

IJACT 23-9-6

## A Plan to Vitalize the Companion Animal Fashion Market using Domestically Produced Fabrics

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### **Abstract**

*As the number of companion animals reaches 15 million in 2022, the pet wear market is expected to grow at an average annual rate of about 14.5% from KRW 1.5684 trillion in 2014 to a market size of over KRW 6 trillion in 2027. However, most of the pet clothing and various supplies currently in circulation are either cheap, low-quality products imported from China or other countries, or expensive products released by overseas luxury brands. Therefore, it is urgent to develop a brand that can compete with luxury products coming from overseas by developing premium pet fashion products using high-end functional fabrics produced domestically. This study seeks to propose ways to revitalize the domestic pet fashion market by examining the current status of global pet fashion, the domestic textile industry, and the current status of the pet fashion market. The suggestions and expected effects are as follows. First, active support is needed for the development of products using domestically produced fabrics, such as raising awareness through various subsidy projects and contests. Second, it is expected that small and medium-sized businesses will be revitalized through the production of pet fashion products using high-quality functional knit fabrics produced in northern Gyeonggi Province. Third, it is necessary to produce high-quality premium products through continuous and intensive support from the government and collaboration between large corporations and small and medium-sized enterprises. Fourth, there is an urgent need to provide opportunities to train experts for the expected effects of starting businesses and creating new jobs.*

**Keywords:** *Companion Animal, Pet Wear, Companion Animal Fashion Market, Domestic Textile Industry*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Modern society is rapidly becoming a nuclear family, and the elderly and single population are increasing each year. Moreover, as the term Dink (a term coined from the first letters of Dink: Double Income No Kids, which refers to dual-income couples who intentionally do not have children after marriage [1]) is emerging, it is becoming a social issue. This is an international trend, and experts point out that this phenomenon is due to the carefree lifestyle of young people, the increase in women's employment rate, and the time and cost burden of raising children. This phenomenon is a global trend, as people with fewer family members like the Dink family raise pets, and together with the idea that pets are members of the family, even the Din Pet (compound Domestic research across the companion animal market is only at the beginning stage. Moreover, research

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Manuscript received: July 19, 2023 / revised: August 5, 2023 / accepted: August 10, 2023

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In this way, the purpose of this study is as follows according to the social atmosphere in which interest in companion animals is increasing.

First, a review of the current status of domestic and international companion animal fashion products.

Second, consideration of the characteristics of domestically produced functional fabrics.

Third, suggesting the direction of domestic companion animal fashion product development.

It is expected that the results of this study will be basic data that can be used to vitalize domestic companion animal fashion products and related industries.

## 2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Definition of Companion Animal Fashion and Previous Studies

Dog costumes are clothes worn by dogs, and their purpose is to protect the dog's body from the outside weather such as wind and snow, or to be used as a decoration according to the dog guardian's preference. Dogs have sweat glands only in certain parts of the body, such as the soles of their feet, not the entire body like humans, so they do not need clothes to absorb sweat and breathe. In addition, dogs do not wear clothes because their bodies are covered with fur, so they need warmth in summer, but they wear sleeveless T-shirts, capes, and accessories for decorative purposes [3].

There is no clearly systematized standard for classification according to the type of dog clothes, but some studies classify them as follows. Park and Yang (2005) classified them into practical clothes (raincoat, bathrobe, etc.) and decorative clothes (casual clothes, outing clothes, costumes) according to their purpose, and Park (2005) classified them into blouses, knitted clothes, training clothes, cold-weather clothes, bathrobes, and event clothes [4]. J. E. Lee (2012) referred to the classification of pet clothing shopping malls linked to Internet portal sites, and classified dog clothing items into T-shirts, dresses, pants/skirts, knitwear/sweaters, outerwear, bathrobes, special clothes, and panties, and classified them into everyday clothes, going out clothes, and special clothes according to the wearing situation [5].

Various studies are urgently needed according to the rapid growth of the companion animal market. However, current related research is very insufficient. In particular, since 2005, most of the domestic studies have been on the psychological impact of some companion animals or on overall sociality with pets, and research on pet products is limited to research on consumer purchasing conditions or prototype development. This study aims to examine the types of domestic and international companion animal fashion products currently being sold according to the social atmosphere in which interest in companion animals is heightened. In addition, it is intended to develop companion animal fashion products using functional knit fabrics produced in Korea to present a plan for the development of high value-added premium products.

### 2.2 Current Status of Global Companion Animal Fashion



**Figure 1. Global Companion Animal Apparel and Accessories market size**

Image source: <https://www.joongang.co.kr>

A pet is an animal that people like, keep close to, and cherish [6]. A companion animal is an animal that a person keeps and raises to rely on emotionally. Dogs, cats, birds, etc [7]. are recently used to mean a family that lives together for the rest of their lives.

In Korea, the demand for companion animals is gradually increasing due to the increase in single-person households and nuclear families and the aging population. The number of households raising companion animals is steadily increasing from 17.4% in 2010 to 17.9% in 2012, 21.8% in 2015, and 28.1% in 2017 [8]. According to Figure 1, in relation to the increase in pet care, the size of the domestic pet-related market is also showing rapid growth. It is estimated to grow at an average annual rate of about 14.5% from KRW 1.5684 trillion in 2014 to KRW 2.3322 trillion in 2017. Considering this trend, the market size is expected to grow to more than 6 trillion won by 2027. In addition, according to the Korean Intellectual Property Office, design applications for companion animal-related products have increased by an annual average of 21%

over the past six years [9].

As people spend more time at home due to the influence of COVID-19, interest in companion animals for emotional comfort increased, and the demand followed. In result, design applications for related products seem to be lively. As shown in Table 1, as interest in companion animals grows and the market expands, global luxury brands are also releasing clothing and accessories for companion animals. Various products such as pet clothing, collars, leashes, and carrying bags from luxury brands such as Prada, Fendi, Hermes, Louis Vuitton, Dior, Gucci, and Goyard have been released [10] and sold at high prices. Consumption of these premium products is expected to continue in the future as the number of guardians who consider companion animals as members of the family increases.

**Table 1. Overseas luxury pet clothes and pet supplies**












	Prada	Hermes	CHANEL	Fendi	Moncler	Burberry
Clothes						
Supplies						

image source: <https://www.google.co.kr/>

### 3. DOMESTIC TEXTILE INDUSTRY STATUS and COMPANION ANIMAL FASHION MARKET STATUS

#### 3.1 Status of Domestic Textile Industry

Korea is the 6th largest textile exporter in the world and the 5th largest in terms of technology, and the textile industry has international competitiveness in market share and technology. Among them, the northern Gyeonggi region has potential for development as a textile industry cluster. In particular, it is specialized in high-quality knitwear, synthetic fabrics, and multi-product small-lot production systems, and about 90% of domestic high-quality knitwear production is concentrated in northern Gyeonggi-do. Furthermore, functional fabrics produced in northern Gyeonggi occupy about 40% of the world high-end knitwear (golf wear, sports/leisure wear) market, developing into an international textile cluster [11].

In addition, the strength of Gyeonggi-do's textile industry is that it is geographically the best textile material production area as it is adjacent to Seoul, the largest clothing consumption market in Korea. In particular, it has diversified division of labor centering on knit knitting and dyeing/processing industries, securing competitiveness to respond quickly to changes in the global fashion market by establishing a small-lot, multi-item, short-delivery production system [12].

#### 3.2 Current Status of Companion Animal Fashion Market of Large Domestic Companies

According to the Korea Rural Economic Institute, the domestic companion animal market is expected to grow from 1.9 trillion won in 2015 to 6 trillion won in 2027. As the number of 'pet+family' who consider companion animals like family is also rapidly increasing, domestic listed companies are rushing to capture the 6 trillion won pet market [13]. As shown in Table 2, LF HAZZYS launched a dog clothing line in celebration of 'International Dog Day' in 2023, and the 2023 iconic line is a collection of HAZZYS' heritage for over 20

years, including classic pique t-shirts, cable knits, and oxford shirts. This collection consists of key items that reflect the latest trend of creating sophisticated similar looks based on the intimacy between dog owners and their dogs [14].

As shown in Table 2, the 2023 Iconic line is a collection composed of key items containing Hazzys' 20-year heritage, such as classic pique T-shirts, cable knits, and oxford shirts. The latest trend of creating a sophisticated similar look based on the intimacy between the owner and the companion dog is reflected. BYC is said to be on the rise in 2021 by launching 'Garyas', a summer underwear for dogs, winter products Air Mary red underwear and corrugated underwear, and body heat thermal underwear in winter [15]. Black Yak signed a business agreement with Rayfarm Korea in 2021 to develop a new companion animal business market, and launched a companion door (outdoor for companions) product with 'anti-static challenger' that can be easily brushed off even if companion animal hair is attached to it, which was co-developed for three years [16]. As shown in Table 2, in 2021, Kolon Industries expanded the kids fashion brand 'Little Closet' to companion animal products and conducted an animal campaign, but ended the brand operation in 2022 after two years [17]. In addition, 'Handsome' launched companion animal items such as companion animal toys and blankets online and offline in 2018, and 'Olive de Olive' also launched a companion animal lifestyle brand in 2018. Taejin International launched the companion animal brand 'CLOL, Lasferadog, and Kiwi Nancelos' as an in-house editorial brand in 2018 and 2019. In 'Hideaway', some companion animal items were introduced in 2018 within the Life Work brand [18]. As shown in Table 2, pet products from other domestic small and medium-sized companies are sold at mid- to low-priced or low-priced pet products through online retailers. Recently, various products have been released to meet the needs of pet owners who want to communicate with their dogs by wearing clothes of the same brand.

**Table 2. Domestic Pet Clothes Products**







<p>Major Company</p>	 <p>HAZZYS 2023SS Iconic</p>	 <p>BYC Garyas</p>	 <p>Black Yak companion outdoor</p>	 <p>Kolon Industries 'Little Closet'</p>
<p>Small Business</p>	 <p>The K pet</p>	 <p>CHOCOPET HOUSE</p>	 <p>NATURE PET</p>	 <p>DOGPOSE</p>

image source: www.naver.com

However, most of the currently distributed companion animal costumes and various supplies are cheap and low-quality products imported from abroad. Therefore, it is urgent to prepare countermeasures for the rapid movement of domestic companies and the revitalization of the domestic companion animal market according to the increase in the domestic companion animal population.

#### 4. EXPECTATIONS AND DISCUSSION

The following discussions are necessary to revitalize the domestic pet fashion market.

**First. Expanding support for local governments to enlarge the high value-added premium companion animal fashion product market**

In line with the size of the pet market reaching 6 trillion won, a direction for product planning for high value-added premium pet fashion products is needed. In particular, in order to provide an opportunity to expand the domestic premium pet fashion product market, a plan using domestically produced fabrics is needed. Active support is needed for product development, including raising awareness through each subsidy project and contest.

### **Second. Revitalization of small and medium-sized businesses by utilizing functional knit fabrics produced in the northern Gyeonggi region**

It is expected that small and medium-sized businesses will be revitalized through the production of pet fashion products using high-quality functional knit fabrics produced in northern Gyeonggi Province. In particular, if knitted clothing is woven automatically in a factory based on a systematic knit organization, the price can be reduced and pet fashion products that are comfortable and fit well can be produced. In addition, these pet fashion products are expected to help export not only domestically but also overseas.

### **Third. Enhancing global competitiveness through branding of domestic premium fashion goods**

With global luxury brands rapidly increasing their pet market share, it is necessary to devise measures to raise product awareness of domestic companies and stimulate exports, and to produce high-quality premium products through continuous and intensive government support and collaboration between large companies and small and medium-sized enterprises to enhance global competitiveness.

### **Fourth. Establishment of new businesses and new job creation effect**

Due to the increase in single-person households and nuclear families, and the aging population, an era will come when we will be comforted by companion animals and live together. It is expected to contribute to the physical and mental health of the people by supporting the companion animal fashion goods industry for the coming future, as well as young designers' startups and new job creation. Therefore, it is urgent to provide opportunities to nurture experts through individual start-up support.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The fashion industry is competing to dominate the pet wear market. This is because there is an increasing number of 'Pet-Me' who cherish companion animals like their alter ego beyond the 'Pet-Family' who regard companion animals as family. In addition, the pet wear market is expected to grow further as the 'homecock' culture has become commonplace from the start of COVID-19 [19]. Therefore, the conclusions of this study for revitalization of the domestic companion fashion market are as follows.

Due to the increase in the domestic pet population, there is an urgent need for domestic companies to move quickly and prepare measures to revitalize the domestic pet market. As mentioned in the previous chapter, if pet fashion products are produced using high-quality functional knit fabrics produced in northern Gyeonggi Province, along with active support such as raising awareness through various local projects and contests for product development using domestically produced fabrics, domestic pet fashion products can be produced domestically. It will have the effect of revitalizing small and medium-sized businesses. In addition, it is necessary to produce high-quality premium products through continuous and intensive support from the government and collaboration between large corporations and small and medium-sized enterprises. In particular, if various supports for small business owners and individual entrepreneurs are continuously provided, the domestic pet fashion industry will be revitalized.

## **6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

This paper was supported by the Research Fund, 2022, Pyeongtaek University in Korea

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