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# Female Consumers' Clothing-related Attribute Expectations Differ According to Their Gender Identities
## *Vpliv spolne identitete na pričakovane lastnosti ženskih potrošniških oblačil*

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## Abstract
It is necessary to determine the factors that affect consumers' preferences in the ready-made clothing sector, where competition is intense. Gender is accepted as one of the most fundamental factors affecting purchasing decisions not only in the ready-made clothing industry, but also in many other sectors. However, rapidly changing environmental conditions require going beyond traditional patterns in explaining consumption behaviors. Accordingly, the concept of gender, which is socially constructed, has also been conceptualized from a psychological point of view. In this study, the concept of gender was based on psychological foundations and it was investigated whether female consumers' clothing-related attribute expectations differ according to their gender identities. Questionnaires created in line with the purpose of the study were applied to 393 people who were selected by convenience sampling. The data were collected through a face-to-face survey. Research hypotheses were tested with ANOVA analysis. As a result of the research, it was found that female consumers' clothing-related attribute expectations differ according to gender identities. In the literature, no study has been found that examines the changes in the clothing-related expectations of female consumers according to their gender identity roles. In this context, it is expected that the study will make significant contributions to both the managers in the clothing sector and academics.
Keywords: gender identity, clothing-related attribute expectations, cluster analysis

## *Izvleček*
*V sektorju konfekcijsko izdelanih oblačil, kjer vlada močna konkurenca, je treba ugotoviti, kateri dejavniki vplivajo na preference potrošnikov. Spol je eden najpomembnejših dejavnikov, ki vplivajo na odločitve o nakupu, ne samo pri konfekcijsko izdelanih oblačilih, temveč tudi marsikje drugod. Hitro spreminjajoče se okoljske razmere zahtevajo preseganje tradicionalnih vzorcev predvidevanja o vedenju potrošnikov. V skladu s tem je koncept spola, ki je na splošno razlagan kot biološki, v tej raziskavi obravnavan s psihološkega vidika. Raziskano je bilo, ali se pričakovanja potrošnikov o lastnostih oblačil razlikujejo glede na njihovo spolno identiteto. Za raziskavo so bili izdelani vprašalniki in z metodo priročnega vzorčenja je bilo izbranih 393 ljudi, ki so bili anketirani v živo. Raziskovalne hipoteze so bile preverjene s stati-*

*stično metodo ANOVA. Pokazalo se je, da se pričakovanja potrošnikov glede lastnosti oblačil razlikujejo glede na spolno identiteto. V literaturi ni bila najdena nobena raziskava o vplivu spolne identitete na spremenjena pričakovanja potrošnikov, povezanih z oblačili. S tega vidika je ta raziskava pomembna za menedžerje v sektorju oblačil kot raziskovalce.*

*Ključne besede: spolna identiteta, pričakovanja glede atributov v zvezi z oblačili, klasterska analiza*

# 1 Introduction

Clothing indicates an individual's gender identity, ethnicity, and social class. Investigating clothing purchasing attitudes and behaviors is effective in understanding the consumption behaviors of both individuals and society [1]. Clothing, which is a necessity in the life of humans, is a buffer between individuals' sociological, psychological and economic structures and their physical structures. Features such as individuals' income, lifestyles and the way they express their own personalities, emotions, pleasures, dreams and wishes affective upon their clothing purchasing behavior [2]. One of the most important factors affecting consumers' clothing preferences is their gender. Çabuk and Köksal [3] argued that the concept of biological gender, which divides individuals into two different groups as male and female, does not provide sufficient data to explain consumer behavior.

When examining consumer behavior, it is necessary to determine gender identities that may cause women and men to behave in contrast to their traditional roles [4]. The concept of gender has evolved from biological gender (male and female) to gender identity that examines gender in many ways including biological, psychological and sociological gender roles. Today, changing perspectives and lifestyles depending on social and economic conditions have caused the differences between the roles of women and men to decrease gradually [5]. In other words, it causes women to try to gain a position in working life and men to share responsibilities such as housework and childcare [3]. These changes in social roles have led to the development of the gender identity concept [6]. In addition, it can be said that changes in this regard have effects on women's education, profession and clothing [5]. Recent studies indicate that gender identity is a changing concept and should be examined with dynamic groups in different contexts [7]. Clothing develops new identities, divides identities and displays identities. In other words, clothing is a concrete image of an individual's gender identity [8]. For this reason, it is expected that women's gender

identity roles will have a significant impact on their clothing preferences. However, no study has been found in the literature that reveals the relationship between women's gender identities and their clothing preferences. In this respect, this study is important to reveal this relationship.

The aim of this study is to reveal how female consumers' clothing-related attribute expectations differ according to their gender identities. In this respect, first of all, the concepts constituting the conceptual framework of the study were discussed, the relevant literature was examined in accordance with the purpose of the study, and research hypotheses were developed associating them with the theoretical background. In the application part of the research, these hypotheses were tested, and the findings were evaluated.

## 1.1 Conceptual framework and research hypotheses

### 1.1.1 Gender identity

Gender identity refers to the behaviors an individual uses to communicate their gender identity to the social world apart from themselves. An individual can communicate their gender identity both consciously and unconsciously. These ways can include many micro-decisions such as clothing, hair, make-up or speaking style. Gender identity is an individual's way of expressing themselves. It is not determined by genotypes or phenotypes and cannot be verified or confirmed by another person, but rather depends on an individual's inner self. However, individuals' gender identity can be affected by the expectations of the society in which they live [9].

Gender identity is individuals' acceptance of their feminine or masculine characteristics and defining themselves according to these characteristics [10, 11]. Gender Schema Theory and Multi-Factor Gender Identity Theory, which are effective in the psychology literature, contribute to the development of studies on consumer behavior [12]. The Gender Schema Theory, developed by Bem [13], opposes traditional approaches to biological gender

differences in information processing. Individuals' gender identities are effective in information processing processes. A woman may behave more masculinely than a man, and a man may behave more femininely than a woman. The difference between men and women constitutes a basic organizing principle in any culture [10]. According to Leinback et al. [14], every society has its specific roles, language, behaviors, occupations and characteristics that are considered appropriate for men and women. Behavior patterns defined as masculine and feminine in a society are coded into an individual's gender identity schemes [15]. The development of schemas related to gender identity continues throughout life [16].

Unlike the Gender Schema Theory, the Multifactorial Gender Identity Theory developed by Spence requires the measurement of many different variables to determine gender identity. According to this theory, individuals' gender identities are determined by measuring factors such as gender role behaviors, personal characteristics and gender attitudes. If a single variable is measured, the applicability of that variable is limited [13]. In other words, individuals' gender identity is multifactorial and each factor has a different developmental history that varies from individual to individual, because these factors are affected by many variables that are not gender-based [17].

The Bem Gender Identity Inventory, used most frequently since 1979, was created based on the idea that individuals with a differentiated gender identity exhibit the standard gender behaviors that a society expects from men and women. According to this inventory, individuals can be divided into four different gender identity role groups as masculine, feminine, androgynous and undifferentiated [14].

Masculine gender identity is mostly rational and externally oriented. Being competitive, self-confident, adventurous, independent, logical, having the characteristics of a leader and accordingly being able to make easy decisions and not getting excited during crisis, being competent in working life, hiding one's emotions, not being influenced easily and being scientific, aggressive and objective are masculine characteristics. Feminine gender identity, on the other hand, is emotional and internally oriented. Being aware of their feelings, expressing their feelings easily, being talkative and using polite language, being kind and understanding, having high moral values, enjoying art and literature,

requiring high security and having regular habits are feminine characteristics [18]. The masculine personality structure is attributed to men, and the feminine personality structure is attributed to women. However, because gender identity is different from gender, there are women with masculine features as well as men with feminine features. While masculine women's purchasing decisions are similar to those of men, feminine men's decisions may be similar to feminine women's purchasing behavior. Therefore, the difference between gender and gender identity should be taken into account in consumption studies [1].

The concept of androgynous gender identity differs from the expressions reflecting traditional gender roles in a particular culture. Individuals with androgynous gender identity show both the most distinctive features considered masculine and the most typical features considered feminine[13]. Individuals with the fourth gender identity, expressed as undifferentiated, reflect both masculine and feminine characteristics at the lowest level [19]. In conclusion, individuals possessing high feminine features but low masculine features are 'feminine'; individuals possessing high masculine features but low feminine features are 'masculine'; those who have both masculine and feminine features at a high level close to each other are classified as 'androgynous' and those who have both masculine and feminine features at a low level are classified as 'undifferentiated' [13].

Similar to Bem [13], Yağcı and Ilarslan [4] found consumers are clustered into four different gender identity groups: masculine, feminine, androgynous and undifferentiated. In the study of Ye and Robertson [20], millennial consumers are clustered in two groups: feminine and masculine. Görmüş et al. [21] found that participants' gender identities were categorized as masculine, feminine, undifferentiated and androgynous. Unlike others, Neale et al. [11] found that consumers' gender identities are divided into three categories – masculine, feminine and androgynous. Kilicer et al. [1] found that consumers were divided into three groups: androgynous, undifferentiated and feminine in terms of gender identity, through the study conducted with an aim of examining consumers' gift purchase behavior. Yurttakalan and Gelibolu [22] examined generation Z consumers' online purchasing behaviors and determined participants' gender identities to be feminine, masculine and androgynous. Based

on this conceptual information in the literature, we predicted that female consumers' gender identities are different and hypothesis 1 was developed.

Hypothesis 1($H_1$): Female consumers' gender identities differ from each other.

### 1.1.2 The relation between gender identity and clothing-related attribute expectations

Clothing, which is a necessity of human existence in society, is an important consumption tool that provides information about the individual's personal qualities, roles and socio-economic status [2, 23]. According to Morris [24], clothes carry non-verbal cues and a person's dress says a lot about that person. In other words, clothes often reflect a person's sense of self-confidence, personality, education, general character, past experiences, and socioeconomic status [25]. This indicates that clothing has a huge impact on social interaction and managing impression [26].

According to Crane [27], there is a significant relationship between clothing and an individual's identity, because clothing not only reflects an individual's own visual symbolic image but is also a way of expressing themselves in the social and cultural environment in which they live. Clothing reflects the conformity of an individual's identity to society, as well as their difference from others. According to Entwistle [28], clothing contributes to how societies and cultures develop and maintain what is typical, traditional and standard, or usual.

In other words, clothing has historically been used in societies and cultures as a way to maintain existing norms as well as creating them. Clothing is not only a personal choice, but also a means to distinguish between the individual's identity and the socio-cultural world in which they live. One of the ways individuals socialize and develop identity is through clothing.

Guy and Banim [29] conducted qualitative research on how women feel about clothing, how clothing represents their identity, and which factors are effective in their clothing decisions. They argued that female consumers' identities are an affective factor on their clothing preferences and in eliminating their indecision. Goodman et al. [8] argued that clothing is an indicator of gender identity and they focused on the importance of clothing in the development of women's gender identity, revealing that clothing preferences contribute to the formation and preservation of identities. Aiken [30] found that there is a significant relationship between female consumers' gender identities and their clothing purchase decisions. It was also found that female consumers' reasons to buy clothes are design, comfort, interest, harmony and economy, and these reasons differ according to gender identity. Kaya [31] argued that clothing preferences, which are an important indicator of gender and social status, are effective in protecting or destroying symbolic boundaries, and differ according to consumers' gender identities [31].

*Table 1: Clothing-related attribute expectations [23]*

| Attribute | Definition |
| --- | --- |
| Conformity | It refers to dressing similarly to others in social and business life. |
| Individuality | It refers to the clothing qualities that distinguish an individual from others. |
| Modesty | It refers to clothing qualities that are not noticed by others. |
| Exhibitionism | It refers to the clothing qualities that attract other individuals' attention. |
| Femininity | It refers to the use of clothes characterized by curvy lines, details in design and a soft appearance. |
| Masculinity | It refers to the use of clothes characterized by straight lines, a special effect and a tough appearance. |
| Aestheticism | It refers to clothes appealing to individuals' senses, especially visually. |
| Functionalism | It refers to the use of clothes that reflects practical benefit, protection, durability and ease of care. |
| Constancy | It refers to a high degree of consistency in individuals' clothing preferences. |
| Change | It refers to individuals' desire of change, excitement and trying different things in their clothing preferences. |
| Freedom | It refers to the individual's preference for clothes that do not tighten their body but make them feel free. |
| Restraint | It refers to the individual's preference of narrow and body-hugging clothes. |

When the literature was examined, it was determined that although there are studies which try to explain the relationship between gender identity and clothing preferences, there has not been any study conducted to directly determine the relationship between consumers' gender identity and clothing-related attribute expectations. Attributes effective in choosing clothes express the ways of thinking and behaviors that reflect an individual's views on clothing tendencies [23]. Karhooff [23] divided the attributes effective in consumers' clothing preferences into 12 dimensions. Table 1 includes the descriptions of each dimension. Based on this conceptual information, it is predicted that the attributes that affect female consumers' clothing preferences may differ according to their gender identities and hypothesis 2 was developed.

Hypothesis 2 ($H_2$): In women's clothing preferences, clothing-related attribute expectations differ according to gender identity.

$H_{2a}$: In women's clothing preferences, conformity expectation differs according to gender identity.

$H_{2b}$: In women's clothing preferences, individuality expectation differs according to gender identity.

$H_{2c}$: In women's clothing preferences, femininity expectation differs according to gender identity.

$H_{2d}$: In women's clothing preferences, masculinity expectation differs according to gender identity.

$H_{2e}$: In women's clothing preferences, aestheticism expectation differs according to gender identity.

$H_{2f}$: In women's clothing preferences, functionalism expectation differs according to gender identity.

$H_{2g}$: In women's clothing preferences, constancy expectation differs according to gender identity.

$H_{2h}$: In women's clothing preferences, change expectation differs according to gender identity.

$H_{2i}$: In women's clothing preferences, freedom expectation differs according to gender identity.

$H_{2j}$: In women's clothing preferences, restraint expectation differs according to gender identity.

## 2 Methodology and results

### 2.1 Sample and data collection tool

The research population of the study consists of female consumers over the age of 17 in Turkey. Since it was not possible to reach the entire population, data were collected from 393 individuals using the convenience sampling method. Through face-to-face surveys, the data were collected in March and April 2021.

The questionnaire applied to collect the data consists of three parts. In the first part of the questionnaire, a 40-item (20 feminine-20 masculine) scale was provided to determine female consumers' gender identities. The scale was developed by Bem [32] and adapted to Turkish society by Dökmen [33]. In the second part of the questionnaire, the scale prepared by Karhooff [23] was provided to determine female consumers' clothing-related attribute expectations. A 5-point Likert scale was used in both scales. (1: Strongly disagree, 5: Strongly agree). In the third part of the questionnaire, questions were included to determine the participants' demographic characteristics.

### 2.2 Factor and cluster analysis to determine female consumers' gender identity roles

In the study, factor analysis with varimax rotation was applied to the Bem gender role inventory consisting of 40 statements in order to determine the factor structures related to gender identity. First, the results of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test were checked to evaluate the suitability of the variable set for factor analysis and the results of the Bartlett sphericity test was checked to test the suitability of the model. The KMO measurement value is 0.946 (Table 2). The Bartlett Sphericity test chi-square value ($\chi_2 = 11175,667$; df = 780, p < .001) is statistically significant. Considering both results, the data set adequacy for exploratory factor analysis was determined [34]. In this study, considering the number of samples, it was ensured that the lower limit of item factor loads was 0.50 [35]. Two expressions (feminine, loyal) that did not meet this criterion were excluded from the scale. According to the results of the factor analysis, eight factors with an eigenvalue of at least 1 and explaining 69.477% of the variation in the items were determined. Each factor was evaluated to examine the compatibility of the resulting factor structures with the structures in the original scale and with the literature. Considering the dimensions of the original scale, the 5th, 6th and 7th factors, which consist of two expressions, consist of one masculine expression and one feminine expression. Therefore, these factors were considered to be insignificant. In addition, the 8th factor was not included in the study because it consisted of only one expression. Therefore, the statements in the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th factors were excluded from the study.

All the expressions in the 1st factor that emerged as a result of the analysis are included in the feminine characteristics in the original scale. In factor 4, only the expressions "generous" and "responsible to my family" are included in the masculinity dimension in the original scale. However, these two expressions can be considered related to the other expressions in the 4th factor. Therefore, the 1st and 4th factors have the characteristics of feminine identity and the 1st factor was named as "feminine_1" and the 4th factor as "feminine_2". All the expressions in the 2nd and 3rd factors are under the masculinity dimension in the original scale. The second factor was named "masculine_1", the third factor was named "masculine_2". Four factors to be used in determining gender identities explain 56.60% of the variance. When the cronbach's α values of the determined factors are examined, it is seen that it is between 0.837 and 0.912 (Table 2).

Confirmatory factor analysis was applied to test the construct validity of the four-factor structure obtained as a result of the explanatory factor analysis of the gender identity role scale. In order to test the acceptability of the model as a whole, the goodness of fit values were examined and it was determined that all goodness of fit criteria of the model were good and within acceptable limits ($\chi^2$/df = 2.04; RMSEA = 0.052; SRMR = 0.034; GFI = 0.87; NNFI = 0.99; NFI = 0.98; IFI = 0.99; CFI = 0.99). Therefore, when the confirmatory factor analysis results are considered, it is seen that all items in the measurement model are compatible with the model [36]. The construct validity of the confirmatory factor analysis alone is insufficient to show the validity of the scales in the measurement model. The construct validity of the measurement model should also be tested with confirmatory factor analysis. The construct validity was evaluated in this study by testing it with convergent validity and discriminant validity.

Table 3 shows that the composite reliability coefficients (CR) of the dimensions of the measurement model are above 0.70 and the average variance values explained (AVE) are above 0.50. Considering these values, it was determined that the scales used in the research had convergent validity and the first criterion of construct validity was met. To test the discriminant validity, which is another criterion to ensure construct validity, the square root of the mean variance explained by each factor and the correlation values between the factors were compared and it was determined that for each factor, the square root of the mean variance explained was higher than the correlation values between the dimensions. Construct validity was provided for all scales. After the construct validity of the measurement model was evaluated, the reliability of the scales was tested with the Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient. When the Cronbach's alpha values of each scale are examined, it is seen that it is between 0.912 and 0.948 (Table 3). Nunnally [37] stated that reliability coefficients above 0.7 are acceptable in social sciences. Accordingly, it can be said that the study scales have high reliability.

Cluster analysis was performed using four factors that Cluster analysis was performed using four factors that emerged as a result of factor analysis to determine the gender identities of the participants. The K-means algorithm is an algorithm that aims at collecting the observations with the closest values in the same cluster when the number of clusters is certain. Accordingly, hierarchical clustering and the K-means algorithm were used in this study because the number of clusters related to gender identity is certain [39]. As mentioned above, there are four clusters in the Bem Gender Identity Inventory: masculine, feminine, androgynous and undifferentiated.

The number of participants in each of the clusters determined as a result of the analysis and the cluster averages are shown in Table 4. Table 4 depicts that the averages of both the feminine and the masculine dimensions of the participants in the first Cluster are high. For this reason, this cluster was named androgynous. The second cluster is a cluster in which the averages of the feminine dimensions are low and the averages of the masculine dimensions are high. In the fourth group, the means of the feminine dimensions were high; the means of the masculine dimensions are low. Thus, the second cluster has masculine characteristics and the fourth cluster has feminine characteristics. Finally, the third cluster is a cluster with low means of both feminine and masculine dimensions. Therefore, the participants of this cluster do not clearly have feminine and masculine identity characteristics. For this reason, the third cluster was named as the indifferent.

As a result of the clustering analysis, 101 of the female consumers participating in the study were in the androgynous cluster, 110 were the masculine cluster, 59 were in the undifferentiated cluster and 123 were in the feminine cluster. In addition, it was

*Table 2: Exploratory factor analysis (gender identity role scale)*

| Items | Components 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Soft spoken | 0.865 | | | | | | | |
| Gentle | 0.824 | | | | | | | |
| Tender | 0.816 | | | | | | | |
| Loves children | 0.800 | | | | | | | |
| Warm | 0.798 | | | | | | | |
| Kind | 0.779 | | | | | | | |
| Understanding | 0.772 | | | | | | | |
| Emotional | 0.768 | | | | | | | |
| Does not use harsh language | 0.745 | | | | | | | |
| Ambitious | | 0.783 | | | | | | |
| Sociable | | 0.769 | | | | | | |
| Analytical | | 0.756 | | | | | | |
| Assertive | | 0.754 | | | | | | |
| Authoritarian | | 0.753 | | | | | | |
| Prescriptive | | 0.747 | | | | | | |
| Willing to take risks | | 0.710 | | | | | | |
| Act as a leader | | 0.641 | | | | | | |
| Willing to take a stand | | | 0.784 | | | | | |
| Keeping one's word | | | 0.769 | | | | | |
| Self-reliant | | | 0.768 | | | | | |
| Defends own belief | | | 0.765 | | | | | |
| Strong personality | | | 0.737 | | | | | |
| Dominant | | | 0.707 | | | | | |
| Forceful | | | 0.694 | | | | | |
| Sensitive to the needs of others | | | | 0.768 | | | | |
| Responsible to my family | | | | 0.761 | | | | |
| Devoted | | | | 0.758 | | | | |
| Eager to soothe hurt feelings | | | | 0.745 | | | | |
| Generous | | | | 0.734 | | | | |
| Compassionate | | | | 0.726 | | | | |
| Heartwarming | | | | 0.706 | | | | |
| Masculine | | | | | 0.708 | | | |
| Impassive | | | | | 0.596 | | | |
| Serious | | | | | | 0.674 | | |
| Yielding | | | | | | 0.580 | | |
| Aggressive | | | | | | | 0.725 | |
| Shy | | | | | | | 0.700 | |
| Honest | | | | | | | | 0.805 |
| Feminine | 0.382* | | | | | | | |
| Loyal | 0.349* | | | | | | | |
| Eigenvalue | *12.522* | *7.304* | *1.712* | *1.658* | *1.297* | *1.223* | *1.063* | 1.012 |
| Variance explained | *18.741* | *14.084* | *12.048* | *11.727* | *3.471* | *3.208* | *3.138* | 3.059 |
| Total variance | | | | | | | *69.477* | |
| Keiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) | | | | | | | *0.946* | |
| Barlett's Test of Sphericity | | | | | | | *11175.667* | |
| df | | | | | | | *780* | |
| Sig. (value) | | | | | | | *0.000* | |

* Factor loads below 0.5 [35] were excluded from the analysis.

*Table 3: Reliability and validity analysis results (gender identity role scale)*

| | α | CR | VE | Corelation Between Structures | | | (AVE)$^{1/2}$ |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | | | (1) | (2) | (3) | |
| Feminine_1 **(1)** | 0.948 | 0.952 | 0.689 | 1 | | | 0.830 |
| Feminine_2 **(2)** | 0.920 | 0.917 | 0.615 | 0.646 | 1 | | 0.784 |
| Masculine_1 **(3)** | 0.912 | 0.922 | 0.598 | −0.188 | −0.240 | 1 | 0.773 |
| Masculine_2 **(4)** | 0.937 | 0.935 | 0.673 | −0.216 | −0.260 | 0.649 | 0.820 |

*Table 4: The number of participants and the cluster averages*

| Gender identity dimensions | Cluster 1 (androgynous) | Cluster 2 (masculine) | Cluster 3 (undifferentiated) | Cluster 4 (feminine) | F | Sig. |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Feminine_1 | 3.99 | 2.03 | 2.10 | 4.03 | 123.134 | 0.000 |
| Feminine_2 | 4.03 | 1.88 | 1.69 | 4.25 | 176.653 | 0.000 |
| Masculine_1 | 3.40 | 3.71 | 2.01 | 1.91 | 87.651 | 0.000 |
| Masculine_2 | 3.82 | 4.21 | 1.77 | 1.76 | 168.951 | 0.000 |
| Number of cases (N) | 101 | 110 | 59 | 123 | | |

determined by the ANOVA test that the four factors obtained through the factor analysis contributed to the differentiation of the four determined clusters ($p < 0.01$).

### 2.3 Construct validity of the scale of female consumers' clothing-related attribute expectations

Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to test the construct validity of the scale of female consumers' clothing-related attribute expectations. In order to test the acceptability of the model as a whole, goodness of fit values were examined and it was determined that all goodness of fit criteria of the model were good and within acceptable limits ($\chi^2/df = 1.96$; RMSEA = 0.050; SRMR = 0.042; GFI = 90; AGFI = 0.85; NNFI = 0.92; NFI = 0.90; IFI = 0.94; CFI = 0.94). Therefore, when the confirmatory factor analysis results are taken into account, it can be concluded that all items in the measurement model are compatible with the model. Table 5 shows that the CR coefficients of the dimensions of the measurement model are above 0.70 and the AVE values are above 0.50. Considering these values, it was determined that the scales used in the research had convergent validity and the first criterion of construct validity was met [36].

In order to test the discriminant validity, which is another criterion for construct validity, the square root of the mean variance explained by each factor and the correlation values between the factors were compared, and it was determined that the square root of the mean variance explained for each factor was higher than the correlation values between the dimensions (Table 6). Construct validity was provided for all scales.

After the construct validity of the measurement model was evaluated, the reliability of the scales was tested with the Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient. When the alpha values of the scales of the dimensions in the study were examined, it was seen that the values were higher than the recommended value of 0.70 [37].

### 2.4 Female consumers' clothing-related attribute expectations according to their gender identities

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was applied to determine whether women's clothing-related attribute expectations differ according to their gender identities. According to one-way ANOVA analysis, in women's clothing preferences, change, functionalism, masculinity, femininity, restraint, aestheticism, conformity, and constancy attribute expectations of female consumers differ statistically according to their gender identities. It was determined that the expectation of individuality and the freedom attribute in women's clothing preferences did not show a statistically significant difference according to their gender identities. In line with these results, hypotheses $H_{2a}$, $H_{2c}$, $H_{2d}$, $H_{2e}$, $H_{2f}$, $H_{2g}$, $H_{2h}$ and $H_{2j}$ were supported. $H_{2b}$ and $H_{2i}$ hypotheses were not supported (Table 7).

*Table 5: Reliability and validity analysis results of the measurement model*

| Items | β |
|---|---|
| **Change (CR: 0.908; AVE: 0.711; Cronbach's α: 0.907)** | |
| I like to try new styles. | 0.84 |
| I follow fashion. | 0.80 |
| I think that various styles of clothing add excitement to my life. | 0.86 |
| I like to try different things about clothing. | 0.87 |
| **Functualism (CR: 0.909; AVE: 0.71; Cronbach's α: 0.906)** | |
| When buying a coat for cold winter days. keeping warm is important to me. | 0.82 |
| When purchasing clothes. the quality is important to me. | 0.84 |
| When buying clothes. I prefer healthy fabrics and products that will not harm me physically. | 0.88 |
| When buying clothes. it is important to me that they can be used for a long time. | 0.84 |
| **Masculinity (CR: 0.861; AVE: 0.675; Cronbach's α: 0.859)** | |
| I like to wear clothes made of sturdy. tightly woven materials. | 0.76 |
| I prefer hard fabrics over soft fabrics. | 0.85 |
| I prefer clothes that accentuate the shoulders. | 0.85 |
| **Femininity (CR: 0.826; AVE: 0.616; Cronbach's α: 0.822)** | |
| I love floral print clothes. | 0.78 |
| I like fancy dresses. | 0.89 |
| I prefer feminine clothes. | 0.67 |
| **Restraint (CR: 0.836; AVE: 0.633; Cronbach's α: 0.834)** | |
| I like that my clothes fit my body comfortably. | 0.76 |
| I like tight clothes. So I can feel them in my body. | 0.92 |
| I like tight-fitting clothes. | 0.69 |
| **Aestheticism (CR: 0.724; AVE: 0.487; Cronbach's α: 0.705)** | |
| I like to use various colors together when choosing clothes. | 0.64 |
| When I look at old paintings or photographs. I am fascinated by the beauty of the clothes of that period. | 0.86 |
| Local clothes catch my attention. | 0.53 |
| **Individuality (CR: 0.838; AVE: 0.635; Cronbach's α: 0.835)** | |
| I don't mind if my clothes are the same as what my friends wear. | 0.69 |
| I never dress alike with my friends. | 0.84 |
| It makes me uncomfortable to dress similarly to others in my group. | 0.85 |
| **Conformity (CR: 0.835; AVE: 0.563; Cronbach's α: 0.833)** | |
| My dressing style is similar to those around me. | 0.62 |
| To gain acceptance in a group. it is important to wear the right attire to comply with the group. | 0.80 |
| In a business setting. a person should dress similarly to other employees. | 0.89 |
| When a new fashion trend emerges. I and my friends try it. | 0.66 |
| **Freedom (CR: 0.801; AVE: 0.573; Cronbach's α: 0.804)** | |
| When buying a dress. it is important for me to be able to move freely in it. | 0.72 |
| I like comfortable clothes that I feel like I'm not wearing them. | 0.79 |
| I buy clothes that are comfortable and large enough to be able to move easily and freely. | 0.76 |
| **Constancy (CR: 0.894; AVE: 0.679; Cronbach's α: 0.894)** | |
| I don't like constantly changing my hairstyle and color. | 0.76 |
| I can buy different colors of the clothes. style of which I like. | 0.87 |
| Most of my clothes are in the same style. | 0.86 |
| Over the years, I think I have developed a style of dressing. | 0.80 |
| * Reverse code item | |

*Table 6: Correlations between factors and discriminant validity*

|  | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) | (9) | (AVE)$^{1/2}$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Change **(1)** | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0,843 |
| Functionalism **(2)** | 0.026 | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.842 |
| Masculinity **(3)** | −0.070 | 0.061 | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.821 |
| Femininity **(4)** | 0.155 | −0.173 | −0.163 | 1 |  |  |  |  |  | 0.784 |
| Restraint **(5)** | 0.182 | −0.008 | −0.046 | 0.092 | 1 |  |  |  |  | 0.795 |
| Aestheticism **(6)** | 0.103 | 0.105 | 0.045 | 0.059 | 0.299 | 1 |  |  |  | 0.697 |
| Individuality **(7)** | 0.110 | −0.085 | 0.089 | 0.069 | 0.084 | 0.077 | 1 |  |  | 0.796 |
| Conformity **(8)** | −0.080 | 0.088 | 0.192 | −0.017 | −0.049 | 0.064 | −0.066 | 1 |  | 0.750 |
| Freedom **(9)** | 0.123 | 0.194 | −0.068 | −0.024 | 0.084 | 0.137 | −0.128 | 0.026 | 1 | 0.756 |
| Constancy **(10)** | 0.003 | 0.213 | 0.122 | −0.106 | 0.007 | 0.076 | 0.022 | 0.197 | −0.034 | 0.824 |

*Table 7: Hypotheses testing (ANOVA analysis results)*

| Dependent variable | df | F-statistic | Sig. | Independent groups (Mean) | Mean difference | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Change | 3 | 12.806* | .000 | Androgynous (3.77) / Masculine (3.19) | 0.579* | .001 |
|  |  |  |  | Androgynous (3.77) / Feminine (3.83) | −0.061 | .974 |
|  |  |  |  | Androgynous (3.77) / Undifferentiated (3.03) | 0.734* | .000 |
|  |  |  |  | Masculine (3.19) / Feminine (3.83) | −0.640* | .000 |
|  |  |  |  | Masculine (3.19) / Undifferentiated (3.03) | 0.155 | .806 |
|  |  |  |  | Feminine (3.83) / Undifferentiated (3.03) | 0.795* | .000 |
| Functionalism | 3 | 12.807* | .000 | Androgynous (3.79) / Masculine (3.96) | −0.169 | .723 |
|  |  |  |  | Androgynous (3.79) / Feminine (3.15) | 0.635* | .005 |
|  |  |  |  | Androgynous (3.79) / Undifferentiated (3.14) | 0.643* | .005 |
|  |  |  |  | Masculine (3.96) / Feminine (3.15) | 0.804* | .000 |
|  |  |  |  | Masculine (3.96) / Undifferentiated (3.14) | 0.813* | .000 |
|  |  |  |  | Feminine (3.15) / Undifferentiated (3.14) | 0.008 | .999 |
| Masculinity | 3 | 37.062* | .000 | Androgynous (3.43) / Masculine (3.97) | −0.540* | .003 |
|  |  |  |  | Androgynous (3.43) / Feminine (2.70) | 0.728* | .000 |
|  |  |  |  | Androgynous (3.43) / Undifferentiated (2.96) | 0.475** | .049 |
|  |  |  |  | Masculine (3.97) / Feminine (2.70) | 1.268* | .000 |
|  |  |  |  | Masculine (3.97) / Undifferentiated (2.96) | 1.015* | .000 |
|  |  |  |  | Feminine (2.70) / Undifferentiated (2.96) | −0.253 | .484 |
| Femininity | 3 | 24.506* | .000 | Androgynous (3.50) / Masculine (2.80) | 0.695* | .000 |
|  |  |  |  | Androgynous (3.50) / Feminine (3.96) | −0.459** | .012 |
|  |  |  |  | Androgynous (3.50) / Undifferentiated (2.94) | 0.555** | .013 |
|  |  |  |  | Masculine (2.80) / Feminine (3.96) | −1.155* | .000 |
|  |  |  |  | Masculine (2.80) / Undifferentiated (2.94) | −0.140 | .862 |
|  |  |  |  | Feminine (3.96) / Undifferentiated (2.94) | 1.015* | .000 |
| Restraint | 3 | 2.926** | .038 | Androgynous (3.47) / Masculine (3.30) | 0.166 | .636 |
|  |  |  |  | Androgynous (3.47) / Feminine (3.68) | −0.213 | .402 |
|  |  |  |  | Androgynous (3.47) / Undifferentiated (3.58) | −0.106 | .919 |
|  |  |  |  | Masculine (3.30) / Feminine (3.68) | −0.379** | .024 |
|  |  |  |  | Masculine (3.30) / Undifferentiated (3.58) | −0.272 | .345 |
|  |  |  |  | Feminine (3.68) / Undifferentiated (3.58) | 0.106 | .912 |
| Aestheticism | 3 | 5.708* | .001 | Androgynous (3.97) / Masculine (3.58) | 0.385* | .010 |
|  |  |  |  | Androgynous (3.97) / Feminine (3.52) | 0.445* | .001 |
|  |  |  |  | Androgynous (3.97) / Undifferentiated (3.52) | 0.448** | .013 |
|  |  |  |  | Masculine (3.58) / Feminine (3.52) | 0.059 | .958 |
|  |  |  |  | Masculine (3.58) /Undifferentiated (3.52) | 0.062 | .973 |
|  |  |  |  | Feminine (3.52) / Undifferentiated (3.52) | 0.003 | .999 |

| Dependent variable | df | F-statistic | Sig. | Independent groups (Mean) | Mean difference | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Individuality | 3 | 1.035[n.s.] | .377 | Androgynous (2.78) / Masculine (2.90) | −0.117 | .889 |
| | | | | Androgynous (2.78) / Feminine (2.87) | −0.090 | .941 |
| | | | | Androgynous (2.78) / Undifferentiated (2.58) | 0.194 | .748 |
| | | | | Masculine (2.90) / Feminine (2.87) | 0.027 | .998 |
| | | | | Masculine (2.90) / Undifferentiated (2.58) | 0.312 | .361 |
| | | | | Feminine (2.87) / Undifferentiated (2.58) | 0.285 | .427 |
| Conformity | 3 | 17.298* | .000 | Androgynous (3.19) / Masculine (3.57) | −0.384** | .032 |
| | | | | Androgynous (3.19) / Feminine (2.63) | 0.556* | .000 |
| | | | | Androgynous (3.19) / Undifferentiated (2.96) | 0.231 | .507 |
| | | | | Masculine (3.57) / Feminine (2.63) | 0.941* | .000 |
| | | | | Masculine (3.57) / Undifferentiated (2.96) | 0.615* | .001 |
| | | | | Feminine (2.63) / Undifferentiated (2.96) | −0.325 | .180 |
| Freedom | 3 | 1.613[n.s.] | .186 | Androgynous (3.73) / Masculine (3.79) | −0.0051 | .978 |
| | | | | Androgynous (3.73) / Feminine (3.99) | −0.255 | .180 |
| | | | | Androgynous (3.73) / Undifferentiated (3.81) | −0.074 | .963 |
| | | | | Masculine (3.79) / Feminine (3.99) | −0.203 | .350 |
| | | | | Masculine (3.79) / Undifferentiated (3.81) | −0.022 | .999 |
| | | | | Feminine (3.99) / Undifferentiated (3.81) | 0.181 | .616 |
| Constancy | 3 | 17.448* | .000 | Androgynous (3.54) / Masculine (4.02) | −0.482* | .010 |
| | | | | Androgynous (3.54) / Feminine (3.17) | 0.370 | .048 |
| | | | | Androgynous (3.54) / Undifferentiated (2.88) | 0.661* | .002 |
| | | | | Masculine (4.02) /Feminine (3.17) | 0.852* | .000 |
| | | | | Masculine (4.02) / Undifferentiated (2.88) | 1.143* | .000 |
| | | | | Feminine (3.17) / Undifferentiated (2.88) | 0.291 | .357 |

*p < 0.01; ** p < 0.05; [n.s.] > 0.05 (not supported)

In addition, the Tukey test was used to determine which sub-groups differed among these groups. The Tukey test results have shown that in clothing preferences, androgynous and feminine identities, placed more importance on change and femininity in comparison to masculine and undifferentiated identities. Functionalism and masculinity in clothing preference is higher in androgynous and masculine groups than feminine and undifferentiated ones. Restraint expectation is higher in feminine than in masculine groups. Androgynous identities also prefer aesthetic clothing more than other gender identities. Masculine and androgynous groups care more about the conformity of the clothes than the feminine and undifferentiated groups. Finally, masculine identities prefer constancy in their clothing preferences more than other gender identities.

## 3  Discussion

The results of the study are discussed in terms of four basic issues; socio-demographic characteristics of the sample, scales, hypotheses and limitations of the study.

The analysis of the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample showed that 46.1% of the sample were 17–29 years old, 20.9% were 30–39 years old, 13.7% were 40–49 years old, 19.3% of the sample were 50 and over. In addition, 6.1% of the sample had completed primary school-secondary school education, 27.2% were high school graduates, 9.7% had obtained an associate degree, 45.5% had an undergraduate degree and 11.5% were postgraduate education graduates.

In terms of scales, it was determined that construct validity was provided for both the Clothing-related Attribute Expectations scale and Bem Gender Identity scale. In the present study, two dimensions – modesty and exhibitionism- were excluded from the original Clothing-related Attribute Expectations scale because items of these dimensions were supposed to be inappropriate in terms of cultural and social aspects. The original Bem Gender Identity scale has two dimensions- masculine and feminine-, but in this study both of these dimensions were divided into two different dimensions. In other words, the gender identity scale consisted of four dimensions. They were named as Feminine_1, Feminine_2, Masculine_1 and

Masculine_2. The results of the analysis showed that both scales are reliable and valid. Thus, it can be concluded that both scales had measured what structures they intended to measure.

When participants' gender identities were examined, it was found that four different types of gender identity- masculine, feminine, undifferentiated, androgynous- existed as stated in the original Bem Gender Identity Inventory. This finding supported the previous studies [4, 13, 21]. Women with different gender identities have different kinds of clothing-related attribute expectations. Women's individuality and freedom expectation do not differ regarding their gender identities, but the other clothing-related attribute expectations (change, functionalism, masculinity, femininity, restraint, aestheticism, conformity, constancy) change according to gender identities. As stated in the conceptual framework and research hypotheses, all of these four gender identities exhibit different characteristics and clothing is a way of showing one's characteristics to the world. Thus, it can be said that each of these four gender identities choose their clothes considering their own clothing-related attribute expectations.

When comparing clothing-related attribute expectations, it can be concluded that aestheticism is an attribute expected mostly by androgynous consumers. Constancy in clothing is mostly preferred by masculine consumers. In other words, they do not prefer to change the style they wear. Restraint is an attribute expected by feminine consumers. In other words, they like to wear tight clothing. Conformity is a preferred attribute in the clothing preference of masculine and androgynous groups compared with feminine and undifferentiated consumers. Compared to masculine and undifferentiated consumers, androgynous and feminine consumers expect change and femininity when choosing clothing. Functionalism and masculinity is important for masculine and androgenous consumers more than feminine and undifferentiated ones. These results support the conclusion that clothing preferences change according to gender identities obtained via the studies conducted by Aiken [30], Guy and Benim [29], Goodman et al. [8] and Kaya [31]. In short, 9 of the 11 research hypotheses developed to examine the direct relation between the variables were supported, but two were not supported.

The main limitation of this study is that sample only consisted of female consumers. Male con-sumers might have different gender identities than female consumers and their clothing preferences and clothing-related attribute expectations might change based on their gender identities. Thus, future studies could investigate their behaviour and also compare female and male customers in terms of their gender identities and clothing preferences. The current study focuses on abstract clothing-related attributes such as conformity, constancy and individuality. Future studies could investigate whether physical clothing-related attributes such as fabric, color, pattern, texture, styling, care and workmanship differ according to consumers' gender identities. To expand the scope of the relationship between fashion and gender identity, the value of incorporating feminine features into menswear and masculine features into womenswear for consumers who are androgenous or undifferentiated could be identified by examining such clothing styles as unisex clothing. The moderating effect of gender identity between clothing-related attributes and variables such as willingness to buy, brand loyalty, and attitude towards a brand could be investigated. Another research area would be the importance of gender identity in consumer segmentation. Validation of scales could be provided through studies conducted in different cultural settings. This study is in the context of ready-made clothing, but consumers' gender identities could be examined in terms of other contexts such as tourism, food and electronic preferences.

The other limitation is the sampling method. The convenience sampling method was used to form the sample of the study, but instead of this method, the quota sampling method might be used based on the other demographic factors such as income, age, gender, education, since these are also effective in consumers' behavior.

## 4 Conclusion

The direct relation between the clothing-related attribute expectations and gender identities was investigated. First, female consumers' gender identities were determined as masculine, feminine, undifferentiated, androgynous. Then, the question of whether female consumers' clothing-related attribute expectations differ according to their gender identities was examined. It was found that women's clothing-related attribute expectations dif-

fer according to their gender identities. Aside from individuality and freedom expectations, the other clothing-related attribute expectations (change, functionalism, masculinity, femininity, restraint, aestheticism, conformity, constancy) change in accordance to women's gender identities. Since no study has been found in this context, it is expected to contribute to the field both academically and managerially.

Firstly, the theoretical significance of this study lies in the variables examined. Although there are various studies in the ready-made clothing sector, they mostly investigate consumers' clothing preferences and their purchase decisions. The underlying clothing-related attribute expectations have not been investigated. The present study examined female consumers' clothing preferences in terms of clothing-related attribute expectations and gender identity. Since the main focus is whether clothing-related attribute expectations change in regards to gender identities, this study makes a major contribution to the marketing literature. Secondly, in the original Bem Gender Identity Inventory, there are two dimensions called masculine and feminine. But in this study both masculine and feminine characteristics are divided into two. Thus, gender-identity-items illustrate four dimensions. In this respect, the study contributes to the literature.

Biological gender is not the only a factor that affects people's attitudes, expectations and behavior, but gender identity is also effective in these aspects. Today, many clothing brands produce and sell clothing for men and women. In a life where there are so many differences, it is not enough to separate and define the concept of gender as male and female only. Clothing-related attribute expectations affecting clothing preferences vary according to gender identities. Thus, it can be said that unisex clothing, which emerged and became widespread in the 1960s, is a response to the individuals' clothing-related needs and wants arising from their differing gender identities. Today, although feminine style clothing maintains a secure place in women's clothing fashion as masculine style clothing does in men's clothing fashion, unisex clothing has become quite a fashion favorite. In this respect, understanding the importance of gender identity differences in clothing preferences will help clothing firms, brands and managers better understand consumers' gender identities and its effects on their behaviors. Understanding consumers' gender identities and its

effects on their behaviors can lead managers to develop innovative strategies attracting the consumers and to design and produce specific clothing for each gender identity. It can be said that consumers might feel precious and unique. Thus, brands or companies can motivate consumers and gain profits through increased sales. In short, this study provides managerial evidence.

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