THE INFLUENCE OF INTERNALIZED HOMOPHOBIA

AND ANTI-EFFEMINACY ATTITUDES ON GAY

MEN'S FASHION INVOLVEMENT AND

SUBSEQUENT PREFERENCE FOR MASCULINE OR

FEMININE APPEARANCE

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to relate plain matter of fact in the simplest

manner and style; because my principal design

was to inform you, and not to amuse you."

Jonathan Swift

Gulliver's Travels

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Abstract: Studies have examined gay men's fashion involvement, however few have measured this phenomenon in the context of negative prejudices that exist within the gay community itself. More specifically, there is a gap in the literature related to examining the influence of internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy attitudes on gay men's fashion involvement. There is also a need to explore gay men's current definitions of masculinity and femininity in relation to fashion and clothing. Applying the framework of Social Identity Theory (SIT), the purpose of this mixed method study was twofold. First, it measured the influence of internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy attitudes (among gay men) on gay men's fashion involvement on one hand and their preferences for either masculine or feminine clothing on the other. Secondly, this study explored gay men's definitions of masculine or feminine appearance in the context of clothing fashion. Additionally the study explored the relationship between fashion involvement in gay men and subsequent preference for masculine or feminine appearance. Data analysis revealed that gay men who were fashion conscious and fashion innovators displayed lower levels of internalized homophobia in social situations. In addition, gay men who had higher anti-effeminacy attitudes showed a preference for masculine appearance in the context of clothing fashions and gay men who were fashion innovative communicators, showed preference for a feminine or less masculine appearance. Overall participants described their dress preference as masculine. Implications of this study include the recognition of a previously neglected market potential, by creating less masculine clothing lines or less gender-specific merchandising techniques to cater to the needs of highly fashion involved gay men who have a potential for higher average spending on clothing.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Research has shown gay men to be heavily invested in their bodies and appearance, to be highly sensitive to changes in fashion trends, and to influence trends to a great extent (Sha, Aung, Londerville & Raston, 2007). This study addressed a gap in the literature by measuring gay men's fashion involvement in relation to other variables, namely internalized homophobia and negative attitudes toward effeminacy. Additionally this study explored gay men's perception of masculine and feminine appearance in the context of fashion and clothing. The following section provides background and then explains the purpose and significance of the study.

Background

Gay male culture has been at the frontier of sartorial excellence, that is, impeccable fashion, since the beginning of the eighteenth century (Geczy & Karaminas, 2013). Since the beginning of the 21st century the perception of the quintessential gay man as a style leader in contemporary society has gained considerable ground (Sender, 2006), especially with the emergence of openly gay male leading fashion designers such as John Galliano, Tom Ford, and Marc Jacobs among many others, and television shows such as "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy" (Sender, 2006; Geczy & Karaminas, 2013).

Interestingly, a number of empirical studies conclude that women are more readily committed to fashion than men and use fashion as a means of self-expression and identity-formation, in contrast to men (Bakewell, Mitchell & Rothwell, 2006). In the context of consumer

research, traditional masculinity has been defined by the utilitarian motives of purpose, value, and function while traditional femininity has relied on the experiential aspects of narcissism, individualism, and expressiveness (McNeill & Douglas, 2011). Significant scientific evidence points to the gender deviance or 'effeminacy' in gay men through the display of gender-atypical interests, behaviors and personality traits (Taywaditep, 2002). This link between the perception that women are interested in fashion and gay men are effeminate has led, in some instances, to the stereotyping of the popular gay male archetype as being highly fashionable and effeminate (Sullivan, 2011). This association between effeminacy and fashion involvement in gay men may be linked to the admission that significant self-indulgence in fashion and clothing is traditionally perceived as a feminine phenomenon.

Moreover, a review of gay male fashion reveals that gay men have deviated from the dressing styles of heteronormative men (Geczy & Karaminas, 2013). The term 'heteronormative dressing style' here denotes the dressing norms based on the hetero-normative prescriptions of society where gender roles are defined, and where men are masculine and women are feminine (Taywaditep, 2002). The prominence of effeminacy in male homosexual fashion has often been set in the context of social dissent in order to create a distinct and unique identity (Geczy & Karaminas, 2013). Masculinity among gay men, on the other hand, has regularly played out as a contending stimulus to blend in, become invisible, and assimilate (Geczy & Karaminas, 2013). The effeminate periods of gay male fashion have existed through the 'Macaroni', 'Dandy' and 'Edwardian' looks of the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, exemplified by iconic figures such as Oscar Wilde and Quentin Crisp. On the other hand, the masculine periods, among gay men, have been observed in the latter half of the twentieth century specifically from the seventies onwards with the emergence of hyper-masculine gay sub-cultures. The butch shift (Sender 2006; Geczy & Karaminas, 2013; Taywaditep 2002) also known as the 'masculinization

of the gay man' is witnessed through the uber macho depictions of the 'mustached clone', the 'tattooed leatherman', 'biker' and the 'all American jock' (Geczy & Karaminas, 2013).

Gay male fashion has constantly oscillated between the flagrant exorbitance of effeminacy to the conservative, assimilative territories of masculinity (Geczy & Karaminas, 2013). The inferring of homosexual identity (Altman1971), is carried out against the backdrop of a social environment. Because of the fundamental semiotic influence of clothing and physical appearance on promoting communication in social situations (Marmor, 1980), the peculiarities or the distinctiveness of homosexual fashion or style has often served as a conveyor and marker for delineating and distinguishing the idiosyncrasies of the homosexual community. J.C. Flugel in his thesis, contended that the line of demarcation between men's and women's fashion was contingent on the level of vanity or involvement put into one's clothing or appearance management (Sontag, 1994). Male narcissism, if considered in the context of attention to clothing in this case, weighs in heavily on the effeminate side of the gender scale.

Because of the social stigma faced from society at large, not all gay men are comfortable with being labelled as stereotypically fashion conscious, effeminate, or even as homosexual or gay (Taywaditep, 2002). The display of internalized homophobia (negative attitudes towards homosexuality) and anti-effeminacy attitudes (low regard for effeminacy in men), professed by gay men themselves, has been rampant within the homosexual community for a very long time (Currie, Cunningham & Findlay, 2004; Taywaditep, 2002). It has been found that gay men with high internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy attitudes who do not want to be identified with the stereotypical characteristics of being gay, actively abide to the heteronormative prescriptions of mainstream society which defend masculinity and dismiss femininity (Currie, Cunningham & Findlay, 2004; Taywaditep, 2002). This is directly opposite to the effeminate fashion conscious male gay stereotype, among gay men themselves (Sullivan, 2011).

Statement of Problem

A number of studies (Rudd, 1996; Sha *et al.,* 2007) have examined gay men's fashion involvement; however few have measured this phenomenon in the context of negative prejudices that exist within the gay community itself. More specifically, there is a gap in the literature related to the influence of internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy attitudes, that exist within the gay community, on gay men's fashion involvement. Moreover, although some studies have shown gay men to have a predilection for a more or less masculine appearance (Sullivan, 2011; Sánchez & Vilain, 2012), those results do not explain how their preferences could be influenced by other variables. More specifically, no studies have measured the influence of internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy attitudes on gay men's preference for a masculine or feminine appearance. In addition, although popular stereotypes do exist portraying the masculine gay man as being more muscular, butch and rugged, and of the feminine gay man as being skinny, athletic and smooth (Cole, 2002; Schofield & Schmidt, 2005), there is a dearth of research that explores these stereotypes in relation to fashion and clothing. More specifically, there is little information available about gay men's current definitions of masculinity and femininity as exemplified in their fashion and clothing.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was three-fold. Firstly it measured the influence of internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy attitudes, among gay men, on gay men's fashion involvement on one hand and their preferences for either masculine or feminine clothing on the other. Secondly, this study explored what gay men mean by masculine or feminine appearance in the context of clothing fashions. Thirdly, the study explored the relationship between fashion involvement in gay men and subsequent preference for masculine or feminine appearance.

Fashion involvement in gay men, for the purpose of this study, pertained to the following fashion consumer groups: people who are fashion conscious: fashion innovators, fashion opinion leaders, and fashion innovative communicators (Behling, 1992; Studak & Workman, 2004). Fashion conscious people, as defined by Tatzel, (1982) are concerned about their own clothing and have the motivation to shop for specific styles. *Fashion conscious* consumer skills, as they pertain to having fashion consciousness, often include the ability to follow what styles are in fashion, knowledge of which fashion stores are selling those styles, and which styles are worth buying or wearing. *Fashion conscious* consumers in this context can be thought of as *fashion followers*, who only agree to emulate fashion trends when they peak societal acceptance (Kaiser, 1997; Studak & Workman, 2004). On the other hand, *fashion innovators* are the pioneers in discovering and wearing new and novel fashions, along with the *fashion opinion leaders* who are responsible for the approval and legitimization of new fashion innovations by swaying others to wear them. *Fashion innovative communicators* are a combination of fashion innovators and fashion opinion leaders and are comprised of those who not only inaugurate new fashions, but also those who influence and convince fashion followers to wear them (Workman & Johnson, 1993; Studak & Workman, 2004). The reasons for including these three consumer groups for this study is because gay men have been known to be fashion conscious, fashion innovators and fashion leaders (Sha et al.,2007). For the purpose of this study, these three fashion consumer groups are distinguished to guide the understanding of gay men's fashion involvement.

Research Questions

The following research questions were proposed:

R1: *Is there a relationship between internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy attitudes toward fashion involvement in gay men?*

    R1-1: Does internalized homophobia affect fashion involvement in gay men?

R1-2: Do anti-effeminacy attitudes affect fashion involvement in gay men?

R2: *Is there a relationship between internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy attitudes toward preference for masculine or feminine appearance in gay men?*

R2-1: Does internalized homophobia affect preference for masculine appearance in gay men?

R2-2: Does internalized homophobia affect preference for feminine appearance in gay men?

R2-3: Do anti-effeminacy attitudes affect preference for masculine appearance in gay men?

R2-4: Do anti-effeminacy attitudes affect preference for feminine appearance in gay men?

R3: *What do gay men mean by a masculine or feminine appearance, in terms of fashion and clothing, for gay men?*

R3-1: What do gay men mean by a masculine appearance, in terms of fashion and clothing, for gay men?

R3-2: What do gay men mean by a feminine appearance, in terms of fashion and clothing, for gay men?

R4: *Is there a relationship between fashion involvement in gay men and subsequent preference for masculine or feminine appearance?*

R4-1: Is there a relationship between fashion involvement in gay men and subsequent preference for masculine appearance?

R4-2: Is there a relationship between fashion involvement in gay men and subsequent preference for feminine appearance?

Significance of Study

The significance of this study is two-fold: one sociological and the other commercial. The sociological significance mainly pertains to understanding the influence of internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy attitudes on gay men's fashion involvement. Previous studies have measured related constructs of fashion involvement (Sha *et al.*, 2007) and preference for masculine or feminine appearance in gay men (Sánchez & Vilain, 2012). However most of these studies have measured gay men's fashion involvement and their preference for masculine or feminine appearance, as independent variables. Therefore, there is a gap in the literature which measures gay men's fashion involvement and their preference for masculine or feminine appearance as dependent variables and in relation to how they could be influenced by the independent variables of internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy attitudes (Bakewell *et. al.*, 2006). Bakewell *et al.,* (2006) state that it would be beneficial to explore how 'fear of the feminine' (in the case of anti-effeminacy attitudes) and 'fear of the avoided-self' (in the case of internalized homophobia) could affect fashion characteristics in gay men. Comprehension of how negative attitudes toward gay men within the gay community itself might affect their fashion consumption choices can aid in better understanding what drives gay men's fashion involvement.

The commercial significance on the other hand relates to how insight gained from this study can be effectively utilized to meet gay men's fashion and clothing needs. Businesses selling specifically to the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community have mostly been limited to creating gay-activism/pride souvenirs and paraphernalia with very little or no attention to clothing or product lines outside the gay pride agenda. Clothing companies that have explicitly

catered to the LGBT community with specific product lines, at least in the case of gay men, have largely consisted of erotic wear and underwear brands like Andrew Christian and CheapUndies.com to name a few, while apparel products have mostly been neglected.

It must however be mentioned here that some mainstream clothing companies like Target, Benetton, Banana Republic, and JC Penney, among others have in fact previously marketed to the LGBT community through the depiction of homosexual couples, lifestyles, and messages in advertisements (Freitas, Kaiser & Hammidi, 1996), but have not created special clothing or product lines based on their needs and preferences. In other words, these companies have marketed to the LGBT populace through the context of a hetero-normative framework and more specifically hetero-normative clothing styles. This, then, naturally begets the question about whether LGBT individuals would prefer clothing fashions different from the hetero-normative clothing options. Do gay men really need special clothing items or lines dedicated to them? Studies (Sánchez & Vilain, 2012; Sullivan, 2011) have shown that gay men have, in a majority of instances, preferred masculine looks or appearances over feminine ones.

However, as previously mentioned, gay men's fashion from as far back as the 18th century to present time, has constantly wavered between the polarities of masculine reserve and feminine expressiveness (Geczy & Karaminas, 2013). But, most contemporary clothing retailers, some high-end fashion designers notwithstanding, still rely on the division of stores into men's and women's sections which reinforces the social construction of gender into two separate categories of people, with unique interests and preferences. According to a recent report published by National Public Radio (Kott, 2014) millennials, or generational cohorts born in the nineteen eighties and nineties (Merriam-Webster dictionary), are starting to reconsider the definitions of gender and sex-typification through their clothing choices. With the burgeoning blurring of gender roles and standards of gender conformity in recent times (The Intelligence Group, 2013), issues of the eminence of gender-fluid dressing specifically within the male gay

community become particularly important and relevant to fashion marketers and retailers. There is a dearth of diverse clothing choices which transgress the boundaries of gender normative dressing styles. This may be limiting for some men, especially for gay men, who might not want to conform to these heteronormative prescriptions of masculine dressing. However, the idea here is not to put gay men in women's dresses, but "to get the man out of the pants and not in a transvestite way, but in a naturally male way" (Androgynous fashion blurs traditional rules of style, 2010). The significance, in this context, therefore lies in the potential of the clothing designer, manufacturer and retailer to understand that blurring the boundaries between gender specific clothing and creating more gender inclusive product lines will be attractive to consumers regardless of their gender and sexual identity.

From an economic standpoint, LGBT consumers have been a highly coveted target market. As per the National Lesbian and Gay Chamber of Commerce, 6 to 7% of the adult US population or 15 to 16 million adult Americans identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. This has led to the recognition of the LGBT population as a very lucrative market segment. *Buying power* refers to disposable personal income (DPI), for an individual's total after-tax income, available to spend on personal consumption and as touted by Witeck Communications in 2013 the *buying power* of the US LGBT populace in 2013 was estimated to be a staggering $830 billion (Witeck Communications, 2013). In addition, despite recent changing situations, LGBT households are still considered as being "DINKS" (double income, no kids) which leaves room for more discretionary spending (Freitas *et al*., 1996).

According to Rivendell Media, in 2013, the percentage of all US businesses marketing directly to LGBT consumers through gay-specific advertisements containing explicit references to homosexual lifestyles in written content and graphics, stands at 56.2% and all ad spending in the gay press amounts to $381.4 million, up by 18.2% from 2012. Moreover, gay men specifically, have proven themselves to be highly lucrative consumers and purveyors of style and

luxury (Stabiner, 1982). With women still earning close to about 25 cents less than men for every dollar, men are still at a discretionary-income spending advantage and the gay male market can be touted as the highest consuming segment in the whole LGBT population. Investigating the needs of gay men, an extremely lucrative consumer demographic, and identifying their preferences, provide a definitive path to success for interested fashion businesses who want to cater to this market segment.

Previous studies that have tried exploring clothing preferences among gay men have been conducted by presenting the participants with pre-defined stimuli in the form of photos or flat pattern drawings of clothing items based on pre-conceptualized categories which have included the following styles of *innovative/ trendy*, *classic/traditional*, and *casual/relaxed* for one study (Rudd, 1996) and the styles of *camouflage*, *professor*, *burning man*, and *Nigel Barker* for another study (Sullivan, 2011). While the conceptualization of these categories has been well thought out and based on thorough content analyses (Sullivan, 2011) and previous research (Rudd, 1996), the meanings of such categories and their relevance may be outdated. The proposed study, in contrast, did not impose on the participant established definitions of masculine and feminine appearance, but instead inquired of the participant to provide their personal current and contemporary definitions and meanings. Thus qualitative data obtained about what masculine and feminine clothing meant to gay men and their subsequent preference for either type provided interested fashion businesses first-hand insight into the clothing preferences of the gay male market segment.

Assumptions

As the participants partook in this study out of their own volition, it is assumed that the participants had provided valid information by responding honestly to the questions. In the absence of a global definition of masculinity or femininity, the descriptions of masculinity and

femininity are different in different cultures. However, for the purposes of this study, only participants living in the United States were allowed to participate, and it was assumed that their interpretations of masculinity and femininity corresponded to the definitions of masculinity and femininity in the American cultural context.

Limitations

One of the limitations of this study was that no differences were made between gay male participants who are Americans and those who are immigrants living in the United States. The definitions of masculinity, femininity and even homosexuality are interpreted with varying cultural connotations, however results obtained did not identify cultural differences. Further, although certain religions openly condemn homosexuality, no differences were made based on the participants' religious affiliation or lack thereof.

Moreover, because a major portion of the participants for this study were recruited through contacting various LGBT and affiliated organizations and through personal networks, gay men who were not connected to such organizations may not have been able to participate in this study. In addition, the survey for this study may not have reached gay men who are still closeted and are not willing to answer questions related to their sexuality.

CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

This chapter aims to provide the reader with a detailed background for the study. Exploring the fashion preferences of gay men, naturally, begets the question about why clothing is important to gay culture in the first place, and why we are studying it. The literature review commences with contributing to the reader's knowledge about the inherent role of clothing and appearance in forming, mediating and professing semiotic information about homosexual identity, not only for the self but also to others within the gay community. This is followed by discussions about demystifying the fashion stereotype of the gay man and how society has traditionally allotted fashion to the feminine domain. In the same vein, the literature then deliberates the relationship between effeminacy and male homosexuality. Next, the reader is informed about how the presence of internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy attitudes fundamentally oppose the fashion and feminine stereotypes of the gay male community. Based on this extensive review, this chapter proposes hypotheses from the research questions suggested in Chapter 1 and presents a conceptual model to explore these hypotheses.

Homosexual Identity, Semiotics and the Importance of Dress

Homosexual identity. The centrality of the idea of sexual identity in self-presentation of homosexual populations, in contrast to their heterosexual counterparts, has long been noticed (Clarke & Turner, 2007). In other words, while most hetero-normative self-presentation includes attributes like gender, age, education and profession, the homo-normative self-presentation has often emphasized the singular importance of the aspect of sexuality as an innate and essential part

of self-identity, sometimes in absence of the other attributes (Eliason, 1996). Through the seventies, eighties, and early nineties, academics have posited the significance of sexual identity to homosexual identity (Altman, 1971; Plummer, 1975; Moses, 1978; Cass, 1979; 1984; Troiden, 1988; Rust 1992, 1993; Eliason, 1996).

Sexual identity can be broken down into three components: self-identity, perceived identity and presented identity (Cass, 1984a). While self-identity pertains to the ideas held by the individual about himself, perceived and presented identities are concerned with how the individual thinks he is perceived by others, and how he chooses to present himself to others in the context of specific social situations, respectively. Cass (1984b) thus alludes to the consideration of sexual-identity as a cognitive construct, which results from an interactive interplay between one's self-perceptions created in two situations: one that is self-conceived and the other that is formed in the condition of a social context like race, gender, occupation or sexual orientation. Further, for that sense of identity to be successfully integrated into the self, one must have the chance for a direct exchange of the expression of that identity, through actual behavior with others (Cass, 1979). Therefore, for complete identity integration, the concepts of self, perceived and presented identities must align and appear to be consistent (Troiden, 1989).

Homosexual identity can be primarily understood in a social context, and derived from social norms (Altman, 1971). The typical stages for the development of homosexual identity as defined by Cass (1984b) and Troiden (1989) are (*i*) *Sensitization:* Usually occurring at a pre-pubertal age, characterized by feelings of marginality and incongruity with same –sex peers; (*ii*) *Confusion*: During adolescence, marked by the first thoughts of possible homosexual orientation followed by subsequent inner anxiety and suspicion (*iii*) *Identity assumption*: Symbolized by the acceptance of homosexual identity and presentation of that identity to other homosexual or close peers (*iv*) *Commitment:* Distinguished by the acknowledgement of complete homosexual self-identification and voluntary adoption of a homosexual lifestyle that is willfully presented to

others. The last two stages of sexual identity formation, namely identity assumption and commitment, can thus be correlated with the alignment of the self, perceived and presented identities, as previously mentioned, where all three components are activated simultaneously to constitute a consistent whole(Cass,1884b;Troiden, 1989).

Semiotics. The communication of committed identities is often achieved through a combination of distinct verbal and non-verbal modes of expression or semiotics. Semiotics, by definition, discusses the theory of signs, or of signaling systems (Palmer. 1993). While verbal modes of communication or verbal semiotics primarily allude to the usage of specific vocabulary, non-verbal modes of expression or non-verbal semiotics often refer to the way an individual behaves or appears in public. The peculiarity of semiotic expression is instrumental in the formation of social cultures and/or subcultures, where differences act as agents of segregation between groups and similarities act as agents of assimilation within groups (Eliason, 1996). Higher levels of cultural identification and belonging have been attributed to positively impact choice of lifestyle and subsequent appropriation of social position through prestige, privilege, and power (Kaiser, 1990).

The consideration of commodities as a medium to constantly construct and communicate meaning in everyday life has gained traction in material culture studies (Riggins, 1994). The meaning of objects is created, observed and maintained through collective effort in an environment of social interaction within specific cultures (Blumer, 1969). McCracken (1986) and Kaiser (1990) have defined cultural idiosyncrasies as cognitive heuristics that aid in the mechanism of categorization, classification and organization of people based on gender, physical appearance and ability, age, social class and ethnicity. Because meaning is socially constructed (Rudd, 1996), clothing can thus be instrumental in serving as a cultural vehicle for conveying meaning on a daily basis across individuals, groups, and entire cultures, where people interpret them and facilitate interaction based on the interpretation of those meanings (Kaiser, 1990).

Clothing or dress is an integral agent of non-verbal communication and has long been associated with cultural meaning (McCracken, 1986) by acting as a medium for relaying information between the wearer and the viewer (Holman, 1980). In addition, dress is a part of our overall appearance that is a result of orchestrated modification to create, maintain or adhere to a specific appearance standard (Miller-Spillman, Reilly & Hunt-Hurst, 2012). Research has demonstrated the influence of clothing appearances on forming self-image as well as the effect it has on creating first impressions (Johnson, Kim, Schofield & Yurchisin, 2002).The influence of clothing and dress thus extends far beyond its obvious material domain and facilitates a societal understanding of the clothed body (Miller-Spillman, et al., 2012). In other words, dress can contribute toward disseminating key information about the wearer's age, gender, social status, social role and ethnicity.

Semiotics of clothing is particularly discernible in the context of subcultural identification. A subculture has been defined as multifaceted expression within diverse societies, where the scope for pluralistic interpretation encourages the appearance of alternative systems against, and almost paralleling the supremacy, of the hegemonic uniform standard (Cohen, 1955; Plummer, 1975; Rubington & Weinberg, 1987). Idiosyncratic expressions of appearance through clothing, hair, make-up, and even lifestyle have succeeded in creating distinct physical identities for various subcultures such as the Hippie, Grunge, Punk, Goth etc. (Subcultures, 2005). Similarly, when considering homosexuality as a separate social culture, divergent from dominant societal standards not only in areas of sexual attraction and practices but also in key aspects of identity expression (Rudd, 1996), clothing and dress, as key components of appearance, have played a crucial role in the solidification of cultural identity among members of the homosexual population as well (Rudd, 1996; Freitas et al., 1996).

However, Kaiser (1990) states that owing to the exchange of semiotic information between the sender and receiver, the meaning conveyed is always in a state of flux and the

expression and understanding of such meaning is constantly negotiated. In the same vein of dynamic interpretation of identities, it has been observed that the identification of sexual identity through clothing and appearance cannot be fully comprehended through a homogenous perspective as long as the entire homosexual population is considered as a macro, cognate whole (Penaloza, 1996; Cole, 2000; Mort, 1996). Therefore, Cole (2000) states that although clothing has been indicated as a primal signifier for gay identification, a majority of past research has fallen short in explaining how the different subcultures within the gay community have utilized semiotics to communicate their identities.

Importance of dress. Although styles of physical appearance of gay men have differed between different sub-tribes and groups and undergone transformation over time (Edwards, 1997; Faderman, 1991), researchers (Atkins, 1998; Cogan & Erikson, 1999) have argued in support of the presence of definite and recognizable gay appearance markers. The importance placed upon clothing and dress in forming identities is manifested in the emphasis placed on the visual aspect of constructing, interpreting and representing a consensual gay or lesbian identity that is in *sync* with the standards or ideals of contemporary popular culture defined in gay magazines, publications, and television media (Clarke & Turner, 2007). Considerable academic research has largely been based on the consideration of the homosexual community as a monolithic cultural entity (Penaloza, 1996; Cole, 2000; Mort, 1996), however even a cursory glance into contemporary popular gay male culture will reveal the presence of generic sub tribes such as *bears*, *cubs*, *femmes*, *fairies* and *muscle marys* (Cole, 2000; Schofield & Schmidt, 2005). *Grindr*, a popular gay male networking app available on iPhones and most Android phones, has recently introduced a section to help users classify themselves under twelve categories of male gay subcultures called *Bear*, *Clean-Cut*, *Daddy*, *Discreet*, *Geek*, *Jock*, *Leather*, *Otter*, *Poz*, *Rugged*, *Trans*, and *Twinks*. In addition, distinct clothing aesthetics serve as specialized identifiers for self-

allegiance to these specific subcultural tribes and sub tribes within the gay community itself (Schofield & Schmidt, 2005).

Schofield and Schmidt (2005) state that tribal identities are contingent upon sexual preferences, life values, and body shape and are often expressed through distinct clothing choice and preferences. While *drag queens* and *fairies* yearn to completely look like women, *aesthetes*, *camps* and *femmes* subscribe to a semi-masculine appearance but with obvious feminine details in terms of fit and tightness; the *invisibles,* on the other hand, adhere to a purely masculine appearance and follow the hegemonic standards of hetero-normative male fashion (Schofield & Schmidt, 2005). Because of the historical repression of homosexuality (Sullivan, 2003), gay men and women use clothing and appearance to profess their sexual orientation, thereby creating a sense of community or a space of safe refuge by countering and combating the hegemonic confines of sexual preference and lifestyle in heteronormative society (Clarke & Turner, 2007). Popularly known as the issue of *visibility*, the aspect of appearing and dressing gay has become paramount to signal citizenship to Gay and Lesbian (G&L) communities and separation from the mainstream (Freitas *et al*., 1996). This is in line with the radical role of subcultures like the skinheads and punks that have traditionally resisted the dominant societal norms of gender, class and race through appropriation of symbolic material possessions and consequent display of the same (Kates, 2000).

However a paradox for such 'visibility' exists. In light of the historical repression and rendering of homosexuality as condemnable and as a social vice or abnormality, sometimes homosexual 'visibility' has been manifested as secretive semiotic codes, understood only by those within the community (Skidmore, 1999). Therefore, Skidmore (1999) argues that historically it has rather been the 'invisibility' of the homosexual that has placed precedence over the dress and appearance of gay men consequently prompting a natural but required concern to

experiment and negotiate the expression of gay identities both within and outside the gay community.

Fashion and the Gay Stereotype

The use of semiotics through clothing to generate and strengthen sub-cultural identity within the modern male homosexual population has not just been contained as signifiers for indicating sexual orientation, but in reality has bled far into defining heightened taste, and establishing leadership over clothing, appearance and fashion at large for the modern gay man. Simply typing in the first few keywords "are all male fashion designers…" immediately prompts Google's efficient search prediction software to automatically suffix the word *gay* at the end even before the user has completed typing the sentence. Since the summer of 2003, when a new reality series on the Bravo channel called *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* hit the television screens and entrusted five gay men with the precious responsibility of refining straight men's taste in matters of fashion and style of living, the solidification of the authority of the gay man as the creative fashion doyen of mainstream society became a matter that has remained largely undisputed (Sender, 2006).

Men have historically been at forefront of the fashion industry starting from the mid twentieth century with Charles Frederick Worth, Paul Poiret, and Mario Fortuny, however the importance of their sexual orientation and in particular identifying them as gay has only been a recent development. A quick look at the creative heads across the biggest contemporary fashion houses reveals the likes of Karl Lagerfeld, Marc Jacobs, Tom Ford, John Galliano, Stefano Pilati, Jean Paul Gaultier, Domenico Dolce & Stefano Gabbana, Michael Kors and Zac Posen, to name only a few, who are all fashion leaders and self-identified gay men (Whitty, 2012). In addition, even fictional gay characters on popular television shows such as Standford Bletch in *Sex and the City*, Kurt Hummell in *Glee*, Justin Suarez from *Ugly Betty*, among many others, have all

contributed to the fashionable image of the gay man. Fashion historian and chief curator of the

Museum of the Fashion Institute of Technology, Valerie Steele points out that the existence of

male homosexuality as almost a stereotype within the fashion domain is undeniable, however no

"gay gene" has yet been identified that can help defend the argument of the sartorial genius as a

facet of homosexuality, nor are there statistics enumerating the number of gay male fashion

designers for that matter (Givhan, 2013). In fact, Robin Givhan from the Washington Post notes

that the truth of the stereotype is so real, that unless otherwise stated, when speaking of a male

fashion designer, until the individual concerned explicitly professes his heterosexuality, it is

almost tacit understanding that the converse is true (Givhan, 2013).

The fashion brilliance of the gay man, however, is not limited only to designers and

creative heads of multinational fashion corporations, but has in fact percolated into the stereotype

image of the common gay man as well. Stylishness and knowledgeability of fashion trends has

been identified as a common male gay trait (Sullivan, 2011). A women's website running an

article titled "8 Reasons Why Every Girl Needs a Gay Best Friend" places fashion tips or advice

from gay men as the number 2 reason why gay men are so very important in a woman's life

(Jovanovic, n.d.). In comparison to straight men, gay men have themselves professed to admitting

to the stereotype by self-reporting higher fashion interest and fashion awareness than their

heterosexual equivalents (Sha *et al.,* 2007). Studies by Snezek (1986), and Rudd (1996) among

others, have found gay men, at large, to be highly fashion conscious and discernible consumers

with elevated taste and selective preference for better quality and higher standards. The

subsequent dissemination of fashion trends originated by gay men into mainstream society, as

noted by Rudd and Tedrick (1994), furthers the imagination of the role of gay men as not only

being fashion conscious, but as prominent fashion leaders as well.

The fashion stereotype of the gay man can be understood as a natural extension of their

heightened involvement in visual appearance. A considerable amount of social research has

acceded to findings that gay men place heightened emphasis on physical appearance and being engaged in appearance investment related activities such as spending time and money on shopping for clothes (Kleinberg, 1980; Stabiner, 1982; Lakoff & Scherr, 1984; Kates, 2002). The aspect of physical appearance or body image in this context in particular is of prime significance, because it has been found to be a major factor in facilitating socialization both in areas of communication and attraction among the homosexual populous (Marmor, 1980). Kleinberg (1980), and Lakoff and Scherr (1984) have attributed the reason for physical vanity among homosexuals to the correlation between physical appearance and sexual attraction (Hagan, 1979; Symons, 1979). In such a scenario, extreme emphasis is placed on physical attributes and the homosexual male psyche is consistently conditioned to live up to an idealized standard of presentability and attractiveness (Clark, 1977) thus rejecting any deviants that do not fit that stereotype (Sergios & Cody, 1985/86). Because of this culturally accepted focus on physical beauty (Reilly, Rudd, & Hillery, 2008) gay men have been known to suffer from greater body dissatisfaction and poorer body image (Kimmel & Mahalik, 2005).

Another construct related to, but conceptually distinct from, body image is appearance investment. While body dissatisfaction, a factor of body image, alludes to positive or negative assessment of one's body or body parts, appearance investment primarily denotes the attitudes or concerns put into controlling or ameliorating one's own appearance. Gay men have been shown to possess lower self-esteem, due to the social stigma or homophobia from society at large (Reilly & Rudd, 2006). Self-esteem or the worth one feels in one's own self has, on the other hand, been linked to body image and appearance investment. In fact, empirical evidence suggests that body image dissatisfaction and heightened investment in one's own appearance reflects lower levels of self-esteem (Kousari-Rad & McLaren, 2013; Forand, Gunthert, German & Wenze, 2010). Studies have proven the relation between self-esteem and consumer behavior, in that lower self-esteem leads to heightened practices in consumption of material possessions or services as a way to

compensate for inferior feelings about the self (Faber & O'Guinn, 1992; Lee, Lennon & Rudd, 2002). Consequently commodification of the image of the gay man has emerged. As Clammer (as cited in Gabriel & Lang, 1995, p. 195) says, shopping is "not merely the acquisition of things: it is the buying of identity".

In contemporary society, the ideal gay identity has extended beyond only fashionable clothing and appearance but evolved into an entire lifestyle. Sender (2006) notes that the image of the gay man as portrayed in *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* depicts the gay man as upper-class, educated, wealthy and successful with superior taste and interest in clothing, fashion, poetry, art, music and décor. Reflected in this portrayal is the image of the ideal gay man who has both money and taste and uses them to his advantage to achieve the best life possible. Hart (2004) echoes this sentiment and states that *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* had for the first time in the history of American popular television, set a precedent for male homosexuality that had never been seen in such a light before: that of the superiority of the gay man over his straight counterpart. The homosexual man was no longer to be seen as the sexually repressed, deprived and desperate effeminate caricature of a man who is the subject of every ridicule, but instead as the forerunner and connoisseur of everything that is stylish, glamorous, glitzy, wealthy and beautiful.

Thus, the stereotype of the fashion conscious gay man can be considered to be a desirable one. The relationship between sexual orientation and fashion awareness as a positive stereotyped trait was tested in a study conducted by Cotner and Burkley (2013) where participants had to express their level of fashion knowledge. The study revealed that, when the topic of sexual orientation was made relevant to the two separate groups of homosexual and heterosexual participants, sexual orientation did in fact affect performance on the fashion knowledge quiz. Gay participants scored higher on the fashion knowledge quiz, in comparison to their heterosexual counterparts. These examples of the positive association of homosexual identity for gay men in

the fashion domain thus contribute to a stereotype 'lift' or a shift to the positive stereotype and therefore encouragement for the male homosexual population at large to adhere to this positive stereotype.

However, it must be mentioned here that despite the positive association and stereotype 'lift' of the popular image of the gay man with being fashionable and fashion leaders, no scientific evidence points to the consensus that all gay men, universally, are equally involved in fashion and are fashion conscious (Sender, 2006). Despite all the references in popular culture and academic evidence that supports this stereotype, in reality, making such an overarching assumption and presenting an overgeneralized uni-dimensional view of all gay men would be presumptuous. In fact, as already mentioned, this image of fashionable gay men, as connoisseurs of heightened taste and aesthetic relies to a great extent on the commodification of the gay culture, with gay men being big spenders and consumers (Sender, 2006). This gay man, is mostly wealthy, educated and lives in an urban environment with access to the all that is new, including the latest in fashion trends. As Sender (2006) notes, this fashionable gay identity is predominantly rooted in a metropolitan context, where financial affluence and access to education play a major role. Such stereotypes often leads to a homogenous view of the gay male community, which refuses to accommodate the outliers, in other words, gay men who are not involved in fashion. It is therefore, important in this context to understand that the male gay community is not a homogenous, monolithic subculture, subscribing unilaterally to the stereotype of being fashionable.

Fashion and the Feminine Stereotype

Historically biological sex-typing and gender identity characterize women as being inherently invested in appearance and beauty and characterize men with an almost oppositional and habitual disregard for the same (Kaiser, 1997). Therefore, the association of femininity and

fashion is best understood by juxtaposing female narcissism with masculine aloofness. Sex typing of women as being passive and weak and men as being aggressive and powerful has formed stereotyped feminine roles of narcissism and nurture, and masculine roles of function and faculty (Stern, 1988). Fashion, as a social phenomenon in itself, facilitates a culture of consumption through a process of self-directed attention resulting in manipulating or managing one's appearance. Consumption literature has traditionally hailed men as 'producers' and women as 'consumers' in society (McNeill & Douglas, 2011). In other words, while women have been conventionally recognized and appreciated for their appearance, beauty and domestic dexterity, men's prestige has often been attained and protected through their ability to provide for the woman (McNeill & Douglas, 2011). Consequently, consumer marketers have touted women as their ultimate target audience (McNeill & Douglas, 2011).

Additionally, societal objectification of the female body has placed women under the inescapable scrutiny of the male gaze, prompting a coercive compulsion for all women to live up to an ideal standard of feminine beauty. Academic evidence has corroborated this assumption by showing women suffering from poorer body image and lower levels of self-esteem than men (Forand, Gunthert, German & Wneze, 2010). Societal female conditioning to emphasize appearance and beauty, from an early age, can be considered as a major causative factor towards such psychological stress (Bakewell *et al.*, 2006). Kaiser and Freeman(1989) as cited in (Bakewell et al., 2006), state that women have been shown to rely on peer approval for appearance gratification and often use clothing as a means to gain others' acceptance. This "other-oriented" approach for appearance gratification in women extends from the proverbial comprehension of beauty as realized in the eyes of the 'beholder' and as something that serves the self but only when it has passed the consensual authorization of others (Cox and Dittmar, 1995).

The influence of peer approval for women in the case of clothing and fashion is however highly contrasted by the 'self-oriented' approach in men, who are more focused on the functional

aspect of clothes (Bakewell *et al.*, 2006). Craik (1994) posits that men are more concerned with fit and comfort of clothing, not style; are dependent on women for their shopping and do not pay attention to clothing or follow fashion trends. This is sustained by Galilee's (2002) supposition which contrasts the masculine characteristics of quality, value, practicality and conformity against the feminine issues of narcissism, fashion individualism or statement making and fashion knowledge. Thus it can be inferred that while the roots of female sartorial engagement lie in a domain of heightened hedonic experience, male sartorial involvement follows a contrastingly utilitarian approach.

In the case of male grooming products, which carry an inherently narcissistic connotation, Mason (2002) as cited in McNeill & Douglas, (2011) states that most men are still resistant to the idea of male grooming because of the historic feminine connotation associated with it. Those men who do however seek its benefits, consider their grooming choices as being more functional than self-indulgent (McNeill & Douglas, 2011).

According to Cho & Workman (2011), women's fashion involvement deriving from a more willful approach to seek pleasure from fashion related activities contrasts the 'needs-based' approach observed in most men. This is in congruence with the expressive/communal versus instrumental/agentic orientations of femininity and masculinity (Parsons & Shils, 1952). Instrumental or agentic goals allude to the attainment of goals which are outside the purview of the interactive process and include personality traits like independence, assertiveness, reason, rationality, and competitiveness as emblems of traditional masculinity (Palan, 2001). Communal or expressive orientations on the other hand give importance to the interaction itself and comprises within it the qualities of nurturance, intuition, caring, sensitivity and considerateness (Palan, 2001). In accordance to this and in the context of fashion, a number of empirical studies have concluded that women use fashion as a means of self-expression and self-identity (Gould & Stern, 1989; Solomon, 1999), are more committed to fashion (Zaichowsky, 1985; O'Cass, 2000),

are more likely to better understand fashion cues (McCracken and Roth, 1989), actively engage in fashion information seeking during clothing purchases(Kaiser & Chandler, 1984), have a higher probability to spend more time on discovering and wearing new fashions, are more creative in inventing new styles and are also generally more fashion conscious than men (Bakewell et al., 2006).

All the above literature is based on the binary consideration of men being masculine and women being feminine which alludes to the concept of biological sex typing or the gender binary. The association of femininity and fashion is however not only seen in the case of biological sex typing, but also in relation to gender identity. Gender identity transcends the limitations of biological sex and according to Spence (1984) as cited in Palan, (2001), is a cognitive construct that alludes to one's psychological sex as the "fundamental existential sense of one's maleness or femaleness" which in turn is derived from the prevalent cultural connotations of what it means to be masculine or feminine in contemporary society (Lerner 1986). In a study conducted by Lertwannawit and Gulid (2010), straight men with high fashion interest were found to be significantly characterized by feminine personality traits. This is true not only in the case of straight men but gay men as well. Kates (1998, 2000, 2002, 2004) and Oakenfull (2012) have found gender-atypical consumption as a consistent correlate with feminine gender identity in gay men. Thus it is posited that aspects of fashion and appearance have been traditionally and repeatedly held in the feminine domain. Moreover, the gender atypicality, or behavior not typical of one's biological gender, noticed in gay men in relation to fashion and consumption has rendered homosexuality in close association with effeminacy.

Homosexuality and Effeminacy

The association of male homosexuality with effeminacy has long been prevalent. Effeminacy by definition refers to masculinity that is not sufficiently masculine, or in other words

masculinity that does not live up to the expectations of what it means to be masculine in a specific culture (Holocomb, 2007). Generally, effeminacy is a term that is used to allude to the lack of qualities such as strength, virility, emotional control and demonstrativeness, particularly in men, and labeling men who do not display those qualities as effeminate (Holocomb, 2007). Historically through western societies male homosexuals have often been affiliated with the display of effeminate and androgynous stereotyped traits (Taywaditep, 2002). Considerable scientific evidence has alluded to the characteristic gender deviance among both male and female homosexuals (Mac Donald & Games, 1974; Taywaditep, 2002), where gender deviance refers to the transgression of traditional gender roles and gender performance and the identification with characteristics or personality traits of the opposite gender to a certain extent. Although the term effeminacy (Websters Third International Dictionary, n.d.) implies the "quality of being effeminate: a woman like delicacy, weakness, or softness in a man." in common parlance it is frequently associated with words like '*sissy*', '*fairy*', '*queen*' and '*faggot*' (Chauncey, 1994; Edwards, 1994).

Attributes of male effeminate behavior may be a combination of speaking with a high voice, moving the hips or pelvis excessively during walking, displaying a limp wrist or an emphasized flutter of the eyelashes, in addition to others (Wortis, 1940; Schatzberg, Westfall, Blumetti, Birk, 1975). Following the official recognition of homosexuality in Western society by Swiss doctor Karoyl Maria Benkert, during the latter half of the 19th century, the gender variant connotation of homosexuality was first established through the works of Karl Heinrich Ulrichs (1825 – 1895). Ulrichs, an openly homosexual German writer, social commentator and lawyer introduced the theory of *sexual inversion* as an explanation for homosexual attraction (Sullivan, 2003). The theory of *sexual inversion*, in other words 'hermaphrodism of the soul' as interpreted by Ulrichs defined a homosexual man as 'a woman inside a man's body' (Sullivan, 2003). Ulrich's contention thus accommodated the idea of a strong relation between gender variance and

homosexuality – effeminacy for homosexual males in this case, which was further propagated and supported by some of the most influential sexologists of the latter half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, such as Richard von Krafft-Ebing, Havelock Ellis, Carl Westphal, Magnus Hirschfeld and Sigmund Freud (Sullivan, 2003).

It must be noted here that the propagation of the theory of sexual inversion in reality only re-enforced the hetero-normative standard of attraction between a man and a woman, in this case exemplified by the idea of a woman inside a man's body. Evidence of such psychological gender dysphoria is noted in Joseph Wortis' (1940) work where he states that effeminacy is akin to an innate desire of womanhood. Based on Ulrich's proposition of the hermaphrodism of the soul, Wortis (1940) correlated physical evidence of sexual inversion with effeminacy in the homosexual male, although no concrete evidence was found. Prior to the early twentieth century, homosexuality was considered a congenital disorder, however Havelock Ellis' work vaguely stated that the causative agent for the occurrence of homosexual behavior was a consequence of both nature and nurture (Sullivan, 2003). Extending this perception of homosexuality as acquired through a plethora of surrounding influences, effeminacy in the homosexual male was commonly attributed to the consequence of having a strong, over-overbearing maternal influence in contrast to a yielding, indifferent father, as a developmental factor (Ravart & Cote, 1992). However, both homosexual and heterosexual men were found susceptible to an effeminate inclination, due to anxiety of maternal separation through the developmental process of growing (Ravart & Cote, 1992). In fact, because boys must disassociate from the natural primal feminine tendency and acquire and invest towards adherence to a socially acceptable standard of masculinity, expressing homosexuality can be specifically problematic for them (Ravart & Cote, 1992). Havelock Elli's proposition is explicated in the 'Sissy Boy Syndrome" where Richard Green (1987) attributes a combination of societal, parental and hereditary factors contributing toward the encouragement of the formation of a homosexual identity.

These factors then can be thought of as not directly being responsible for facilitating the formation of a homosexual identity but instead for the encouragement of the display of effeminacy. In a study where 44 extremely effeminate boys, who identified as homosexual and bisexuals, were followed from early boyhood to stages of adolescence, three-fourths of them resisted to change from homosexual tendencies. Interestingly, however behavioral expressions of effeminacy were contained in some cases by active discouragement by parental figures (Ravart & Cote, 1992). Thus a strong correlation for the singular effect of parental influence (nurture) as an instigator for homosexuality was clearly disproven. In a study conducted by Holemon and Winokur (1965) to decipher the causative factors for homosexuality, out of a sample of 36 homosexuals, 24 identified as effeminate and 12 as non-effeminate. A substantial number of the effeminate homosexuals who had realized obvious signs of behavioral effeminacy in themselves from early childhood had learned about homosexuality earlier, engaged in their first homosexual encounter before the age of 15, had repeated the act more frequently and were generally more sexually active in comparison to their non-effeminate homosexual counterparts. In addition the effeminate homosexuals preferred to play the passive sexual role in their first homosexual encounter and in subsequent ones. Thus it can be said that for the effeminate homosexuals, their effeminate characteristics could have promoted a more resolute approach toward their homosexual self-identification (Kite, 1987).

Correlates of juvenescent effeminacy with homosexuals in childhood sex-typed behavior in contrast to heterosexual populations, have also been observed (Bailey, Kim, Hills & Linsenmeier, 1997). Such retrospective evaluation although largely germane to the United States since the 1950's have shown cross-cultural generalizability (Whitam & Mathy, 1986; 1991). Childhood sex a-typicality among homosexual males has been consistently linked to having a non sex-typed self-concept and preference for female playmates coupled with a domestic demeanor and career aspirations that are traditionally ascribed to women (Bailey *et al.*, 1997). Descriptions

of mothers' memories of their boys' childhood behavior have also validated these retrospective recalls by homosexuals about childhood effeminacy (Bailey, Nothnagel & Wolfe, 1995). Although variability in the observation of studies associating male homosexuals with effeminacy does exist, words like 'butch' and 'femme' in popular homosexual jargon to define masculine and feminine homosexuals allude to the definitive presence of the latter (Tripp, 1975). In the same vein of the acknowledgement of the effeminate homosexual man, it was seen in the study conducted by Bailey *et al.*, (1997) that in a comparison between homosexual and heterosexual people seeking romantic partners through personal advertisements, the likelihood of homosexuals to indicate the sex typicality in the personal ads was considerably higher than for their heterosexual counterparts. This explicit stating for the preference of a gendered trait, in itself, alludes to the existence of a plural definition of gender identification and expression among male homosexuals.

Although considerable scientific and behavioral evidence, as we have seen, points to the correlation between homosexuality and effeminacy, this is not to say that all male homosexuals are naturally effeminate. This research only serves to represent a popular societal sentiment about gay men that has been established over time. In reality, however, there are a variety of subcultural tribal identities within the male homosexual community that conform to varying levels of allegiance to masculine and feminine characteristics (Schofield & Schmidt, 2005). However, despite the sub-categorization of the male homosexual community based on its adherence to the standards of masculinity and femininity, the age-old association of homosexuality with effeminacy is undeniable in mainstream culture.

Internalized Homophobia

The word homophobia was originally coined to refer to the concern in heterosexual men about being labeled as homosexuals in the May, 1969 edition of the American pornographic

magazine *Screw* (Herek, 2004). However over time, the meaning of homophobia has shifted from straight men being labeled as homosexuals to the harboring of negative or adverse attitudes towards homosexuality and lesbian, gays, bisexuals and trans-genders who practice homosexual acts (Adams, Bell & Griffin, 1997). In other words, homophobia refers to active hostility toward sexual tendencies that are deviant from the hetero-norm and is often expressed through violence and discrimination against homosexual individuals (Renzetti & Edleson, 2008). Institutionalized homophobia sometimes vilifies homosexuals through religious intolerance as in the case of certain religious texts barring homosexual acts and considering them as inherently sinful. In addition state sponsored intolerance was witnessed in Nazi Germany during the Holocaust and more recently in Uganda, India and Russia, to only name a few. State sanctioned homophobia has resulted in punishments ranging from imprisonment to death. Not only that, according to a report published by the (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2013) on hate crime statistics in 2012, violence based on sexual orientation came right after race-based violence, and constituted about 19.6% of all hate crimes carried out in the United States, in 2012.

Internalized homophobia, on other hand, is something that is intrinsic to homosexuals themselves and is in fact a direct repercussion of this active homophobia inflicted by external society at large. Internalized homophobia, is then a result of the pervasive homophobic beliefs of mainstream society, eventually becoming ingrained into the self-perception of LGBT individuals (Maylon, 1982). Internalized homophobia refers to the incorporation of negative attitudes and assumptions about homosexuals, by homosexuals, leading to the internalization of all the societal stigma, prejudice, and negative stereotypes associated with being gay (Nungesser, 1983). Cabaj (1988) differentiates between external homophobia and internalized homophobia, as the former being active discrimination against and hatred for homosexuals and the latter being more of an internal reaction to that active homo-negativism. The usage of the suffix phobia may be a misnomer because internalized homophobia does not indicate fear of homosexuals, but rather the

unfavorable attitudes and feelings associated with homosexuals and homosexuality in general (Shields & Harriman, 1984).

Internalized homophobia can be operational at both the conscious and unconscious levels of an individual (Maylon, 1982). In the case of gay men, internalized homophobia has been implicated in causing lower levels of self-esteem reflected through gay men feeling worthless, inferior, and even perverted owing to their sexual orientation (Allen and Oleson, 1999). The presence of internalized homophobia in gay men has also been linked to a myriad of intra and interpersonal negative outcomes such as feelings of loneliness and distrust, depression, eating disorders, risky and irresponsible sexual conduct, and self-destructive behaviors such as substance-abuse, alcoholism and even suicide (Currie et al., 2004). Ross & Rosser (1996) state that intense feelings of internalized homophobia create a strong sense of denial and self-rejection, ultimately leading to projecting and identifying with the standards of the aggressor, hetero-normative society in this case, of such negative attitudes.

Negative Attitudes toward Effeminacy

The homophobic behavior of mainstream society is one of the primary motivations for unfavorable attitudes about femininity within the male gay community (Taywaditep, 2002). The punishing binds of societal homophobia often oppress gay men to conform to and appropriate the hegemonic standards of hetero-normative society. These hegemonic standards propagate social structures of a gender-based power hierarchy and re-enforce the framework of the gender binary where men are supposed to be masculine and women are supposed to be feminine. Those who do not conform to these standards are rejected by mainstream society. This has led to a sense of misogyny or anti-effeminacy among gay men not towards women, but towards effeminate men within the gay community. Widely known as 'sissyphobia' (Oliven, 1974) or 'effiminophobia' (Fellows, 2005) this anti-effeministic attitude refers to the rejection and active disregard for

effeminate gay men who do not fit into the characteristics of the gender binary. Effeminacy has been highly stigmatized in homosexual subculture (Taywaditep, 2002) since early part of the twentieth century when conservative gender conforming middle class gay men strongly rejected the flamboyant effeminate fairies and queens in the gay male subculture (Chauncey, 1994). Such acrimonious marginalization of effeminate gay men continued through the mid-twentieth century, when the appearance of the gay clones in the 1970s (Levine & Kimmel, 1998), introduced a hyper-masculine look for the gay man that replaced the limp-wristed swish caricature of the effeminate stereotype from yesteryears. Termed as the "Butch shift", popular gay imagery was redefined through the virile depiction of the hyper-masculine gay machismo (Humphries, 1985).

Literature about minority stress in the homosexual community has predominantly focused on the discriminatory aspect of the larger culture's homophobia against the gay community as a whole (Taywaditep, 2002); however it has often failed to recognize the stress experienced through being marginalized by members within the gay community itself because of the prejudice against effeminacy. Herek's (1986) neo-functional theory of attitudes states that one's attitudes may be reflective of one's desire to align oneself with the esteemed reference group. A patriarchal society considers masculinity to be an asset and as superior to femininity (Taywaditep, 2002); as a result, anti-effeminacy attitudes toward gay men by gay men are fuelled by the need to be accepted by others and to be absorbed into the mainstream (Taywaditep, 2002). Those gay men who are gender deviant, as expressed by effeminacy, are often subjected to harassment and peer rejection (Pilkington & D' Augelli, 1995) ultimately leading to depression, anxiety, lower self-esteem and poor psychological well-being (Weinrich, Atkinson, McCutcham, Grant, & the HNRC Group, 1995). In such a scenario gay men who strive for acceptance into mainstream society approve masculine gay men and devalue effeminate gay men (Taywaditep, 2002). In fact, Taywaditep (2002) suggests that the anti-effeminacy attitudes, within the gay community, can be more damaging than the general spiteful predisposition toward homophobia. A study by Bailey,

Kim, Hills & Linsenmeier, (1997) has shown that effeminate gay men are diminished through constant romantic and sexual rejection leading to poor mental health and lower self-esteem. In addition, a few other studies (Laner & Kamel, 1977; Bailey et al. 1997) assessing gay men's personal advertisements, repeatedly found effeminacy as a less desirable trait. More recently a website called "Douchebags of Grindr" which monitors discriminatory prejudices on Grindr, has documented user profiles with descriptions such as "Only into 101% masculine: Fems dnt f*#??n mssg me." and "Be masculine please! I'm gay, don't want a girl" among many other similar statements (Dutta, 2014).

Hypothesis Formation

This literature review established that involvement in fashion has been predominantly associated with femininity. In addition, gay men have often been stereotyped as being fashionable, however, gay men with internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy attitudes may not necessarily agree to adhere to the standards of being feminine and fashionable. Instead, owing to the socially unfavorable attitudes toward homosexuality and effeminacy in men, some gay men higher in internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy attitudes may try to actively defy the stereotype that gay men are fashionable and seek to obtain mainstream acceptance in the hetero normative context. Gay men may view fashion involvement as a stereotype threat and may try to dissociate from it. Based on this framework the following hypotheses have been proposed:

H1: Both Internalized Homophobia and Negative Attitudes toward Effeminacy will be inversely related to Fashion Consciousness and Fashion Innovativeness and Opinion Leadership in gay men.

H1a: Internalized Homophobia will be inversely related to Fashion Consciousness and Fashion Innovativeness and Opinion Leadership in gay men.

H1b: Negative Attitudes toward Effeminacy will be inversely related to Fashion Consciousness and Fashion Innovativeness and Opinion Leadership in gay men.

Empirical evidence suggests that most gay men prefer to appear masculine (Sánchez & Vilain, 2012; Sullivan, 2011). Common sense also favors such empirical evidence, because as men, gay men would subscribe to the prevalent gender norms. Therefore, the preference for masculinity in gay men in their own appearance and in other men in the gay community can be explained by their same sex attraction. However, an overview of homosexual fashion proves otherwise in that gay fashion, in many instances, has defied the rigidity of the gender binary and has instead shown to be more gender fluid (Geczy & Karaminas, 2013). Here then, a discord may arise, where the stereotypical homosexual tendency to be gender deviant might directly contradict the need to be masculine in order to attract a gay partner and fit in with mainstream society. However, Taywaditep, (2002) states that this hardly suffices to explain the active hatred or disregard for effeminacy in other gay men; preference does not necessarily have to lead to prejudice. Because gay men with internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy attitudes are opposed to gay stereotypes of femininity, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Both Internalized Homophobia and Negative Attitudes toward Effeminacy will be inversely related to preference for feminine appearance.

H2a: Internalized Homophobia will be inversely related to preference for feminine appearance.

H2b: Negative Attitudes toward Effeminacy will be inversely related to preference for feminine appearance.

Theoretical Background

Social Identity Theory (SIT) developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner in the 1970s and 1980s was used as the theoretical framework for this study. According to Tajfel and Turner, social identity is an integral part of one's self concept and is contingent upon an individual's perceived membership in a relevant social group. Tajfel (1979) states that man is a social being and that it is an inherent human need to belong. The social groups that we belong to give us a sense of identity and are vital in creating and asserting our values about ourselves, pride and self-esteem. More specifically, social identity theory aims to understand inter-group behavior, where the world is viewed through a divided lens of 'them' and 'us' and where social differences serve to create these inter-group differences. Through this divided lens, the social world outside of us is seen as a combination of 'in' groups and 'out' groups, where the 'in' groups are the social classes we attribute with positive qualities and choose to belong to, while the 'out' groups are disfavored, looked down upon with condescending attitudes, and discriminated against. The central theme of SIT relies on the idea that one group creates superiority over another group by subscribing to prejudices that are denigrating to the other group.

In the context of consumer behavior, Avery (2012) provides an excellent example of this 'in group', 'out group' mentality, where a group of highly andro-centric male consumers of the sports car brand Porsche actively resist the launch of a Porsche brand of SUV's, thought to be eventually marketed to women. Marketing the Porsche brand to a female consumer demographic, which is the 'out' group in this case, threatened the masculine association that the original 'in group' male Porsche owners had with the brand.

The use of the Social Identity Theory framework is therefore appropriate to this study because, as hegemonic masculinity is essentially established and asserted by preserving patriarchal practices coupled with a conscious rejection of anything that is feminine (Avery, 2012), it is suspected that gay men with internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy attitudes will assert their 'in' group privileges by identifying with norms of hegemonic masculinity while denigrating or rejecting the stereotypes of the "inferior" marginalized group. Thus according to SIT, gay men, in order to assimilate into mainstream society, may in fact show limited or decreased involvement in fashion and clothing, otherwise considered as a trait of the 'out' group and stereotypically gay and feminine. Therefore, as seen in Fig. 1.0 (H1), it is hypothesized, that

INSERT FIGURE 1 HERE

gay men with high internalized homophobia will identify with hetero-masculine ideals, of the 'in' group, and show lower participation towards fashion involvement because of the gay stereotype of the 'out' group. Furthermore gay men with high anti-effeminacy attitudes will also identify with the hetero-masculine ideals, of the 'in' group, and display lower fashion involvement. Additionally, for the same reason, gay men with high internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy will show a negative preference for a less masculine appearance.

The two research hypotheses **H1 (**Both Internalized Homophobia and Negative Attitudes toward Effeminacy will be inversely related to Fashion Consciousness and Fashion Leadership in gay men.) and **H2 (**Both Internalized Homophobia and Negative Attitudes toward Effeminacy will be inversely related to preference for feminine appearance.) pertain to answering the two research questions **R1**(*Is there a relationship between internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy attitudes toward fashion involvement in gay men?*) and **R2** (*Is there a relationship between internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy attitudes toward preference for masculine or feminine appearance in gay men*?). Because no relationship has been hypothesized between

fashion involvement and preference for feminine appearance within the scope of this study, the dashed line between fashion involvement and preference for feminine appearance in the conceptual model signifies research question **R4** (*Is there a relationship between fashion involvement in gay men and subsequent preference for masculine or feminine appearance?*). Research question **R3** (*What do gay men mean by a masculine or feminine appearance in terms of fashion and clothing?*), was explored through qualitative inquiry and will describe what the current definitions of masculinity and femininity mean to gay men in the context of fashion and clothing. A detailed description of the research design and methodology is provided in the following chapter.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

This chapter will give a brief description of the research design, the sample population, the instruments used to study the sample population. Methods used to collect data and subsequent procedures to analyze collected data are also included in this section.

Research Design

A mixed method research design comprising of both quantitative and qualitative data collection was employed for this study. The quantitative component measured the influence of Internalized Homophobia and Negative Attitudes toward Effeminacy, in self-identifying gay men, on their fashion involvement on one hand, and their preference for Masculine/Feminine Appearance on the other hand. The qualitative component further probed gay men about their definitions of what they meant by feminine and masculine appearance for themselves, in terms of fashion and clothing. This exploratory section gathered data through open-ended questions.

Two independent variables and two dependent variables were employed for this study. The two independent variables are i) Internalized Homophobia and ii) Negative Attitudes toward Effeminacy. The two dependent variables are i) Fashion Involvement and ii) Preference for Masculine/Feminine Appearance. This was a cross-sectional study, where data collected at a particular time from a sample was considered in relation to a larger population at that given point in time (Babbie, 1973).

Participants. Only self-identifying *gay men,* above the age of 18, and living in the United States were eligible to participate in this study. No other screening criteria, except for sexual orientation, age and current state of residence in the United States, was used to restrict

eligibility to participate in this study. Of all the people who received the survey, 111 people started taking the survey. Of that, 103 self-identified as being gay and 102 identified as being over the age of 18 and currently living in the United States. However, only 80 participants responded to demographic questions of age, race, education, and the type of area they lived in, based on population size.

The mean age of the participants was found to be 26.15 years ranging from 18 to 65 years. In the sample, 96% of the participants was below the age of 30. Racially, the participants were predominantly White/Caucasian with 83% being White, 3% African American, 9% Asian, 3% Native American, 1% Pacific Islander and 10% belonging to other categories of Hispanic/Latino, Indian (South Asian), Puerto Rican and Spanish. Only 5% of the population had a high school degree while 39% had a four year college degree and 18% had a Master's degree. The participant sample was also largely urban with 45% of the participant population having reported to be living in large metropolitan cities (population over 75,000) in contrast to 1% from rural areas (population less than 1001).

Instruments. The questionnaires measured internalized homophobia, negative attitudes toward effeminacy, fashion consciousness, fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership with multi-item scales and preference for masculine/feminine appearance as a single item. All scales except for fashion consciousness and preference for masculine/feminine appearance were established scales with verified validity and reliability. However, only fashion consciousness was pilot tested in this study for reliability, because preference for masculine/feminine appearance was measured through a single item instrument. In addition to these 5 scales, participants were asked about their average monthly expenditure on fashion and clothing items.

Internalized homophobia. The Short Internalized Homo-negativity (IH) scale as developed by Currie *et al.*, (2004) was a 12 item self-report questionnaire used to measure

internalized antigay prejudice or Internalized Homophobia (IH) among gay men. The twelve

items reflected three underlying correlated dimensions of Public Identification (IHPUB) as Gay,

Social Comfort (IHSOC) with Gay Men and Sexual Comfort (IHSEX) with Gay Men. The scale

was adapted by Currie *et al.,* (2004) from the Reactions to Homosexuality scale (RHS) created by

Ross and Rosser (1996) for the first two dimensions of Public Identification and Social Comfort;

Currie *et al.,* (2004) added a completely new third dimension of Sexual Comfort in their study.

The public identification dimension of internalized homophobia indicated the level of

comfort gay men had in expressing their sexual identity to others in general public situations that

were not necessarily gay. The social comfort dimension of internalized homophobia reflected

how gay men felt about social situations with other gay men within predominantly gay venues or

environments. The sexual dimension within internalized homophobia reflects how gay men felt

about gay relationships and gay sexual encounters, not necessarily concerning themselves, but in

general. Examples of items include "Even if I could change my sexual orientation I wouldn't"

(public identification dimension), "Social situations with gay men make me feel uncomfortable"

(social comfort dimension) and "Most gay men cannot sustain a long-term committed

relationship" (sexual comfort dimension). Participants responded to each item on a 7 point Likert

scale (1= strongly agree; 7=strongly disagree). The Cronbach's alpha reported for this scale by

Currie *et al.*, (2004) was .78. Items 1 (I am comfortable about people finding out that I am gay), 3

(I feel comfortable discussing homosexuality in a public situation), 4(Even if I could change my

sexual orientation I wouldn't) and 10 (I feel comfortable in gay bars) were reverse coded for

analysis.

Negative attitudes toward effeminacy. The Negative Attitudes toward Effeminacy scale

(NATE) developed by Taywaditep (2001) was a 17-item self-report questionnaire, used to

measure the level of negative attitudes that gay men have toward effeminate behavior in other gay

men. Some items include "If I were to run a personal ad looking for a date, I would include "no

fems" in the requirements" and "When I meet a gay man for the first time, I would be turned off immediately if he acted effeminate." Participants responded to each item on a 7-point Likert scale (1= strongly agree; 7=strongly disagree). Taywaditep (2001) reported a Cronbach's alpha of .94. A study conducted later by Sanchez and Vilain (2012) using the same scale also reported a Cronbach's alpha of .94. Items 3 (I would enjoy going to a party where many gay guys "camp it up" and act in a feminine manner), 6 (I don't mind letting people see that some of my gay friends are quite effeminate), 8 (I am comfortable hanging out with gay guys who are feminine by most people's standards), 10 (It is all right with me to see gay men talk, walk, and do things in a feminine way), and 11 (Effeminate gay men help contribute to the good diversity within the gay community) were reverse coded for analysis.

Fashion consciousness. The measure for Fashion Consciousness (FC), used in this study, was a 12-item self-report questionnaire used to measure the level of awareness, interest and knowledge of contemporary fashion and trends. The questionnaire was adapted from a 33-item instrument used by Bakewell *et al.*, (2006). The items chosen specifically relate to men's fashion and reflect cognitive, conative and behavioral aspects of fashion. Some examples of items include "I would say I'm very fashion conscious" (cognitive), "I know which type of men's clothes are fashionable" (conative) and "I usually only shop in trendy stores" (behavioral). Participants responded to a 5-point Likert scale (1= strongly agree; 5=strongly disagree).

Because the measure for Fashion Consciousness was adapted, it was pilot tested to measure reliability. The pilot study was administered to a sample of 49 men and women. The gender specific prefix 'men' for men's fashion/trends, men's clothes, men's jewelry, men's haircuts were omitted from the items and were made gender neutral to make it suitable for both men and women. The Cronbach's Alpha α reported from the pilot study was .826. Because this score was more than .70, the instrument was considered appropriate for use in the final study

(Nunnally, 1978). Item 9 (I hardly ever notice what other men are wearing) was reverse coded for analysis.

Fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership. The Measure for Fashion Innovativeness and Opinion Leadership (FIO), developed by Hirschman and Adcock (1978) was a 6 item self-report questionnaire used to measure the level of innovativeness and leadership in the context of fashion. The measure is divided into two constructs of Fashion Innovativeness (FI) (items 1-3) and Fashion Opinion Leadership (FO) (items 4-6). While Fashion Innovativeness refers to the proclivity of an individual to try new styles and fashion relatively earlier than others, Fashion Leadership alludes to the level of influence an individual has over other's fashion purchase decisions, giving advice and acting as an expert for related information. Participants responded to a four-point likert scale (1=often; 4=never). Some examples of the items include "Are you willing to try new ideas about clothing fashions? How often?" (Fashion Innovativeness) and "How often do you influence the types of clothing fashions your friends buy?" (Fashion Opinion Leadership). The questionnaire has been widely used in consumer research and has established content validity and reliability. Cronbach's alpha reported for all 6 items by Hirschman and Adcock (1978) was .79. Item 3 (Are you usually among the last to try new clothing fashions? How often?) was reverse coded for analysis.

Preference for masculine/feminine appearance. To measure the preference for Masculine/Feminine appearance, a single item measure was developed. The item stated "I like my appearance to be …" and the participant responded on a 7 point bi-polar feminine-masculine semantic differential scale ranging from very feminine to very masculine. The phrasing for the midpoint anchor (4) was set to "equally masculine and feminine" in contrast to it being "neither masculine nor feminine" in a similar semantic differential response format from the Sex Role Identity Scale (SRIS) (Storms, 1979). This was done to capture the androgynous in addition to the

undifferentiated (see Bem, 1977). This item was reverse coded for analysis, so that 1 referred to very masculine and 7 referred to very feminine.

Open ended questions. The final stage of the survey consisted of one open ended question. This question asked the participants to provide narrative data describing their definition of masculine, feminine or equally masculine and feminine appearance in the categories of shirts/tees/tops, pants/trousers/bottoms, jackets/coats, accessories and other items (See Appendix A, questions 10, 11, 12). Based on the participants' response to preference for either masculine, feminine or equally masculine and feminine appearance, a single open ended question was posed asking what they meant by masculine clothing fashions, for gay men, that they would wear or what they meant by feminine clothing fashions, for gay men, that they would wear or what they meant by equally masculine and feminine clothing fashions, for gay men, that they would wear respectively. Prompts for responses pertaining to style, cut, fit, length, color, material, print, and/or decoration of the clothing items etc. were provided to aid the participants in formulating their responses. It should be mentioned here, that because the definitions of masculinity and femininity can be interpreted differently by different people, this study asked its participants about their definitions of masculine, feminine or equally masculine and feminine clothing, that they would wear. It was assumed that the participants based their descriptions on the common societal notions of what masculinity and femininity meant to them. This method of alluding to a widely accepted definition of gender norms as understood by the participant was used by Taywaditep (2001) in his study for a measure of Current Masculinity-Femininity.

Data Collection

Data for this study was collected entirely through an online survey. The survey hyperlink was embedded in a survey recruitment message and sent to potential participants over email. A combination of convenience and snowball sampling methods were utilized to recruit participants

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for this study. Participants were recruited by contacting LGBT (support/advocacy) organizations across the United States to facilitate in the data collection process. Their role in facilitating the data collection process pertained to electronically distributing the study recruitment email, containing the embedded survey link, to LGBT populations in their database or mailing list. Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, discussion boards, blogs, and chatrooms, were also utilized to distribute the survey. Participation for this study was completely voluntary and no compensation (monetary or otherwise) was provided to the participants.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was done in two stages. The first stage consisted of the quantitative data analysis while the second stage consisted of the qualitative data analysis. The quantitative data analysis began by cleaning the data of incomplete responses. One hundred and eleven surveys were collected out of which, 86 complete responses were found to be usable for the quantitative section. The remaining 25 responses were incomplete and could not be used for analysis. Next, reverse coding was performed to change the negatively worded items so that a high value indicated a similar direction of response on every time on every scale. Then Cronbach's Alpha (α) was determined for each individual scale to measure inter-item reliability and to compare these α values to values obtained in previous studies. An exploratory factor analysis was performed on the four scales. The principal component extraction method and the Varimax with Kaiser Normalization Rotation method (25 iterations) were employed. Finally the means were calculated for all 86 participants for each individual scale and were compared to measure the association between the dependent (fashion involvement, preference for masculine/feminine appearance) and independent variables (internalized homophobia, anti-effeminacy attitudes) through the Pearson product-moment correlation. IBM SPSS 17 was used to conduct the aforementioned coding and analyzing procedures.

For the qualitative analysis, the open-ended question (See Appendix A) that asked

participants to describe the clothing categories of shirts, pants, jackets/coats, accessories, and

other items in relation to their preference for clothing with masculine, feminine or equally

masculine and feminine appearance were examined. Participants were given a prompt to include

garment details about the style, cut, length, fit, color, material, print and/or decoration of the

clothing items. Employing the open coding method (Creswell, 2013), the narrative data were read

to identify specific reoccurring terms. The terms fit, cut/style and color/print/pattern were

mentioned by many of the participants. Employing axial coding principles (Creswell, 2013),

researchers then further analyzed the data to identify reoccurring themes under each term.

CHAPTER IV

Findings

Quantitative Findings

      Measures. The mean and standard deviation scores for the measures of negative attitudes

toward effeminacy, internalized homophobia, fashion involvement as measured through fashion

consciousness and fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership, and preference for masculine

or feminine appearance are shown in Table 1. Each of the results will be discussed individually.

INSERT TABLE 1 HERE

The sampled population of gay men for this study showed low negative attitudes toward

effeminacy (M= 5.36, SD=1.17), low internalized homophobia (M=4.99, SD=.88), high fashion

consciousness (M=2.39, SD=.66), low fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership (M=2.42,

SD=.66) and a preference for masculine appearance (M=2.82, SD=.85).

      Cronbach's Alpha scores for each individual scale are indicated in Table 2. Cronbach's

Alpha for internalized homophobia and fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership were seen

to vary from their original alpha scores as determined by the developers of the respective

measures. This was important to measure because the difference in the alpha scores could

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INSERT TABLE 2 HERE

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indicate if the internal consistency of the items for the scales in this study was better or worse in

comparison to previous studies. While alpha scores for internalized homophobia reported a

minimal decrease in value to.76 from its original value of .78 as measured by Currie *et al*.,

(2004), alpha scores for fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership reported a considerable

increase to .839 from its original value of .79 as measured by Hirschman and Adcock (1978). The

reliability for negative attitudes toward effeminacy (.949) retained the same score as reported by

its developer Taywaditep (2001). Due to the adaptation of the fashion consciousness scale,

previous alpha scores were not available for comparison and the Cronbach's alpha was reported

at .87. The reliability scores, for each scale used in the study, of >.70 was considered to be strong

(Nunnally, 1978).

Four exploratory factor analyses were conducted for each scale and the Kaiser-Meyer-

Olkin measure of sampling adequacy indicated that the samples for all the scales were factorable,

except for the fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership scale. The factor analyses was

conducted to detect and examine the nature of the underlying or latent constructs in the scales, if

any, which may have influenced the responses measured for the variables.

Interestingly enough, the Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy indicated

that the negative attitudes toward effeminacy scale sample (See Table 3) was factorable

(KMO=.912, df = 136, p<.000) in contrast to the uni-dimensionality of the scale when it was

measured by the developer Taywaditep (2001) himself. The analysis identified 3 different factors,

for factor loadings larger than .30 and Eigen values equal to 1, where the factors accounted for

70.62% of the total variance. Although the exploratory factor analyses yielded 3 factors, the items

topics for each factor were not cohesive in character and did not form any specific dimensions for

the factors. Some critics have said that the negative attitudes toward effeminacy scale comprises

of two factors, namely social and erotic/romantic factors, based on the nature of the items

(Taywaditep, 2002). However the factors, identified in this study for the negative attitudes toward

effeminacy scale, failed to form any cohesive dimensions based on the nature of the items (See Table 3).

The fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership scale, as measured by the developers Hirschman and Adcock (1978) in their study, revealed two distinct dimensions namely i) fashion innovativeness and ii) opinion leadership. However, the Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy applied to the data in this study indicated that the fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership scale sample was not factorable (KMO= .822, df =15, p<.000). The analysis identified only one factor, for factor loadings larger than .30 and Eigen values equal to 1, where the factor accounted for 57.75% of the total variance.

The Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy indicated that the fashion consciousness scale sample (See Table 4) was factorable (KMO= .861, df = 66, p< .000). The analysis identified three factors, for factor loadings larger than .30 and Eigen values equal to 1, where the factors accounted for 63% of the total variance (See Table 4). Although, the exploratory factor analyses yielded 3 factors, the item topics for each factor were not cohesive in their character or nature and did not form any specific dimensions for the factors.

Similar to findings by the developers Currie *et al.,* (2004), the Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy indicated that the internalized homophobia scale sample (See table 5) was factorable (KMO= .706, df=55, p<.000). The analysis identified the three factors of public identification (IHPUB), social comfort (IHSOC), and sexual comfort (IHSEX) for internalized homophobia, corresponding to the original findings, for factor loadings larger than .30 and Eigen values equal to 1, where the factors accounted for 65.84 % of the total variance (See Table 5).

INSERT TABLES 3, 4,5 HERE

Correlation among measures. A Pearson product-moment correlation was conducted to measure the association between internalized homophobia (M=4.99, SD=.88) and fashion consciousness (M=2.39, SD=.66) and between internalized homophobia (M=4.99, SD=.88) and fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership (M=2.42, SD.66). This was in relation to hypothesis *H1a* and research question *R1-1*. Results (See Table 6), r (84) =-.006, p=.957 revealed no significant correlation between internalized homophobia and fashion consciousness for the whole scales. No significant results for the whole scales, r (84) =.003, p>.979 were found for the correlation between internalized homophobia and fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership

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INSERT TABLE 6 HERE

(See Table 6) either.

A positive significant correlation was found between the sexual comfort dimension (IHSEX) of internalized homophobia and fashion consciousness, r (84)=.330,p=.002, which means that participants who showed negative attitudes towards gay men who are in romantic and sexual relationships also showed high fashion consciousness. A negative significant correlation was found between the social dimension (IHSOC) of internalized homophobia and fashion consciousness, r (84) = -.227, p=.03, which means that participants who felt comfortable in social situations with other gay men in exclusively gay environments and showed low internalized homophobia in those social situations also showed higher fashion consciousness. A negative significant correlation was found also between the social dimension (IHSOC) of internalized homophobia and fashion innovativeness, r (84) = -.331, p=.002, which means that those participants who felt comfortable in social situations with other gay men in exclusively gay environments and showed low internalized homophobia in those social situations also showed higher fashion innovativeness. A positive significant correlation was found between the sexual dimension (IHSEX) of internalized homophobia and fashion opinion leadership, r (84) =.338,

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p=.001, which means that participants who showed negative attitudes about gay men being in romantic and sexual relationships also showed high fashion opinion leadership (See Table 6.). Therefore even though no correlations were found for the whole scale measuring internalized homophobia, two correlations between the dimensions were observed (i) between the social dimension of internalized homophobia and fashion consciousness, and (ii)between the social dimension of internalized homophobia and fashion innovativeness. Therefore it can be said that *H1a (Internalized Homophobia will be inversely related to Fashion Consciousness and Fashion Innovativeness and Opinion Leadership in gay men.*) was partially supported.

A Pearson correlation was also run to assess the association between negative attitudes toward effeminacy (M=5.35, SD=1.17) and fashion consciousness (M=2.42, SD.66), then between negative attitudes toward effeminacy (M=5.35, SD=1.17) and fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership (M=2.42, SD.66). This was in relation to *H1b* and research question *R1-2*. No significant correlations were observed on the whole or for the dimensions. (See table 6). Therefore *H1b (Negative Attitudes toward Effeminacy will be inversely related to Fashion Consciousness and Fashion Innovativeness and Opinion Leadership in gay men)* was not supported.

A Pearson correlation test measuring associations between internalized homophobia (M=4.99, SD=.88) and preference for masculine or feminine appearance (M=2.82, SD=.85) revealed no significant correlations either for the whole scale or for its dimensions. (See table 6). Therefore, *H2a (Internalized Homophobia will be inversely related to preference for feminine appearance)* was not supported. However, a positive significant correlation was found between negative attitudes toward effeminacy (M=4.99, SD=.88) and preference for masculine appearance (M=2.82, SD=.85), r(84)=.233, p=.031. In other words, a negative significant correlation was found between negative attitudes toward effeminacy and preference for a feminine appearance, which meant that participants who showed negative attitudes toward effeminacy showed a lower

preference for a feminine appearance. However, it is important to mention here, that out of 86 participants, only 2 participants showed preference for feminine appearance and only 17 participants showed preference for equally masculine and feminine appearance. This means that those participants who showed preference for anything other than a masculine appearance may have shown preference for either a feminine appearance or a less masculine appearance. Therefore, from this understanding, the negative correlation between negative attitudes toward effeminacy and preference for feminine appearance means that the participants who showed negative attitudes toward effeminacy showed a lower preference for a feminine or a less masculine appearance. This correlation was expected and therefore **H2b** *(Negative Attitudes toward Effeminacy will be inversely related to preference for feminine appearance)* was supported. (See table 6).

Additionally, Pearson correlation tests were run to assess the association between fashion consciousness (M=2.39, SD=.66) and preference for masculine or feminine appearance (M=2.82, SD=.85) and between fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership and preference for masculine or feminine appearance (M=2.82, SD=.85) (See Table 6). This was done in relation to research question **R4**. *(Is there a relationship between fashion involvement in gay men and subsequent preference for masculine or feminine appearance?)* No significant correlations were found between fashion consciousness and preference for masculine or feminine appearance. However, negative significant correlations were found between fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership and preference for masculine appearance, r (84) = -.330, p=.002, between fashion innovativeness and preference for masculine appearance, r (84) = -.376, p= .000, between fashion opinion leadership and preference for masculine appearance, r (84) = -.249, p= .021. This meant that positive significant correlations existed between fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership

and preference for a feminine or a less masculine appearance, between fashion innovativeness and preference for a feminine or a less masculine appearance and between fashion opinion leadership and preference for a feminine or a less masculine appearance. This meant that participants who had high fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership showed a preference for a feminine or a less masculine appearance; participants who had high fashion innovativeness showed a preference for a feminine or a less masculine appearance; participants who had high fashion opinion leadership showed a preference for a feminine or a less masculine appearance.

Demographics. As previously stated, out of the 86 participants, only 80 participants responded to the demographic questions. For those 80 participants, a negative significant correlation was found between participant average monthly spending (M=1.89, SD=1.067) and fashion consciousness (M=2.39, SD=.66) at r (78) = -.475, p=.000, which meant that participants with higher fashion consciousness showed higher average monthly spending on clothing and fashion. Similarly, a negative significant correlation was found between average monthly spending (M=1.89, SD=1.067) and fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership (M=2.42, SD=.66) at r (78) = -.386, p=.000, which meant that participants with higher fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership showed higher average monthly spending on clothing and fashion. For the 80 participants, no significant correlations were found between locality of residence based on population size (M=5.24, SD=.846) and fashion consciousness (M=2.39, SD=.66) or fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership (M=2.42, SD=.66) or IH (M=4.99, SD=.88) or negative attitudes toward effeminacy (M=5.36, SD=1.17). No significant correlations were found between education (M= 4.79, SD=1.144) and internalized homophobia (M=4.99, SD=.88) or negative attitudes toward effeminacy (M=5.36, SD=1.17).

Qualitative Findings

An exploratory qualitative analysis was performed on the data obtained through the opened ended questions answered by 80 participants. Participants who responded with a preference for either masculine, feminine, or equally masculine and feminine appearance were given a single open-ended question that asked them to describe clothing fashions for gay men according to their chosen preference. This was done in relation to research question *R3 (What do gay men mean by a masculine or feminine appearance, in terms of fashion and clothing, for gay men?).* In the context of clothing and fashions, out of 80 participants, 61 (76%) described what they meant by masculine appearance. 17 (21%) described what they meant by equally masculine and feminine appearance, and only 2 (0.025%) described what they meant by feminine appearance.

Masculine appearance. This section reports qualitative data based on the participants' choice for describing masculine appearance. It is categorized according to the following themes: fit, cut/style, and color/print/pattern.

Fit. In the data for clothing fashions for masculine appearance, the concept of fit was described using terms *fit, fitted and fitting* a total of 41 times, the term *tight* was mentioned 15 times and *slim* was mentioned 14 times. Fit was important for all three of the prescribed categories of shirts, pants and jackets. Under shirts, one participant said "well fitted but not overly tailored" (Participant 24). Fit was found to be crucial for enhancing certain body parts or features. One participant said "For me, in the two initial categories here (Shirts/Pants), it's less about the individual articles of clothing themselves but more about how they fit my body. Fit should be flattering to my inherently masculine features (e.g., chest, arms). Styling should reflect the fit" (Participant 31). For pants, another participant said "nice fitted jeans work for me" (Participant

45). For jackets, fit was associated with the level of comfort. For jackets, one participant said, "Generally something that fits well and comfortably" (Participant 28).

In terms of tightness of fit, participants under masculine appearance primarily indicated a preference for a moderate "slim" fit that was sensitive to the contours of the body but was not too "skinny" tight for all three categories. In terms of shirts, participant comments included "Basic tee shirts…fitted but not excessively tight" (Participant 1), and "nothing that is too tight fitting though" (Participant 73). In relation to pants, participants mentioned liking a slim fit, but not too tight: "Nothing extremely tight, but fits well" (Participant 54), and "Like them slim, tapering to my boots, but not clinging to my legs. Pants are different from tights!" (Participant 36). For jackets, another participant said, "Neither baggy nor tight," and another expressed the desire to keep the jacket volume to a minimum - "a variety of jackets and coats as long as they are not too bulky" (Participant 2). A tight fit was however important for underwear, mentioned under the other items category, as participant 24 noted that he preferred, "jockstraps and tightfitting boxers for underwear." No references to fit were mentioned in the accessories category.

Cut/Style. The word *cut* and *style* appeared a total of 24 and 6 times respectively in the data for clothing fashions under masculine appearance. The most common descriptors related to T-shirts related to neckline shape, and the word V-neck appeared 13 times and crew-cut 6 times. However, participants were conscious of the depth of the neckline. One participant noted "A V-neck or crew neck is certainly in my range -- nothing that is too low cut though" (Participant 37), and another mentioned "Not too deep a V neck. It's not as if I have a cleavage to expose!" (Participant 75). Other shirt styles mentioned included long sleeved shirts, collared button down shirts, Polo shirts, basic t-shirts, sports t-shirts, logo-less shirts and graphic tees.

Interestingly, gender specific comments were mentioned in relation to the cut and style of dress shirts: "I consider "masculine" in this sense to be more within dress shirts" (Participant 44)

and pants, "Nothing that resembles tights, dress or skirt. Nothing too short or flowy" (Participant 65). "Anything but a skirt." (Participant 57). In addition, in relation to patterns, "I avoid polka dots and other typically feminine patterns" (Participant 72).

Under cut and style, for pants, the terms relating to straight cut and straight leg occurred 8 times in the data for clothing fashions under masculine appearance. One participant noted, "Straight cut dress pants and jeans almost exclusively" (Participant 80). Participants also mentioned boot cut pants noting, "Nothing too short, usually about an inch past my heel without shoes" (Participant 31). Simple styles were also mentioned as one participant noted "nothing too fashionable" (Participant 27). Other styles mentioned included gym shorts, sweat pants, khaki pants and cargo shorts.

For jackets, styles mentioned included hoodies, pea coats, trench coats, blazers and military cuts. In terms of style and cut, for jackets utility was preferred over style as one participant noted "I prefer utility over appearance" (Participant 21). Under accessories, popular styles in shoes included dress shoes, sneakers, boat shoes, loafers, dress boots, combat boots, running shoes, moccasins, flip-flops, hiking shoes and running shoes. Accessories did not receive a lot of attention under cut and style, with the exception of jewelry styles, that were mainly described as being simple and light with less gemstones.

Color/Print/ Pattern. The words *color*, *print* and *pattern* appeared for a total of 62, 8 and 14 times, respectively, in in the data for clothing fashions under masculine appearance. Solid, plain and neutral colored garments were consistently preferred over brighter flashy hues, mentioned for a total of 39 participants mentioning these terms. Darker colors of blue and black were also preferred, with 58 comments mentioning those terms. Preference for patterns or prints was minimal. As different participants noted: "Vivid but modest colors" (Participant 61); "No

loud colors" (Participant 63), "Mostly neutral tones and appropriate mature content" (Participant 74), "not a lot of flashy colors" (Participant 63), "no floral or animal print" (Participant 55).

In terms of accessories, participants were consistent with the above-mentioned preference for solid, neutral tones. A preference for bold colors in accessories was only mentioned in a few instances for ties belts and pocket squares.

Equally masculine and feminine appearance. This section reports qualitative data based on the participants' choice in describing equally masculine and feminine appearance. It is categorized according to the following themes: fit, cut/style, and color/print/pattern.

Fit. The term fit was mentioned 31 times in the data referencing clothing with an equally masculine and feminine appearance. The terms *fit, fitted and fitting* for were mentioned 8 times, *tight* 9 times and *skinny* 14 times. Fit was noticed as being relevant to the three categories of shirts, pants and jackets. Additionally, there was a definitive emphasis on tight fitting, skinny, and form-fitting in all the categories of shirts, pants and jackets. For shirts, participants mentioned tight, body-hugging tees "Just regular fashionable clothes, maybe tight tees" (Participant 51). For pants, participants said "Usually jeans, slacks, or the occasional skinny jeans/pants" (Participant 36); "skinny denim shorts, skinny denim pants" (Participant 49); skinny cut and interesting"; "Non baggy, fitted/slim-fit shorts/pants" (Participant 51). Variations from the skinny, form fitting, tight fitting trend was seen as well, but was inclusive of both form fitting and looser trends. For example as one participant said, "I wear both skinny and boot-cut jeans" (Participant 68),

Cut/Style. The term cut appeared a total of 10 and style was mentioned 8 times in the data to describe clothing with an equally masculine and feminine appearance. Under cut and style, for shirts, popular trends that emerged were angle cut sleeves, wide necked shirts, deep V-necks, cowl necks, crop tops, dress shirts, casual shirts, and tank tops. For shorts, popular styles

mentioned most frequently, included denim shorts, skinny jeans, Chubbies, khakis, cut off rolled-up shorts etc. One participant said, "Cut off, rolled up shorts, either girls or boys. Skinny men's jeans rolled up at the bottom" (Participant 29). Other styles mentioned were boots cuts, salwar or Aladdin pants. Jacket styles included unisex jackets, pea coats, bomber jackets and military style jackets. Accessories had the fewest comments in the Cut/Style theme. However, under accessories and for jewelry, instances of emphasis over both minimal and gaudy jewelry was noticed.

*Color/Print/Pattern***.** The word color was seen 27 times in in the data for clothing with an equally masculine or feminine appearance. Preference was shown for both muted and brighter colors for categories of shirts, pants, jackets and. However, participants said that they not were unwilling to try colors that were usually considered feminine. For example, participants said "I wear a lot of men's dress shirts and casual shirts, but I'm also not afraid to wear tees that might be considered "feminine" with "feminine" colors, designs, prints, etc." (Participant 39); "More often to wear less traditional colors (pastel) but I also want to point out that I wear these colors because I like them and am NOT AFRAID to be seen in them (I feel more straight men would wear more colorful things if they weren't afraid of being viewed as "gay")" (Participants 41). A significant emphasis was seen for preference of floral, festive and decorative prints.

Feminine appearance. This section reports qualitative data based on the participants' descriptions of clothing with a feminine appearance. It is categorized according to the following themes: fit, cut/style, and color/print/pattern.

Fit. Both of the participants who described feminine appearance mentioned *fit* and *fitted*, and *tight* whereas *skinny* was only mentioned one time in the data for clothing with a feminine appearance. A clear preference for fitting, tight clothing was seen for both categories of shirts and pants. For jackets, however, both and tight and oversized fits were equally preferred.

Cut/Style. Both cropped tops and long tops were mentioned, as well as short shorts and short pants that did not cover the knee. No other information was reported.

Color/Print/Pattern. Bright colors were described in both categories of shirts and pants. Floral prints and sequined patterns were also mentioned.

CHAPTER V

Conclusion

Discussion

Studies have measured gay men's fashion involvement (Rudd, 1996; Sha *et al*., 2007),

preference for a more or less masculine appearance (Sullivan, 2011; Sanchez & Vilain, 2012),

internalized homophobia (Ross & Rosser, 1996; Currie et al., 2004), and anti-effeminacy attitudes

(Laner & Kamel, 1977; Bailey et al. 1997; Taywaditep, 2002). However there was a lack of

literature which measures the relationship between these variables (fashion involvement,

preference for a more or less masculine appearance, internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy

attitudes). More specifically, no empirical studies were found that measured the influence of

internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy attitudes on gay men's fashion involvement.

Further, no studies had measured how internalized homophobia and anti–effeminacy attitudes in

gay men influenced their preference for a masculine or feminine appearance. In addition, there

was a lack of academic qualitative literature to explore what gay men meant by their definitions

of masculine or feminine appearance in the context of clothing fashions – shirts, pants,

jackets/coats, accessories or other items.

There were three important goals for this study. The first goal was to measure the

influence of internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy attitudes, among gay men, on their

fashion involvement on one hand and their preferences for either masculine or feminine clothing

on the other. Second, this study proposed to understand gay men's current definitions of

masculine or feminine appearance in the context of clothing fashions. Third, the study explored

the relationship between fashion involvement in gay men and their subsequent preference for masculine or feminine appearance. The scale for internalized homophobia had three separate dimensions, namely a public dimension, a sexual dimension and a social dimension. The measure for fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership was comprised of two dimensions of fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership.

The influence of internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy attitudes, among gay men, on their fashion involvement and preferences for the either masculine or feminine clothing. In relation to the first goal of the study, it was hypothesized (***H1a***) that internalized homophobia was inversely correlated to fashion consciousness and fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership in gay men. This hypothesis was based on the understanding that because high fashion involvement was a popular gay stereotype (Sender 2006), gay men with internalized homophobia would be less likely to embrace fashion or be involved in fashion. Results indicated that this hypothesis was partially supported by two negatively significant correlations: one between the social dimension of internalized homophobia and fashion consciousness and the other between the social dimension of internalized homophobia and fashion innovativeness. There was no significant relationship between the social dimension of internalized homophobia and fashion opinion leadership in gay men.

The social dimension of internalized homophobia spoke to how comfortable gay men felt during social situations with other gay men within predominantly gay venues or environments. For example, a high score on the social dimension of internalized homophobia therefore meant that a participant experienced a high level of discomfort in social situations in gay venues or environments. Fashion consciousness spoke to how gay men were aware, interested, or knowledgeable of contemporary men's fashion trends. In other words, participants with high fashion consciousness scores were likely followers of the latest trends in men's fashion and possessed awareness of those trends. On the other hand, participants with high scores in

fashion innovativeness were likely to initiate and discover new fashion trends and to wear those new fashion trends. Those participants who scored high on fashion innovativeness and fashion consciousness were both fashion innovators and fashion followers.

The reason that the social dimension of internalized homophobia was significant in relation to fashion consciousness and fashion innovativeness may have been because fashion and clothing have been shown to serve as a medium of non-verbal communication (Kaiser, 1990). Because gay men with high internalized homophobia may resist gay stereotypes, gay men who are uncomfortable with their sexuality would be less likely to conform to the gay stereotype of being fashion conscious or fashion innovators, more so in social situations where the importance of clothing and fashion serves to communicate non-verbal information. In other words, in social situations gay men with internalized homophobia would be less likely to wear new fashions or follow the latest fashion trends because that might lead to the communication of the idea that they were gay, to others in that social situation, perhaps because of their high involvement in fashion. This relates to the idea of the "straight-acting" gay man (Sanchez & Vilain, 2012) or a gay man who did not want to be identified by the stereotype of being fashion conscious and therefore gay. The significance of only the social dimension of internalized homophobia in this aspect is also supported by the Social Identity Theory framework (SIT) used in the study. Within the context of this framework, gay men with high internalized homophobia would be more likely to align themselves with the hetero-normative standards of mainstream society, in other words the 'in' group, and may show resistance to identify with the gay stereotype of the 'out' group, by showing less fashion consciousness and fashion innovativeness.

The social dimension of internalized homophobia was measured through social feelings or emotions within exclusively gay environments involving other gay men. However, no correlation was found between the public dimensions of internalized homophobia, which expressed feelings about their sexual orientation in general public situations not necessarily

involving other gay men, and fashion consciousness or fashion innovativeness. This could have meant that the participants may have been opposed to portraying the gay stereotype of being fashionable (fashion conscious or fashion innovative) specifically to other gay men, and not in general public spaces or environments that were not necessarily gay. The aspect of the correlation addressing only gay-specific social situations and not general public situations, that are not necessarily gay, is particularly interesting because one would expect that the feelings of internalized homophobia of not expressing one's sexual identity by adhering to the stereotypes of being gay in social situations, would similarly apply to public situations as well. Because social interactions happen in public spaces, one would therefore expect that participants who are uncomfortable conforming to gay stereotypes among other gay men, would be equally uncomfortable conforming to the same stereotypes in general public situations that were not necessarily gay. In other words, the public dimension of internalized homophobia should have also shown a significant negative correlation with fashion consciousness and fashion innovativeness. But interestingly, no significant correlation was found between the public dimension of internalized homophobia and fashion consciousness or fashion innovativeness.

One possible explanation that the public dimension of internalized homophobia did not show correlations might be because, the aspect of internalized homophobia became more relevant and contextual in social situations that involved other gay men, than in general public situations where expression of one's sexual identity may not have been as important. Moreover, this may have also depended on whether the gay men in the specific gay situation or environment were predominantly "straight-acting." This means that those "straight-acting" gay men may have been in those gay environments only because they were all attracted to other men and not to portray popular social stereotypes of being gay.

However, it is important to note that in this study, the overall sampled population was actually found to have lower levels of internalized homophobia (M= 4.99, SD=.88). Therefore we

must be careful not to consider the analysis of this correlation between internalized homophobia and fashion consciousness and fashion innovativeness from the point of view of the sample showing higher levels of internalized homophobia. This means that the gay men in this study showed lower levels of internalized homophobia in social situations that were exclusively gay or which involved other gay men. Therefore the significant negative correlations between the social dimension of internalized homophobia and fashion consciousness and fashion innovativeness, infers that the gay men in this study showed lower levels of internalized homophobia in social situations and were more likely to be more fashion conscious and fashion innovative. The participants who were more fashion conscious and fashion innovative and knowingly or unknowingly conformed to the gay stereotype of being fashionable, therefore, scored low on the social dimension of internalized homophobia and were comfortable about their sexuality in navigating social situations with other gay men. The result showing that the overall sample reflected lower levels of internalized homophobia, the absence of any correlations with the public dimension of internalized homophobia can be explained by the justification that gay men in this study who were more comfortable with their sexual identity may have been more likely to adhere to the gay stereotype of being fashion conscious and fashion innovators in exclusively gay environments, where it was more relevant to express one's sexual identity, than in general public situations where sexual identity was not as important.

In sum, it was only the social dimension of internalized homophobia that correlated negatively with both fashion consciousness and fashion innovativeness, partially supporting the hypothesis that participants with high internalized homophobia would be inversely related to fashion consciousness and fashion innovativeness in gay men. Therefore to summarize hypothesis *H1a*, it can be said that gay men in this study showed lower levels of internalized homophobia in social situations that were exclusively gay or involved other gay men and were more likely to be fashion conscious and fashion innovators.

Within the variables of *H1a* a significant positive relationship was found between the sexual dimension of internalized homophobia and fashion consciousness and fashion opinion leadership. The sexual dimension of internalized homophobia reflects how gay men felt about gay relationships and gay sexual encounters, not necessarily concerning themselves, but in general. Therefore participants with high scores on the sexual dimension of the internalized homophobia scale saw gay relationships in a negative way. Participants with high scores on fashion opinion leadership were likely to influence other's fashion opinions.

Therefore this positive correlation between the sexual dimension of internalized homophobia and fashion consciousness and fashion opinion leadership, respectively, negated hypothesis *H1a*. This could be explained in two ways. One because participants who scored high on fashion consciousness and fashion opinion leadership may not have considered being fashionable as a gay stereotype. They may have scored higher on the fashion scales, because they were just generally invested in fashion but may not have considered being fashionable as a gay stereotype.

The other reason may be because the items on the fashion consciousness and fashion opinion leadership scale were related to the opinions of the participant about the participant himself. Examples of the items on the fashion consciousness scale and fashion opinion leadership scale respectively were, "*I'm* very alert to changes in men's fashion/trends" and "Are you willing to try new ideas about clothing fashions? How often?" Contrastingly, the items for the sexual dimension of the internalized homophobia scale were related to the opinions the participant had about other gay men or situations, not necessarily involving the self. Examples of items from the sexual dimension of the internalized homophobia scale were "Most gay men cannot sustain a long-term committed relationship" and "Most gay prefer anonymous sexual encounters." However, these two ideas do not thoroughly explain the significant positive relationship between participants having negative views about gay relationships and sexual encounters while

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simultaneously possessing high fashion consciousness and high fashion opinion leadership. Therefore this finding indicates a need for further study.

It was also hypothesized (*H1b*) that negative attitudes toward effeminacy was inversely correlated to fashion consciousness and fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership in gay men. This hypothesis was based on the understanding that because high levels of fashion involvement was a popular gay stereotype (Sender, 2006), gay men with high anti-effeminacy attitudes were more likely to defy that stereotype. No significant correlation was found between anti-effeminacy attitudes and fashion consciousness and fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership. Therefore, although the sampled population showed low scores on negative attitudes towards effeminacy (M=5.35, SD=1.17), they were not simultaneously interested in fashion. This may have been because of the fact that even though the participants did not have negative feelings about effeminacy in other gay men, whether through their involvement in fashion or otherwise, they, themselves, i) may just not have been fashion conscious, innovators or leaders, ii) may not have viewed fashion as a feminine trait or iii) may not have considered gay men's fashion involvement as a feminine trait in gay men. This corresponds to previous literature indicating that the male gay community is heterogeneous and not all gay men are effeminate (Schofield and Schmidt, 2005) or highly involved with fashion (Sender, 2006). The absence of a significant correlation may also be because men in general are slowly becoming more and more involved in fashion and grooming and do not consider it as an essentially effeminate involvement (McNeill & Douglas, 2011).

It was also hypothesized (*H2*) that internalized homophobia and anti-effeminacy attitudes were inversely correlated to preference for feminine appearance. **H2** was partially supported through *H2b,* which states that anti-effeminacy attitudes were inversely correlated to a preference for feminine appearance. This finding was expected and was in support of the assumption that gay men with low negative attitudes toward effeminacy were more likely to show preference for

feminine appearance. ***H2a***, which hypothesized that internalized homophobia was inversely correlated to preference for feminine appearance, was not significantly supported. In other words, participants who showed preference for a feminine or a less masculine appearance did not show a significant correlation to internalized homophobia. Even though the sample population had low internalized homophobia (M=4.99, SD= .88) it still showed a preference for masculine appearance (M=2.82, SD=.85). This may be because of the heterogeneity within the male gay community (Schofield and Schmidt, 2005) which means that gay men can be comfortable in their sexuality, have low internalized homophobia and still be want to be masculine. Preference for masculine appearance in gay men was found to be consistently similar to findings in previous studies (Sullivan, 2011; Sanchez & Vilain, 2012).

It is very important to note here that the correlations that were found (or not) for ***H1*** and ***H2***, did not confirm that participants considered fashion involvement as a gay stereotype or fashion involvement as a feminine stereotype. Our results only supported (or not) the hypotheses about these prevalent stereotypes based on previous literature, through the correlations. No direct questions asking the participants about whether they actually believed in these stereotypes were asked. Our results therefore, only served to measure the correlations and not validate the stereotypes.

Gay men's current definitions of masculine or feminine appearance in the context of clothing fashions. The second goal of the study inquired about gay men's current definitions of masculine or feminine appearance in the context of clothing fashions. Based on the themes of fit, cut/style and color/print/pattern that emerged from the analysis of the qualitative data, some comparisons can be drawn between the three categories of gay men who preferred masculine appearance, gay men who preferred equally masculine and feminine appearance and gay men who preferred feminine appearance. Fit of clothing was an important issue for all the three categories of gay men who preferred masculine, equally masculine and feminine or feminine

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appearance. However, gay men who preferred masculine clothing mentioned a moderate fit, while gay men who preferred feminine or equally masculine and feminine clothing mentioned tighter, skinny-fit clothes. Overall, however, gay men in all three categories described an aspect of fit and clothing that is sensitive to the contours of the body. For cut and style, both categories of gay men who preferred masculine and equally masculine appearance showed interest in wearing V-neck shirts. Interestingly, gay men who preferred equally masculine and feminine appearance mentioned wider and deeper V-necks in comparison to the gay men who showed preference for masculine appearance.

In terms of color/print/pattern, participants who preferred masculine appearance were significantly different from participants who preferred equally masculine and equally feminine appearance. Participants who preferred masculine appearance wanted muter, darker and plain colors with no prints. On the other hand, participants who preferred equally masculine and feminine appearance, and participants who preferred feminine appearance showed interest in brighter colors with an inclination for floral and festive prints.

Fashion involvement in gay men and their subsequent preference for masculine or feminine appearance. Thirdly and lastly the study measured the relationship, between fashion involvement in gay men and their subsequent preference for masculine or feminine appearance. Negative significant correlations were found between fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership and preference for masculine appearance, between fashion innovativeness and preference for masculine appearance and between fashion opinion leadership and preference for masculine appearance. In other words, participants who scored high on fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership, fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership showed preference for a feminine or a less masculine appearance. Therefore, these participants who liked their appearance to be feminine or less masculine were fashion innovative communicators (Workman

& Johnson, 1993; Studak & Workman, 2004) who initiated new and novel trends, wore those new trends and legitimized them while influencing others to wear them as well.

Even though the general trend in the sampled population was a preference for masculine appearance (M=2.82, SD=.85) the participants who were fashion innovative communicators (Workman & Johnson, 1993; Studak & Workman, 2004) showed a preference for a feminine or a less masculine appearance. This may be because fashion innovators and communicators, who initiate new trends and influence others to wear them, may deviate from the hetero-normative dressing norms, where men don't always have to dress masculine and women always don't always have to dress feminine. These fashion innovative communicators may relate to high-end fashion designers who create new fashion trends that are not always reflective of mainstream trends but in fact often transgress the boundaries of gender conformity and create a more gender fluid space for alternative sexualities (Geczy & Karaminas, 2013; Singer, 2013).

Fashion consciousness did not show a significant correlation with preference for a less masculine or feminine appearance. This is understandable as fashion consciousness in contrast to fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership, denotes fashion following as opposed to being a fashion leader. Fashion leaders may be more predisposed to changing the norms of dressing in contrast to fashion followers who may only want to adhere to the prevalent trends (Workman & Johnson, 1993; Studak & Workman, 2004).

Additionally for the gay men in the study, average monthly expenditure on clothing was found to have a negative significant correlation with fashion consciousness and fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership. This meant that gay men who were more fashion conscious, fashion innovators and opinion leaders were averagely found to spend more money on clothing every month. This supported findings from previous research (Rudd, 1996; Sha *et al*., 2007).

Limitations

The results obtained from this study should be interpreted with some limitations in consideration. Because data for this study was collected through an online survey by contacting LGBT organizations from various geographical locations, the results of this study are subject to self-selection bias (Sanchez & Vilain, 2012). One of the inherent limitations of this study was that, even though it tried to measure internalized homophobia, participants were recruited through LGBT organizations. This meant that the recruited participants were already 'out', members of LGBT organizations, and comfortable in their sexuality. Moreover the sample size of this study was small (N= 86), limiting generalizability to a great extent. Next there was a generational bias, a racial bias, and a geographical bias. 96% of the population was under the age of 30, 83% were White/Caucasian, 57% held a Bachelor's degree and 45% were from large metropolitan areas with populations of over 75,000. Even though these are limitations of a majority of studies that recruit participants through online surveys (Wiseman and Moradi, 2010), these biases may skew results and limit generalizability. Lastly, the study maybe subject to demand characteristics bias (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 2009). Even though the title of the study did not reveal its actual purpose and the responses were completely anonymous and later aggregated for analysis, some questionnaire items may have prompted the participants to figure out the purpose and then report responses that would be socially and politically appropriate. This may have been especially true for the anti-effeminacy measure where participants were scored on their level of anti-effeminacy prejudice. Because anti-effeminacy is a widely despised issue in current gay male culture (Dutta, 2014), participants may have altered their responses on the survey to appear more socially and politically correct.

Moreover, some may perceive the items on the social comfort dimension of the internalized homophobia scale as incapable of capturing whether the participant was uncomfortable only in gay venues and in interaction with other gay men or just uncomfortable in

social situations in general. In other words, those items may not have been able to capture the difference in whether the participants were just generally shy and uncomfortable in social situations or shy and uncomfortable in specifically gay social situations. In addition, the qualitative data obtained about gay men's current definitions of masculine and feminine appearance was heavily biased towards masculine appearance and only 2 participants preferred feminine appearance, which makes it difficult to formulate a solid idea about what gay men mean by feminine appearance.

Implications and Future Research:

Notwithstanding these limitations, this study has some important implications. This study supported previous research findings (Rudd, 1996; Sha *et al*., 2007), that gay men are fashion conscious, fashion innovators, and opinion leaders. This study also supported research findings that gay men who are fashion conscious, fashion innovators and opinion leaders, report higher average monthly spending on clothing fashion (Rudd, 1996; Sha *et al*., 2007).

Moreover, although this study supported previous research that gay men overall preferred masculine appearance (Sullivan, 2011; Sanchez & Vilain, 2012), this study provided seminal empirical evidence that particularly those gay men who were fashion innovators and leaders showed preference for a less masculine appearance. This finding is completely new and contributes significantly to the academic literature. Catering to the needs of gay men who are fashion conscious, fashion innovators and opinion leaders, by making less masculine clothing items may open up a significant market that has been largely neglected until now. The idea here may extend from creating uniquely feminine clothing lines to developing more gender fluid designs and employing merchandising techniques where store spaces are not distinctly categorized into specified male and female sections but allows for the customer to choose what he wants and which section he wants it from without risk of gender stereotyping.

Moreover, the sample overall was more fashion conscious (M=2.39, SD=.66) than being fashion innovators or opinion leaders (M=2.82, SD=85). This meant the gay men in the sample were more predisposed to following prevalent fashion trends, than creating or wearing new ones. This might be important for fashion companies, who want to cater to this consumer segment, by creating marketing strategies to influence these consumers. In addition, because the gay men in the sample, showed higher fashion consciousness and fashion innovativeness in gay social environments, companies eager to cater to male gay consumer segments might identify the opportunity to create and market niche clothing lines to gay men who socialize in exclusively gay environments.

One of the future recommendations for this study would to be do a multi-group comparison of individuals who self-reported as gay, heterosexual, bisexual and transgender, and measuring the differences in their scores for internalized homophobia, anti-effeminacy attitudes, fashion involvement and preference for masculine or feminine appearance. In the same vein, comparing gay men's current definitions of masculine and feminine appearance with current definitions of masculine and feminine appearance from a control group of straight men, bisexual or transgender men would provide meaningful comparison of how the requirements for clothing fashions in these communities vary and how they can be addressed. Other future prospects could include efforts to collect more meaningful data about gay men's definitions of feminine appearance because only two responses were received in that category.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Q1) Do you identify as a gay man?

Yes

No

Q2) Do you currently reside in the United States?

Yes

No

Q3) Are you 18 years of age or older?

Yes

No

Q4) Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

(1=Strongly Agree, 2= Agree, 3= Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4=Disagree, 5=Strong Disagree).

    I.   I'm very alert to changes in men's fashion/trends

   II.   I would say I am very fashion conscious

  III.   I know which type of men's clothes are fashionable

IV.

V.   I usually only shop in trendy stores

VI.   I know what type of men's jewelry is fashionable

VII.   I am usually aware of trends in men's haircuts

VIII. I read magazines that have fashion style pages

IX.   I know which type of underwear are more trendy than others

X.   I hardly ever notice what other men are wearing

XI.   I am very aware that some shirts are more fashionable than others

XII.   I am very aware that some shoe styles are more fashionable than others

XIII. I usually notice that some men are more fashionable

Q5) Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

(1=Strongly Agree, 2=Agree, 3=Somewhat Agree, 4= Neither Agree nor Disagree, 5=Somewhat

Disagree, 6=Disagree, 7=Strongly Disagree)

I.   I am comfortable about people finding out that I am gay

II.   It is important to me to control who knows about my homosexuality

III.   I feel comfortable discussing homosexuality in a public situation

IV.   Even if I could change my sexual orientation I wouldn't

V.   Most gay men cannot sustain a long-term committed relationship

VI.   Most gay men prefer anonymous sexual encounters

VII.   Gay men tend to flaunt their sexuality inappropriately

VIII. I often feel intimidated while at gay venues.

IX.   Social situations with gay men make me feel uncomfortable

X.   I feel comfortable in gay bars

XI.   Making an advance to another man is difficult for me

Q6) Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement.

(1=Strongly Agree, 2=Agree, 3=Somewhat Agree, 4= Neither Agree nor Disagree, 5=Somewhat Disagree, 6=Disagree, 7=Strongly Disagree)

I.   If I were to run a personal ad looking for a date, I would include "no fems" in the requirements.

II.   I don't want to be associated with the stereotypical image of effeminate gays.

III. I would enjoy going to a party where many gay guys "camp it up" and act in a feminine manner.

IV.   It bothers me to see a gay guy acting like a woman.

V.   A gay man's effeminate behavior would probably get in the way of my developing a comfortable relationship with him.

VI.   I don't mind letting people see that some of my gay friends are quite effeminate.

VII. Generally I try to avoid gay men who are overtly feminine.

VIII. I am comfortable hanging out with gay guys who are feminine by most people's standards.

IX.   When I meet a gay man for the first time, I would be turned off immediately if he acted effeminate.

X.   It is all right with me to see gay men talk, walk, and do things in a feminine way.

XI.   Effeminate gay men help contribute to the good diversity within the gay community.

XII. When in public, I try to maintian some distance from gay guys who are apparently "sissy queens."

XIII. "Femme" gay men are ruining the respectability of gay men overall.

XIV. It is embarrassing to be seen in public with a "queenie" gay men.

XV. The effeminacy of some gay men is detrimental to the public image of gay people in general.

XVI. I would feel nervous being in a group of "sissy" gay guys.

XVII. The gay community would be a much more comfortable place if some of its members try to keep their flamboyant behavior down.

Q7) Please answer the following questions to the best of your understanding.
(1=Often, 2=Sometimes, 3=Seldom, 4=Never)

I. Are you willing to try new ideas about clothing fashions? How often?
II. Do you try something new in the next season's fashions? How often?
III. Are you usually among the last to try new clothing fashions? How often?
IV. How often do you influence the types of clothing fashions your friends buy?
V. How often do others turn to you for advice on fashion and clothing?

Q8) Please answer the question below to the best of your understanding.
(1=Almost everyone I know, 2=More than half, 3=Less than half, 4=Almost no one)

I. How many of your friends and neighbors regard you as a good source of advice on clothing fashions?

Q9) Please move the slider (back and forth) to the desired spot.

(1= very feminine; 2= mostly feminine; 3= somewhat feminine; 4= equally feminine and masculine; 5=somewhat masculine; 6= mostly masculine; 7= very masculine)

_____ I like my appearance to be

Q10) To help us better understand what you mean by masculine appearance, please give us a description of the masculine clothing for gay men that you would wear. Please include details about the the style, cut, length, fit, color, material, print, and/or decoration of the clothing items in the following categories: OR Put N/A in the textbox (es) if you are unable to describe.

Shirts/Tees/Tops

Pants/Trousers/Bottoms

Jackets/Coats

Accessories (Shoes, Jewelry, Watches,Belts,Scarves, Ties, etc.)

Other items

Q11) To help us better understand what you mean by feminine appearance, please give us a description of the feminine clothing for gay men that you would wear. Please include details about the the style, cut, length, fit, color, material, print, and/or decoration of the clothing items in the following categories: OR Put N/A in the textbox (es) if you are unable to describe.

Shirts/Tees/Tops

Pants/Trousers/Bottoms

Jackets/Coats

Accessories (Shoes, Jewelry, Watches, Belts, Scarves, Ties, etc.)

Other items

Q12) To help us better understand what you mean by equally masculine and feminine appearance, please give us a description of the equally masculine and feminine clothing for gay men that you would wear. Please include details about the the style, cut, length, fit, color, material, print, and/or decoration of the clothing items in the following categories: OR Put N/A in the textbox (es) if you are unable to describe.

Shirts/Tees/Tops

Pants/Trousers/Bottoms

Jackets/Coats

Accessories (Shoes, Jewelry, Watches, Belts, Scarves, Ties, etc.)

Other items

Q13) Please indicate your age below in numbers.

Q14) What is your race? (Check all that apply)

White/Caucasian

African American

Asian

Native American

Pacific Islander

Other _____

Q15) Please indicate the highest level of education completed.

Grammar School

High School or equivalent

Vocational/Technical School (2 year)

Some College

College Graduate (4 year)

Master's Degree (MS)

Doctoral Degree (PhD)

Professional Degree (MD, JD, etc.)

Other _____

Q16) Which of the following best describes the area you live in?   If you don't know the population of your area of residence, you may Google it.

Population: 100 or less

Population: 101 - 1000

Population: 1001 - 5000

Population: 5001 - 25,000

Population: 25,001 - 75,000

Population: 75,001 or more

Q17) On an average, how much do you spend on clothes every month?

Less than $50

$51 - $150

$151 - $250

$251 - $350

$351 - $500

More than $500

Q18) How did you find about this survey? (Please check all that apply.)

Followed a text link from another Web page

Found using a search engine

Received e-mail from a mailing list

Was told the URL by friend

Other sources (specify) _____

Q19) We would appreciate if you could refer this survey to any other gay men, over 18 years of age living in the United States that you know. You can either forward/send them the survey link that you received or provide us with their email addresses so we can send them the survey link. PLEASE NOTE that email addresses collected will be completely randomized and will NOT be linked to any participants. IF you would like to provide us with email addresses click YES below!

Yes

No

APPENDIX B

RECRUITMENT MATERIALS USED IN THE STUDY

Recruitment messages sent through Email, Facebook, and Twitter

Hello,

We need participants for an important study about the influence of gay men's attitudes on their clothing involvement and preferences. The purpose of this study is to understand how gay men's attitudes might influence their clothing involvement and their clothing preferences.

If you are a gay male above the age of 18, living in the United States, and have a comprehension of written and spoken English, please click here https://okstateches.az1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_ewI7pXRKXbZEQa9 .The approximate time to take this survey will be about 10-15 minutes.

This study has received "exempt status" from the Institutional Review Board. For more information about the study you may contact the primary investigator **Amoha Das** at amoha.das@okstate.edu or the co-PI **Dr. Mary Ruppert-Stroescu** at mary.ruppert-stroescu@okstate.edu . If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact **Dr. Hugh Crethar**, IRB Chair, 223 Scott Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078, 405-744-3377 or irb@okstate.edu.

Your contribution to the research community is invaluable and we appreciate your time.

Recruitment message sent to LGBT organizations

Hello,

My name is Amoha Das and I am a graduate student at the Dept. of Design, Housing &
Merchandising at Oklahoma State University. I am writing to you in regard to recruiting
participants for my Master's Thesis research project (OKSTATE IRB approval # HE158). The
purpose of this study is to understand how gay men's attitudes might influence their clothing
involvement and preferences. I am looking for gay male participants, above the age of 18, who
live in the United States. If possible, I would kindly request you to forward my online survey link
to all the gay men on your e-mailing list and/or post the survey link on any web site or social
networking site you or your organization may use.

Please note that participation in this survey is completely voluntary, and the participant can
choose to withdraw from taking the survey at any point in time, without penalty. All participant
information will be confidential according to federal and university internal review board
guidelines.

This study has received "exempt status" from the Institutional Review Board. For more
information about the study you may contact the primary investigator Amoha Das
at amoha.das@okstate.edu or the co-PI Dr. Mary Ruppert-Stroescu at mary.ruppert-
stroescu@okstate.edu . If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you may
contact Dr. Hugh Crethar, IRB Chair, 223 Scott Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078, 405-744-
3377 or irb@okstate.edu.

One reminder email will be sent to you in approximately one week. Should you decide to
forward the following recruitment message, I ask that you blind carbon copy (BCC) me, so that I
am able to track the number of organizations participating in my study. Additionally, please
forward any questions or concerns that may arise, to me at amoha.das@okstate.edu .

Phone call script to LGBT organizations

"Hello,

My name is Amoha Das and I am a graduate student at the Dept. of Design, Housing & Merchandising at Oklahoma State University. I am calling you in regard to recruiting participants for a research study. The purpose of this study is to understand how gay men's attitudes might influence their fashion involvement and preferences. I am looking for gay male participants, above the age of 18 , who live in the United States. If possible, I would kindly request you to forward my online survey link to all the gay men on your e-mailing list.

Please note that participation in this survey will be completely voluntary, and the participant can choose to withdraw from taking the survey at any point in time, without penalty.

If the organization agreed:

"Thank you so much for agreeing to help me in my research study. May I please have your email address, so I can send you the recruitment message containing the survey link?"

After collecting the organization's email contact:

"Thank you so much for your kind help in this regard. You will receive an email message from me containing the survey link shortly. It would be great if you can forward that email to all gay men in your e-mailing list as soon as possible.
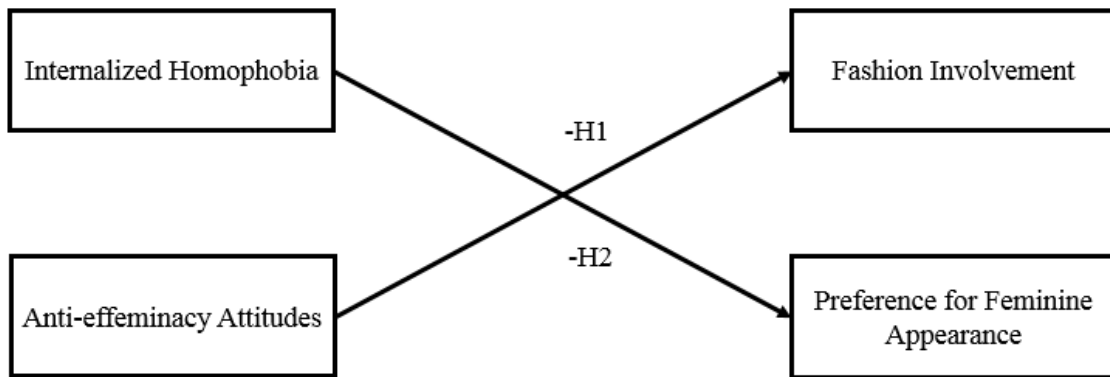
FIGURES

Figure 1 Conceptual Model

APPENDIX D

TABLES

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for all variables considered in the study

	Range		Mean	Std. Deviation
	Minimum	Maximum		
Fashion Consciousness	1	5	2.39	.66
Internalized Homophobia	1	7	4.99	.88
Negative Attitudes Towards Effeminacy	1	7	5.35	1.17
Fashion Innovatives and Opinion Leadership	1	4	2.42	.66
Masculine to Feminine Appearance	1	7	2.82	.85
Valid N (listwise)				

Note. N=86

Table 2

Inter-item Reliability for all scales considered in the study

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
Negative Attitudes Toward Effeminacy	.949	17
Internalized Homophobia	.766	11
Fashion Consciousness	.870	12
Fashion Innovativeness and Opinion Leadership	.839	6

Table 3

Exploratory Factor Analysis for the Negative Attitudes toward Effeminacy Scale

		Component		
		1	2	3
XV.	The effeminacy of some gay men is detrimental to the public image of gay people in general.	**.852**		
XIV.	It is embarrassing to be seen in public with a "queenie" gay men.	**.791**		.344
XVII.	The gay community would be a much more comfortable place if some of its members try to keep their flamboyant behavior down.	**.779**	.323	
XII.	When in public, I try to maintain some distance from gay guys who are apparently "sissy queens."	**.701**	.453	.300
XVI.	I would feel nervous being in a group of "sissy" gay guys.	**.675**	.371	.338
VI.	I don't mind letting people see that some of my gay friends are quite effeminate. *(reverse coded)*	**.624**		.322
XIII.	"Femme" gay men are ruining the respectability of gay men overall.	**.614**	.414	.398
IX.	When I meet a gay man for the first time, I would be turned off immediately if he acted effeminate.		**.806**	
I.	If I were to run a personal ad looking for a date, I would include "no fems" in the requirements.		**.802**	
II.	I don't want to be associated with the stereotypical image of effeminate gays.		**.735**	
IV.	It bothers me to see a gay guy acting like a woman.	.373	**.620**	.452
V.	A gay man's effeminate behavior would probably get in the way of my developing a comfortable relationship with him.	.314	**.600**	.444
VII.	Generally I try to avoid gay men who are overtly feminine.	.569	**.596**	
III.	I would enjoy going to a party where many gay guys "camp it up" and act in a feminine manner. *(reverse coded)*		**.512**	.389
X.	It is all right with me to see gay men talk, walk, and do things in a feminine way. *(reverse coded)*	.311		**.846**
XI.	Effeminate gay men help contribute to the good diversity within the gay community. *(reverse coded)*			**.817**
VIII.	I am comfortable hanging out with gay guys who are feminine by most people's standards. *(reverse coded)*			**.639**

Note. N= 86. All factor loadings >.35. Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax and Kaiser Normalization. Rotations converged in 5 iterations

Table 4

Exploratory Factor Analysis for the Fashion Consciousness Scale

		Component		
		1	2	3
VII.	I read magazines that have fashion style pages	**.822**		
I.	I'm very alert to changes in men's fashion/trends	**.757**		.346
V.	I know what type of men's jewelry is fashionable	**.756**		
II.	I would say I am very fashion conscious	**.680**	.380	.343
VI.	I am usually aware of trends in men's haircuts	**.492**		.477
IV.	I usually only shop in trendy stores	**.477**		
X.	I am very aware that some shirts are more fashionable than others		**.829**	
XI.	I am very aware that some shoe styles are more fashionable than others	.388	**.771**	
XII.	I usually notice that some men are more fashionable		**.727**	.351
IX.	I hardly ever notice what other men are wearing *(reverse coded)*			**.821**
III.	I know which type of men's clothes are fashionable	.437		**.664**
VIII.	I know which type of underwear are more trendy than others	.366		**.528**

Note. $N= 86$. All factor loadings >.35. Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax and Kaiser Normalization. Rotations converged in 5 iterations.

Table 5

Exploratory Factor Analysis for the Internalized Homophobia Scale

		Component		
		Social Comfort	Sexual Comfort	Public Identification
VIII.	I often feel intimidated while at gay venues.	**.876**		
IX.	Social situations with gay men make me feel uncomfortable	**.788**		
X.	I feel comfortable in gay bars *(reverse coded)*	**.718**	-.474	
XI.	Making an advance to another man is difficult for me	**.652**		
V	Most gay men cannot sustain a long-term committed relationship		**.881**	
VI.	Most gay men prefer anonymous sexual encounters		**.856**	
VII.	Gay men tend to flaunt their sexuality inappropriately	.445	**.681**	
I.	I am comfortable about people finding out that I am gay *(reverse coded)*			**.865**
II.	It is important to me to control who knows about my homosexuality			**.720**
III.	I feel comfortable discussing homosexuality in a public situation *(reverse coded)*			**.696**
IV.	Even if I could change my sexual orientation I wouldn't *(reverse coded)*			**.657**

Note. N= 86. All factor loadings >.35. Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax and Kaiser Normalization. Rotations converged in 5 iterations.

Table 6

Pearson Correlation Matrix between the dependent and independent variables

	FC	IH	IHPUB	IHSEX	IHSOC	NATE	FIO	FI	FO	MF
FC										
Pearson Correlation	1									
Sig. (2-tailed)										
IH										
Pearson Correlation	-0.006	1								
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.957									
IHPUB										
Pearson Correlation	-0.082	.644**	1							
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.453	0								
IHSEX										
Pearson Correlation	.330**	.693**	.248*	1						
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.002	0	0.022							
IHSOC										
Pearson Correlation	-.227*	.771**	.257*	.241*	1					
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.036	0	0.017	0.025						
NATE										
Pearson Correlation	0.063	.604**	.459**	.557**	.303**	1				
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.565	0	0	0	0.005					
FIO										
Pearson Correlation	.733**	0.003	-0.072	.298**	-0.191	0.091	1			
Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0.979	0.511	0.005	0.079	0.403				
FI										
Pearson Correlation	.689**	-0.159	-0.139	0.175	-.331**	-0.075	.869**	1		
Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0.145	0.201	0.107	0.002	0.493	0			
FO										
Pearson Correlation	.652**	0.114	-0.014	.338**	-0.064	0.193	.939**	.648**	1	
Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0.294	0.897	0.001	0.555	0.075	0	0		
MF										
Pearson Correlation	-.182	.036	.091	-.126	.106	.233*	-.330**	-.376**	-.249*	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.093	.739	.405	.247	.330	.031	.002	.000	.021	

Note. N=86. **Correlations significant at the 0.01 level (2 – tailed). *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 – tailed). FC= Fashion Consciousness, IH= Internalized Homophobia, IHPUB= Public Identification dimension of Internalized Homophobia, IHSEX= Sexual Comfort dimension of Internalized Homophobia, IHSOC= Social Comfort dimension of Internalized Homophobia, NATE= Negative Attitudes Toward Effeminacy, FIO= Fashion Innovativeness and Opinion Leadership, FI= Fashion Innovativeness, FO= Fashion Opinion Leadership, MF=Masculine to Feminine Appearance.

VITA

Amoha Das

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: THE INFLUENCE OF INTERNALIZED HOMOPHOBIA AND ANTI-EFFEMINACY ATTITUDES ON GAY MEN'S FASHION INVOLVEMENT AND SUBSEQUENT PREFERENCE FOR MASCULINE OR FEMININE APPEARANCE

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