON and TBJ, which well reflected the reasonable and practical needs of consumers.<sup>31)</sup> The main target of unisex young casual wear, the new generation in the age range of 17 to 25, gets easily accustomed to existing media, and widely uses new media, including PC games and the Internet.<sup>32)</sup> They are also enthusiastic about hip-hop music, dance and sports. The globalization by this new generation has affected domestic brands.

As sports have formed the foundation of life from the late 1990s, and provided a motive to the means of communication, the domestic trends of young casual wear are largely represented as comfortable casual wear, sports casual wear, hip-hop casual wear.<sup>33)</sup>

Comfortable young casual wear shows continuous growth in the market. Maru, NII, and TBJ, followed by GIORDANO form formidable 4 zoning, are based on sales networks with nationwide branch stores. These brands put focus on differentiating themselves from other brands as the competition in this market is extremely severe. Recording sales of 130 billion won in 2000, GIORDANO attained first position, MARU, NII and Grimm has appeared as promising new



brands.<sup>34)</sup> These brands present the refined materials and products, while launching high sense products with comfortable and refined silhouette. Existing brands have also strived to develop new items focusing on this trend.

In sport casual wear market, Sport Replay occupies the 1st position.<sup>35)</sup> Sport Replay is known to have opened the era of sports casual wear in the domestic sports casual wear market. According to the a survey of Texjournal, they created the new concept of unisex casual by mixing sports and hip-hop casual and widely attracted a good reputation by launching various accessories and comic character of Sexy lion.<sup>36)</sup> In addition, the new brands of SPOON and D-PULSE in 2000 has jointly become number one brands and the sports casual wear market is expected to show very active trends.<sup>37)</sup>

In addition, new brands have formed the middle and low-priced character market, by adding sensitivity to the price and quality of middle and low-priced brands, and tried the de-single-products approach, breaking from the single product composition. They also promote star marketing with famous entertainers, in order to raise the awareness of brands. Sales of accessories by casual brand can be seen as an effort to satisfy the needs of new generations.<sup>38)</sup> Since the role of accessories in brand is used as a mean of promotion to enhance the brand awareness since the frequency of exposure is high, or to attract the sales by improving the purchasing ability rather than purpose purchase. In addition, accessories can be a medium with which people can freely express the brand concept which cannot be perfectly expressed by clothes, and plays a role of satisfying various needs of new generations since it adds the change and freshness following the trends.

As practical comfortable casual boomed after

the IMF crisis, and Rap music and Techno music strongly emerged in popular music, the new generation began to look for fashions suitable for techno and cyber music, generating hip-hop casual wear.<sup>39)</sup> In the middle of 1970s, the hip-hop, produced by DJ of exclusive African, means new generation which are familiar with fashion, dance, song, consciousness, most popular thinking and style, and drew explosive popularity to the young generation. This popularity was not confined to African American, but spread to all countries in the worlds. Due to this, new market was emerged to serve the hiphop mania. It was not before 1997 and 1998 that hip-hop fashion emerged in domestic market. However, as students studying abroad came back to domestic, the hiphop fashion was gradually known and the demand was also on the increase. With the emergence of DJ DOC · Uptown · HOT · Jeckskies · DIVA who publicly announced itself as the hip-hop musician, new generation began to experience the popularity of hip-hop and this trend became more and more popular. And this trend became stronger with star marketing using star singers such as Uptown · Drunken Tiger · Untitle · Babyboxes.

Currently, the market of new generation experience the peak of diversity which converts the trend to the fashion item that fits their sense. From the aspect of subcultural expression by the postmodern cultural phenomenon of new generation, the market of unisex young casual wear is expected to be more activated.

### III. Design Features of Unisex Young Casual Wear

Unisex young casual wear brands are divided into comfortable casual wear, sports casual wear, hip-hop casual wear, according on the features of

design and subculture of the new generation.  
<Table 2>

### 1. Comfortable Casual Wear

Comfortable casual wear forms the most brand groups with its meaning of American casual wear, and takes the current fashion market with its comfortable and basic design. GIORDANO, TBJ, NII, CASCADE, LITMUS, 1492 miles, a2p, F-4D, V-NESS, CLIDE, RADIO GARDEN, BEAMS, KOOGI DESIGN and GRIMM, MARU belong to this category. <Figure 1>

GIORDANO is a licensed brand providing basic styles, targeting the 10s to 20s, and coordination of single-products among the items of products is possible. Bright colors form the basic color groups, and they identify the needs of consumers well by fully utilizing the trendy color of season, thus recording the highest growth rates. KOOGI DESIGN of KOOGI Adventure put focuses on basic, simple and sexy lines. Emphasizing the

basic casual of high quality casual clothes, they have adopted the clean and clear concept. They analyze the basic and modern easy-style with the unique lines of KOOGI. They plan to appeal to the high-sense consumers with differentiated high-quality products by using high-grade materials and upgrading the details of the materials. In addition, they have a strategy to stimulate the consumption desire of consumers with scarcity of shops. NII launches the Ivy League casual, targeting young people in the age range of 19 to 25, but absorbs a wide range of consumer groups with its traditional features. TBJ differentiates itself from others by reflecting the trends and uses know-how on jeans, as they started with jean brands, rather than adopting basic casual style. MARU holds fast to pure easy casual, and has planned to focus on the construction of a clean and soft image, since it first launched those products in the market. RADIO GARDEN establishes its future direction with a family concept, which is the recent



<Figure 1> Comfortable casual wear  
: GIORDANO, RADIO GARDEN(TEXJOURNAL, 1999. 12)

mainstream and appeals to people in their 10s to 30s by making a soft logo to make the consumer feel comfortable.<sup>40)</sup>

The main target ages are 17-25, but it shows a non-age tendency targeting mass market. Their products are casual styles with comfortable silhouette, a comfortable feeling and soft lines, including slim pants, chino pants, check shirts, T-shirts and sweaters. They adopt the basic colors of white, beige and brown, and uses stable colors of neutral tones. Their materials are natural cotton fabrics with refined sense, a modern and clean appearance, simple coding processed-fabrics, check-patterns of dye, and synthetic materials with cotton. These comfortable casual wears are mainly based on basic colors, T-shirts and denim, focusing on cotton tricot and basic jeans designs. The comfortable casual wear features diverse consumer groups due to their ageless features and de-centrality.

## 2. Sports Casual Wear

Sports casual wear is based on casual wear and re-mixes the functional elements of sports to fit the tastes of new generation. As sports culture is regarded as a kind of daily life culture, it takes a higher percentage in the casual wear market. Adding leisure and sports to the practical, but slightly sensitive casual wear market, the Sports Casual Wear market is the market segment which can highly attract the new generation due to the features of their cultures.

Sports casual wear brands include SPOON, D-PULSE, SPORT REPLAY, IGII SPORT, LITHIUM, GEM STATE, SSAMJI SPORT, GIA.〈Figure 2〉 Launched in the fall/winter season of 1997, SSAMJI SPORT has continuously introduced one-piece items, which are hard to find in sports casual brands. T-shirts series added with the element of Pop Arts have emerged as the most popular item in the summer season. D-PULSE pursues American style fashion trends



〈Figure 2〉 Sports casual wear  
: SPOON, IGII SPORT, GIA(Fashionbiz, 2000. 5)

by connecting American culture with the life styles of young people who enjoy techno, hip-hop music, sports cars and leisure time, while being fairly faithful to their personal development. SPORT REPLAY was started with inspiration from the clothes types, which wear sportswear as casual style clothing. Sport Replay plans to launch products in the niche markets of active sports and comfortable casual.<sup>41)</sup>

16-22 is the main target age range, and its products are based on bright and trendy colors. In particular, the modern and sporty colors of indigo blue form the mainstream. They adopt transparent nylon fabric, textured materials, polyesters, mixed material with cotton, stretched synthetic fabrics, basic denim and cotton fabrics. As for design, they adopt the modern sports image style, which is different from existing sports details. Elastic Band, Draw string pants, Zip-up style jumper, and semi-loose and athletic styles remind us of training wear.<sup>42)</sup>

Along with these trends, various accessories

have emerged to accompany sports casual wear. This new presentation of products fulfills the desire of teenagers who pursue individual characteristics and diversity. The new generation expresses its characteristics with various accessories ranging from necklaces, baseball caps, headgears, and low bags in a shoulder. Accessories are utilized as a method of promoting awareness of brands while recognized as a target to freely express brand concepts. They encourage sales by stimulating the purchasing ability of the new generation, and mainly use basic and trendy colors.

### 3. Hip-hop Casual Wear

This market emerged as a promising market as Rap and hip-hop music became popular and is frequently used by famous singers on TV. This market is a tunnel of communication as the center of culture for teenagers. This hip-hop culture takes the leading position in the fashion market at



<Figure 3> Hip-hop casual wear  
: MF (TEXJOURNAL, 2000. 3)

home and abroad, as the national boundaries are disregarded. Hip-hop casual wear expresses mental freedom, physical comfort as well as having a loose silhouette and vivid colors.(Figure 3)

This hip-hop casual wear produces colors and styles suitable to the emotion of Koreans, rather than just simulating foreign brands. As consumer groups obsessed with fads are expanding to the general public, hip-hop casual wear has appeared in brands with a variety of concepts with the addition of its own analysis for each brands, targeting various distribution networks.<sup>43)</sup>

QUICKSILVER, MF, and TIME ZONE belong to this category. MF is a brand of hip-hop casual wear for the new generation who are between 17 and 19, and has succeeded the domestic hip-hop casual market. These styles are from the expe-

ssion of their own characteristics, freedom and resistance to the existing generation.<sup>44)</sup>

The main target Age ranges are from 16 to 19, and is a relatively low class target than comfortable casual wear. They adopt mainly colorful and vivid colors and add the natural tones of beige and khaki color. As for textiles, they use washing processed denim with the feeling of worn-out, mixed materials and trimmed cross-overs. In terms of style, they use Baggy pants with a wide girth, a loose T-shirts, knitted sweaters and tank tops to put priority on comfort, regardless of T.P.O., as their main items.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The new generation has emerged as the main cultural entity in 1990s after growing up in

<Table 2> Design features of Unisex young casual wear

	COMFORTABLE CASUAL WEAR	SPORTS CASUAL WEAR	HIP-HOP CASUAL WEAR
COLOR	neutral tone basic colors  white, beige & brown	full tone group bright colors sky blue, pink, red blue color group	add natural tone vivid colors  beige & khaki color
MATERIAL	natural cotton fabrics denim check-patterns of dye synthetic materials with cotton	transparent nylon textured materials, polyesters mixed material with cotton, stretched synthetic fabrics	denim with the feeling of worn-out denim and cottons mixed materials trimmed cross-overs
STYLE	comfortable style A semi shape	athletic style A semi-loose shape	hip-hop style A loose shape
ITEM	T-shirts check pattern shirts slim pants	hooded T-shirts Elastic Band Zip-up style jumper Draw string pants	a loose T-shirts knit sweater tank top Baggy pants

economical affluence. They show their own cultural features, which are different from those of the existing generation, in several aspects. The subculture of the new generation is expressed in multimedia video culture, popular music, sports and star. These groups do not draw distinction in the concepts of age, size and sex, and the concept of destruction, postmodernism is the feature of fashion culture of these new generations. The identity of this new generation can be summarized as the coexistence of diversity. This subculture has influence on the unisex young casual wear market. The boundaries of T.P.O. have been removed. Free and comfortable physical features have showed up in the sports casual wear market mixed with active sports wear, in comfortable American style casual wear, and in hip-hop casual wear mixed with hip-hop music.

Domestic brands of unisex young casual wear continuously launch new styles in the fashion market, which can express their comfortable and free wearing. As the influence of sports increases more and more, sports casual lines are expected to continuously grow. Middle and low-priced products with high-quality design are continuously launched. Star marketing strategies are carried out using stars that teenagers aspire to be. This also have a substantial influence on the improvement of corporate image and profits.

The design features resulted from the marketplace-research on the brands of unisex young casual wears are summarized as follows.

1. The features of postmodern including individualism, diversification, de-traditionary de-centrality, and disorganization of norms are also reflected in the cultural phenomena of new generation.

2. The unisex young casual wear is a fashion style with subculture well-showing the new

generation's life style aiming toward freedom and individuality, which has an effect on the postmodern fashion.

3. The unisex young casual wears are classified into a comfortable casual wear, sports casual wear and hip-hop casual wear according to the difference in their designs.

4. The comfortable casual wear featuring relaxed and affluent life tries to add individuality and sensitivity to an American style of comfortable and practical casual wears to aim toward modernity.

5. The sports casual wear tends to add the sports wear's dynamic and fresh sensitivity to the practical and functional casual wear according that the boundary of sport wears has become ambiguous. While the effect of sports appears in postmodern, the sports casual wear reflecting sports becomes more popular.

6. The hip-hop casual wear has been influenced by the hip-hop or reggae music, the new generation's subculture, therefore, which has been connected to the casual wear. The hip-hop casual wear featuring a simple and natural line is regarded by the new generation as an active and comfortable style. This is also a culture that resists the value of mainstream culture as symbolic means.

7. Both the sports casual wear and hip-hop casual wear appears as a total fashion available for the coordination with a variety of accessories which result from not only the teens' desire for individuality and diversification but the brands' marketing ideas.

As explained above, the subculture of new generation appears as the pursuit of style that express the identity of subculture to escape from the social and economic conflict of reality through their symbolic representation behavior.

## REFERENCES

- 1) A.D.Smith, *Social Change: Social Theory and Historical Processes*, Longman, 1976, p.13.
- 2) Robert Lauer & Jeanette Lauer, *Fashion Power*, Prentice-Hall, 1981, p.18.
- 3) Fred Davis, *Fashion, Culture, and Identity*, The university of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1992, p.191.
- 4) Young Seon Namkoong, A study on the culture of clothing of subgroups among adolescents by residence, *Journal of the Korean society of clothing and textiles*, 23(5), 1999, pp.623-634.
- 5) Hartley, *Culture, Media, Language*, Hutchinson, 1980, p.48.
- 6) R. Williams, *The Long Revolution*, Chatto & Windus, 1961, p.57.
- 7) M. Brake, *The Sociology of Youth Culture and Youth Subculture in America*, RKP, 1985, p.3.
- 8) A. Swingewood, *The Myth of Mass Culture*, Macmillan, 1977, p.20.
- 9) George B. Sproles, *Changing Appearances*, Fairchild pub., 1994, p.125.
- 10) P. Blumberg, The decline and fall of the status symbol, *Social problems* 21, 1974, p.497.
- 11) George B. Sproles, *Changing Appearances*, Fairchild publications, 1994, p.124.
- 12) D.Behling, Fashion change and demographics, *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal* 4, 1985, p.23.
- 13) Gini S. Frings, *Fashion from concept to consumer*, Prentice hall, 1996, p.73, 110.
- 14) George B. Sproles, *Changing Appearances*, Fairchild publications, 1994, pp.125-126.
- 15) Chang Nam Kim, *Understanding of Mass Culture*, Hanul Academy, 1998, p.117.
- 16) George B. Sproles, op. cit., p.58.
- 17) Chang Nam Kim, op. cit., p.167.
- 18) Ruth P. Rubinstein, *Dress Codes*, Westview press, 1995, p.214.
- 19) Ibid., p.175.
- 20) Ruth P. Rubinstein, op. cit., pp.213-214.
- 21) Chang Nam Kim, op. cit., pp.170-172.
- 22) Juliet Ash, *The Business of Couture*, Unwin Hyman, 1988, pp.208-214.
- 23) R. M. Mulvaney, *Rastafari and Reggae*, Greenwood Press, 1990, p.69.
- 24) Dong Yon Lee, *How to read sports?*, Samin, 1998, p.66.
- 25) Martin Jacques, *Worshipping the body at altar of sport*, *The observer*, July 13, 1997.
- 26) Ibid., pp.67-77.
- 27) Alder, *Sports fashion*, Avon Books, 1980.
- 28) *Texjournal*, 1999.6, p.166.
- 29) George B. Sproles, op. cit., p.61.
- 30) *Fashionbiz*, 2000.7, pp.84-91.
- 31) *International Textile Newspaper*, 1999.8.30.
- 32) *Texjournal*, 1999.1, p.101.
- 33) *Texjournal*, 1999.6, pp.166-167.
- 34) *Fashionbiz*, 2000.8, pp.246-249.
- 35) *Texjournal*, 1999.12, p.150.
- 36) *Texjournal*, 1999.5, p.220.
- 37) *Texjournal*, The best of best brand, 1999.12, pp.131-152.
- 38) *Texjournal*, 1999.5, p.220.
- 39) *Texjournal*, 1999.5, p.216.
- 40) *Texjournal*, 1999.10-12.
- 41) *Fashionbiz*, 2000.6.
- 42) *Texjournal*, 1999.12-2000.3.
- 43) *Texjournal*, 1999.10-2000.3.
- 44) *Fashionbiz*, 2000.8.