

# Study on the Clothing for the Elderly

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**Abstract:** The focus of this paper is to analyze the elderly and the market to help them to buy more suitable garments. With the increasing in the average age of populations across the world and extending life expectancies, the designers should consider in terms of designing and manufacturing of more functional and fashionable clothing. The potential for supplying improved fit and functional garment for them should be considered. In this paper, from this perspective, the discourses of making an assay of the elderly markets are relevant to the elderly to do more objective selection about their cloth. Based on elaborating the elderly themselves and the market roundly, permitting to improve the elderly's fitting perception of a garment. The special requirements on fabric properties and design applications and their relevance to the provision of functional and aesthetic clothing are to meet their special needs.

**Keywords:** clothing; elderly; market

## 1. Introduction

It is different from the usual practice that the old people over 65 years are identified as the elderly internationally, which our definition of the elderly is over the age of 60 years. Without doubt, longevity is one of the great achievements of the new century.

Statistics show that the world's population is living longer, and an increasingly ageing population will require more and more cloth fitting for them. Elderly people have the same desire to look and feel good as the young, and are surely entitled to the same product choice.

The proportion of older people aged 60 years and over is rapidly increasing worldwide. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development expect that 1 in 3 people will be defined as "ageing" by 2030<sup>[1]</sup>.

### 1.1. Physical status of the elderly

After stepping into Middle-aged, their skin color, somatotype etc, will change inevitably, which is universal. Its characteristics also constitute the Convex and prolapsed; back are broad but flat; arms are long and legs are short and so on, with various features.

The contour of acromion, scapula, musculus biceps brachii changes, with blend shape. Bust points move down, due to increase of the fat of abdomen, waist, hip, so that the center of gravity move down, which makes them seem to be older, not tall and straight. From their complexion, sedimentary melanin is more obvious that mottling appears on the face, neck, hands and other parts of body, the complexion becoming deeper. This phenomenon has little effect on the people with original darker skin, but will have greater influence on the original color be not strongly pigmented, so that on the choice of dress, they should be different from the change before.

Age-related medical conditions such as arthritis or osteoporosis can lead to a change in body shape, and

functional limitations such as dexterity and mobility. As an example, curvature of the spine (scoliosis), a condition often associated with osteoporosis, causes slanting shoulders and waistline, which in turn lead to slanting garment hemlines. Fabric will tend to accumulate on one side of the body due to the uneven waistline. The deformity often causes a hunched back, which will require more fabric to be utilized in order to accommodate the disfigurement. Adapting the garment characteristics of old clothing. In their somatotypes, there are horizontal wrinkles of fat on the thick neck. Physiologically, due to the reduction of body fat, the elderly's skin being sags and prolapsed, wrinkles are obvious. From the type of their body, their chests are flat and back is bow, Neck skating backward; waist are pattern to make allowance for these requirements will provide a garment that is comfortable and offers a camouflage for the deviating body shape. Simple modifications to style details such as larger buttons, or Velcro fastenings, can assist with dressing and undressing where manual dexterity is limited<sup>[2]</sup>.

### 1.2. The elderly's psychology

In an increasingly competitive environment, companies must focus on analyzing the psychological characteristics of elderly consumers. The older consumers are with the following psychological characteristics :

- Full of reason and a little emotional impulsion
- Calculate the budget carefully and strictly
- Convenient and easy to do
- Adhere to their own views, Independent of external influence
- High brand loyalty index

## 2. Market Analysis

After development of decades, up to now, the needs of

the old clothing is as it was then. However, the development of this market is not tepid, caught in an awkward position.

### 2.1. Clothing purchase – the choices

Currently, elderly people have 3 basic choices when purchasing clothing:

- Adapting ready-to-wear clothing available from the high street
- Made-to-measure clothing
- Specialist clothing suppliers

However, these may not provide a solution to the problem. Adaptation of ready-to-wear clothing requires a degree of garment making skill, and the results may often be unsatisfactory. Made-to-measure clothing is expensive and may not be an option for a elderly person who may have a limited income. Specialist clothing suppliers may offer a limited range of products, are not always fashionable, and may be expensive. In addition, elderly people may perceive a stigma attached to the purchase of “special” clothing<sup>[3]</sup>.

### 2.2. The analysis of the actual market situation

- Consumers: difficult to buy clothing

Old people stroll along the street hoping to buy new clothes fitting for them to wear. But they always return with empty hands, for through a major store it is difficult to find appropriate clothes. Not only because they are too fat to enter the clothes but also scared to come back by the flashy fashionable apparel. Besides the majority of the elderly deem going into the mall to purchase new clothing clothes is that young people do, and they often find a familiar tailor to choose the made-to-measure clothing.

- Merchants: difficult to sell clothing

Dilute the concept of garment for the elderly on display mall. Because they are all full of reasons, with emotional impulsion rarely.

- Manufacturers: difficult to do the production

The elderly as a special group of social consumption, generally more than 50 years old, do not belong to the mainstream of clothing consumption. The enterprises have difficulty to grasp the elderly's clothing producing. Firstly, old people don't study on the garments, without a high wearing taste, so their consumption ideas are time-worn. They do not give priority to brand, fashion, style and pattern but covet inexpensive item all their own way; Secondly, the elderly are non-mainstream consumer groups who often have special somatotype, but the products with a article No. of demand is limited, which do not form into mass production and the cost of production design is high, therefore it is unattractive for apparel manufacturers, however the companies which had mainly manufactured the old clothing have often changed into producing all kinds of garments for young people under the pressure of the market. The only clothing on the

market for the elderly are often coarsely with disorderly brands and inferior quality clothing.

## 3. The requirements of old fashion design

There are 3 Common type of the somatotype on the elderly in China: the first kind is endomorph, whose bust, waist, hip are larger; the second kind is an individual having a lean, slightly muscular body, without bouncy muscles but a little expanding waist; the third is somebody whose abdomen is fat, who looks like a stone. Based on these physiological characteristics, in the old garment design we should promote advantages and abolish disadvantages.

### 3.1. The Specific requirements of the clothing designing for the elderly

- The modeling should line with their capacity

After wearing the cloth, the elderly looks dignified sedate decent elegant modest and generous, which help them give play to their temperament and demeanor, reflecting a mature beauty. The clothing should be loose, fit, elegance, fit and comfort, that is the proportion of vertical and horizontal is symmetry with the Linear structure mainly, no additional , in order to embody the old man's solemn and steady fully. when designing the collar, it should be loose and comfortable with the lithe lining. In order to meet the characteristics of the elderly who have large abdomen, the waist of trousers should not be too small, the back rise not too wide.

- The Style and color should be easy and solemn

Moreover, reasonable decoration, simple and unadorned should be in correspondence with the elderly's identity, somatotype and character, the color of bottoms being deeper than the coats. but generally, the clothing with too many Stripes and dizzy color do not match the elderly. the Chinese, black hair, yellow skin, wearing deep blue, crimson, deep in the gray and black color clothing, look more air, constituting the basic colors of Chinese clothing, in addition we can embellish some small flowers in large areas of plain background, such as the flowing picture.

- Emphasize on personalized clothing art

We should choose and make the clothing according to our stature and feature. The clothing for the tall elderly should be with dark, monochrome color; women should not wear the fresh and lovely luster, bright color clothes. The short stature adapt to wear the same color from top to bottom, therefore , In this case, they will look slender. Besides, they could select the light coats and dark lower clothing, but it is the best to choose shoes and socks with the same color. if women wear suits, the coats should not be short to the waist, the length of skirts be appropriate under the calf. The older women are prominent abdomen commonly. If that, they should not choose the short coats, but the loose and comfortable style and

half-length, crisp fabric, coats, matching to the wide skirts, which will help create a more beautiful cloth shape. It is appropriate to add some decorative embellishment in order to divert the attention and gloss over the shortcomings of their somatotype above the upper part of clothing. But do not add any decorations in the abdomen, which will exaggerate the body's flaws.



**Picture 1 the cloth with suitable color and style for the elderly**

The Wide hip women could choose the clothing with the exaggerated shoulder, wide skirt to balance the vision. The short stature elderly could choose the light-colored clothing, women dressed in the elaborate, decorative and bright color clothes. The fat should not wear the tight, but the loose and comfortable, such as the flowing picture.



**Picture 2 the art clothing for the elderly**

- Focus on the choice of the fabric

When choose the clothing fabrics, we should not only pay attention to its texture, color and the relation-

ship between style and themselves, but also determine its comfortableness, Moisture absorption and Breathing, flexibility, and many other features. Generally, we should adopt the light, soft and flexible fabric for the elderly, which is not only comfortable but also easy to move. When choosing the plus materials, we should be based on the principle of cotton fabrics. Due to the electrostatic interaction of the chemical fabrics and to soil easily, it is not suitable to contact with the skin directly as underclothes. Generally, we should choose the cotton fabric to make the underwears, in that case we feel soft and comfortable convenient to Walk, such as the flowing picture.



**Picture 3 the clothing with fit fabric for the elderly**

- In short, according to the physiological and psychological characteristics, the designers should follow the principles of beauty-----harmony, proportion, balance, rhythm, to scheme out the solemn and elegant cloth, with the rich and varied, having a strong period feel clothing, so that ,through the clothing ,the elderly could change and modify its original body defects, to adjust balance of people's visual psychologically, which could add to its physical beauty.

### **3.2. The analysis of choosing the elderly's clothing**

The most important issue to be considered is comfortable clothes for the elderly. it is promoted that the elderly should not only pay attention to the wear, but also the quality of wear. Choosing the right clothes according to the characteristics of the elderly is benefit to their health and longevity. To sum up, the clothing for the elderly is practical, comfortable, clean and beautiful, the four characteristics.

- We should take into consideration of the practical applications about the old people's clothes.

1) The winter dress should be sufficient to keep warm and the summer clothing should be enough to relieve summer heat, which is to protect the health of the elderly.

2) The clothes ought to be comfortable and fit the characteristics of the changes of the elderly, that is they should not have a Sense of restraint but seek to be loose and comfortable, soft, conducive to act. In addition the Chinese clothing, full of national characteristics, is more in line with the requirements of the elderly, appropriate width, suitable for the elderly to wear.

3) The modeling of clothing should be simple, bright lines, grace smart, which looks Simple and generous. The decorative lines, crafts and parts, accessories, should be not to more appropriately, avoiding by all means is not cumbersome. But we also take somatotype into account. Someone who is Lean body chooses the loose Clothing, but the fat's cloth should be a little loose.

4) The elderly should avoid blindly following the fashion, taking if the fashion style being suitable to their own body into consideration.

- The appearance and fabric of the clothing

1) From the appearance of clothing, we should break through the blue, black and gray of the "Old Three-color", choosing the bright colors and so on.

2) Then, Choose the fabric with the elegant texture, that is the cloth not only wear well, but also looks solemn. The old people should synthesize the exquisite texture of fabrics, style, color matching, fabric texture, somatotype, to develop strong points and avoid weak points, wearing clothing with their own style. Besides, the material of lining is also important, being comfortable, such as the lint.

#### 4. The conclusion

The phenomenon of aging population is becoming a more and more serious social problem in china. All the industries and services that are relating with aged people

is the most concern of every area of society. It is one of anxieties of the elderly and the wrinkle that they can not buy appropriate clothes.

On the one hand, the old fashion design is to reflect their elegant temperament, mature character, Stable style and confident demeanor; On the other hand, the cloth should have the "freshness". Therefore, the higher requirements have been confronted to the designers. More importantly, they must be firmly confident---"the most beautiful is my own".

The elderly can be seen as a country's largest minority, although as a consumer group they are most often viewed as a niche market. Clearly demand exists for products where good fit, functionality and appearance are important, which should lead to volume sales and therefore lower unit prices. To develop a marketing strategy it should be remembered that it is only the old people who know what they want and need.

However, with the growth of the elderly, their somatotypes have generally changed a lot. The requirements of the elderly on the clothing have converted from the simple beauty to the health and comfort which are closer to the direction of the physiological changes. "People-oriented" design principles, requiring the designers grasp the size of the elderly body exercise-induced changes in body shape, are very significant. Therefore, studying on the relationship between the movement of the elderly and the ease allowance of clothing is particularly important.

#### References

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