iGIANT® Roundtable: Gender Neutral Clothing
Virtual - August 5, 2021

Host List

Rhea Kaw
Youth Ambassador

Aliza Lopez
Lead Youth Ambassador

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Notable Points

- Gender neutral clothing breaks the conformities/norms of genders
  
  i. Promotes more inclusion and defies the idea that clothing is supposed to be "binary" in a sense; increased flexibility and consideration to those whose expression is not defined by “female” or “male” on a gender spectrum.
  
  ii. Style should not have to be conformed to societal norms and should instead reflect personal preferences and comfort.
• Color seems to shape the idea of "gender-specific" clothing (e.g. pink <-> girls, blue <-> boys)
  i. With the addition of gender neutral clothing, this idea of color belonging to a specific gender is being broken down.
  ii. It is becoming more and more common that people wear any color they desire, regardless of what gender it correlates to.

• Encourages individuals to be more expressive; are not limited to a certain set of gendered clothing or expectations
  i. Self-expression is amplified through gender neutral clothing, as people have more options of what they wish to wear and are not limited by traditional ideas of clothing.
  ii. Though dresses / skirts are typically attributed with female fashion, as with suits with male fashion, it is ultimately up to the wearer’s comfort to wear each article of clothing → gender neutral fashion also tackles this idea.

• Breaks the construct of gender stereotypes (traits that are attributed to being more feminine or masculine) - can freely wear what they best identify with
  i. Regardless of their gender, people can take on the traits they desire through clothing, whether it be feminine or masculine.
  ii. Individuals do not feel compelled to conform to what is expected / more inclined to express their true selves through their clothing.

• Point of emphasis may be for gender neutral clothing to combat the stigma around strict conformities; conveys the message that one’s identity should not be constricted
  i. Conventional female and male clothing may promote the image that women / men / individuals are expected to be more feminine, masculine, or generally possess a certain set of characteristics - nonbinary clothing tackles this notion.
  ii. Consequences of expression-related restrictions may include a lack of confidence, despondent mood, reluctance to be seen, etc.
  iii. Gender neutral fashion enables one to have more liberty with their clothing selections, especially by providing a wider range of options → higher satisfaction with themselves / their identity.

• More sustainable - increased flexibility in designs, can be comfortably worn by more people, uses more “environmentally-friendly material,” etc.
  i. If a standard size for gender neutral clothing can be created that accurately caters to the physique of both men and women, then less materials and energy can be expended.
  ii. This size range can be expanded to fit all body types (i.e. multiple sizes) and different functions (i.e. athletic or leisure).
Calls-to-Action

- Engage / host more challenge competitions to foster and stimulate more thought processes for gender-inclusive designs - notably in modern-day fashion.

- Amplify campaigns and promote awareness on the importance / relevance of gender neutral clothing, especially in the age of Generation Z’s viewpoints of expression with fashion → may be done through articles, infographics, and word-of-mouth techniques & networks.

- Recognize the positive environmental, mental, biological, etc. factors and impacts that are attributed to the augmented use of gender neutral fashion; this may serve as a means of promotion / tackling the stigma for other groups.

- Conduct supplemental research on well-fitting gender neutral designs, as clothing should tailor to a broad range of body types, diverse populations, and resonate with the general wearer; advocate for representation and consideration in this sector.