

Japanese su, and bouchet (2016), choosing a

[Design](#), [Fashion](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Japanese street fashion thrived in this modern world; however, this aesthetics cannot become a mainstream in society.

This subculture has been discussed by several scholars and media internationally and constantly comes under fire domestically. Due to this phenomenon, one of the street fashion styles, Kogyaru and Lolita, will be discussed. The meaning of fashion is not only an expression of aesthetics but also a symbol which is carrying people's notions and identities (Kawamura, 2006). "A fragmented, heterogeneous and individualistic stylistic identification" and the freedom of self-expression (Muggleton, 2002), the messages, which are expressed by the raging fanatics of subculture, also exists in street fashion because it is one of the subcultures. According to Badaoui, Lebrun, Su, and Bouchet (2016), choosing a suitable fashion style for themselves is a process of self-categorization. People will try to identify which style and notions are suitable to their values and identities, then try to adopt it. Through those symbols, people can find out the peers who have close perspectives and sense of fashion. They separated their fashion style from others, create their group identity, have a sense of belonging and collective esteem (Schiele, Venkatesh, Alladi, Graham, John, & Lau-Gesk, Loraine, 2012).

Kogyaru is a generation identity (Jiratanatiteenun, Mizutani, Kitaguchi, Sato, 2012). In the mid-1960s, the female fashion sense was not categorized by class or age, but in the 1990s, Kogyaru wanted to rebel against the parent culture, distinguish themselves from the seniors. Thus, they established their own fashion style to separate the age groups. Those high school girls discovered the sailor-style school uniform, which means Seifuku,

is symbolic of adolescent girls. So, they usually wore the short skirts which are similar to school uniform, “loose socks” to show that they are different from adult women. In Japan, adulthood is representing a lifestyle of hardworking, having a responsibility and duty to society (Hinton, 2013).

The Japanese adolescents are having a negative notion of being an adult. When teenage girls dress up as Kogyaru, they may create a self-esteem, because they are not belonging to the adult age group who are loathed by teenagers. Since Kogyaru is representing a sense of trendy and fashionable (Jiratanatiteenun et al.

, 2012), which is the “individualistic” and “stylistic” identification, being a Kogyaru may also generate a collective esteem. Kogyaru is usually hanging out at Shibuya station (Jiratanatiteenun et al., 2012), the clothing style is a symbol of Kogyaru’s group identity. They can easily find the like-minded person and have a social interaction. Through the uniqueness of fashion style, the self-worth and collective esteem may be enhanced. Since they are different from the ordinary citizens, they may feel they are special and attractive.

Yet they may not satisfy with the dissimilar appearance; therefore, Kogyaru created a unique language and called “Gyaru Moji” (Miller, 2004). For instance, “?????”, means extremely cute, in Gyaru Moji became “???????”. These linguistic forms are constructing their individualism and the sense of belonging, since their languages are uniqueness and not understandable to society, just for the Kogyaru’s group. This language reinforces the group identity of Kogyaru and the collective esteem. Lolita, another street

fashion in Japan, is a traditional feminine identity and a liberation. The appearance of Lolitas dressing up like a Victorian doll, with pale skin, knee length dress, knee-high socks, and blouse. Lolita should be cute, elegant, and exquisite. According to Kawamura's (2012) interview, one of the Lolita said that when she dresses Lolita, she feels like a princess and treated like a true lady.

This dialog reveals that Lolita is a symbol of femininity. Also, other interviewees describe that when she wears Lolita, she feels free and is expressing her real-self, another contends that although her parents and boyfriend do not like Lolita, she still dressing up. The revelation of these conversations is an occurrence of liberation. Muggleton (2002) demonstrate the definition of liberation, a freedom to express oneself when the habit or behavior is prohibited by social norm.

They do not care others' perspectives, just express their desire of pursuing own aesthetics. The adolescent girls in Lolita usually hang out with their peers on the bridge near Harajuku Station, where is the territory of subcultural groups, they may meet others with the same interest and form a group. They have their own website forum, like "Komica", to discuss the brands, style, and events, provide a place for them to communicate with a group of people who are having the same idea and thought, enhance their self-worth. In addition, they created some short forms combined with English and Japanese, such as "JSK", "NOP" and "BL", which are changeable jumperskirt, no sleeve one piece and blouse respectively.

The uniqueness of language used is also helping to construct a stronger group identity. When they use their own language to communicate with others' Lolita, the individualism will be echoing them and build up a sense of belonging and reinforce their social identity. To be concluded, fashion is a symbol for subculturalists to identify the like-minded people and establish their own cultural groups, by holding the creations of unique languages and forums to reinforce the group identity.