

Title	Kankoubou : a design of traditional Chinese clothes rental service in Japan to create interests in hanfu culture
Sub Title	
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Publisher	慶應義塾大学大学院メディアデザイン研究科
Publication year	2019
Jtitle	
JaLC DOI	
Abstract	
Notes	修士学位論文. 2019年度メディアデザイン学 第725号
Genre	Thesis or Dissertation
URL	https://koara.lib.keio.ac.jp/xoonips/modules/xoonips/detail.php?koara_id=KO40001001-00002019-0725

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Master's Thesis
Academic Year 2019

Kankoubou:
A Design Of Traditional Chinese Clothes Rental
Service In Japan to Create Interests In Hanfu
Culture



Keio University
Graduate School of Media Design

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A Master's Thesis
submitted to Keio University Graduate School of Media Design
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Media Design

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Abstract of Master's Thesis of Academic Year 2019

Kankoubou:

A Design Of Traditional Chinese Clothes Rental Service In
Japan to Create Interests In Hanfu Culture

Category: Design

Summary

In an age of decreasing regional boundaries as well as a massive traditional culture crisis remaining to be settled, traditional clothes are obtaining increasing spotlights for its importance of transcending cultures and expressing personal identities. Since the early 21st century, a traditional clothes movement has been started in modern China, calling for bringing back the “lost traditions”. This study aims to determine how Chinese traditional clothes rental service can generate a market in Japan and create interests. Building on existing work on Hanfu culture and social contexts, it asks: to what extent can the service design of Hanfu renting in Japan create a niche and create cultural impacts on individual users.

Based on a review of the literature on Hanfu culture, Anderson's nationalism(2006) and service design overview (2011), this study examines the key procedures of the Hanfu rental service design. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected by questionnaires, interviews and observations. The results indicate that the market for Hanfu renting in Japan is promising yet challenging. On this basis, it is recommended that future modification is taken to meet the needs of a wider range of potential users.

Keywords:

Service Design, Traditional Chinese Clothes, Cross-Culture, Business Strategy, Hanfu

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Acknowledgements

There are many respected persons to thank for helping and guiding me through this thesis.

I would first express my very profound gratitude to my supervisor Professor Hiro Kishi. Thank you for giving me all the affirmation, freedom and support during the two years at Keio Media Design. You consistently allowed this paper to be my own work, but steered me in the right direction whenever I needed it. It is your acceptance and patience that makes me motivated and cheerful during my studying in Keio Media Design. Additionally, I would like to express my deep gratitude to Professor Matthew Waldman. Thank you so much for always having the door of your office open whenever I needed help with my study. Your suggestions are always the enlightenment in every stage of my research. Thank you for all the generous help and useful career advice. I am grateful to have you as my sub-supervisor. Professor Sato, thank you very much for helping me in the last month of thesis writing. Your advice was so on point that it inspired me a lot in the last stage of this study. I would also like to thank my sponsor Kimono Shop Miyabi. Manager Kay, thank you for all the trusts, the freedom and the funds to achieve my crazy thoughts. The Miyabi staff, thank you all for being supportive in starting the new project that you are totally not familiar with. Thank you all, I feel so lucky to have you in my master life.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Background

The importance of clothes transcends cultures, time and geographies. By studying the clothing of certain periods in history, people can make sense of the customs, beliefs, values, economics, and technology of that time. It has been long since clothes have become more than practical things, but symbols of culture. Today, clothes are one way to display one's identity and personality.

Hanfu, the traditional clothes for Han Chinese, the world's largest ethnic group, has important cultural values in human society. Appeared from approximately 3,000 years ago, the evolution of Hanfu represents the development of ancient Chinese civilization. Like Kimono for the Japanese and traditional clothes for other ethnic groups, it reflects certain traditional arts, etiquette, customs, and also a pursuit of ancient aesthetics in modern society. Unlike Kimono, which is preserved in history and commonly worn by Japanese people at present, Hanfu had gone through a disappearance for about 300 years from the 17th century, and could hardly be recognized as traditional garments by Chinese people for years; it re-emerged at the beginning of 21s' in the "Hanfu Movement", advocated by Chinese young generation online.

When the economy experienced great growth in China, in the rapid process of globalization, there appears a need for Chinese people to find what they have been lost in the history, and what would possibly be a unique way, to identify themselves in the changing society with a crisis on traditions. As a result, influenced by media representations of ancient stories, and stimulated by other nations that keep their traditional garments today, Chinese people decided to bring back their own traditional dresses, by re-studying, designing, making, selling and wearing "Hanfu" today. In nearly twenty-year of development, the Hanfu community has grown largely in size and awareness, with a growing number of people joining in the re-emerging practices. In recent years, there are two major manifestations of Hanfu renaissance, the quick growth of Hanfu shops online, and the increasing

popularity of Hanfu portrait photos on social networks. Meanwhile, in the recent Hanfu movement, participants take actions not only domestically, but also internationally by wearing Hanfu abroad. “Bring Hanfu while traveling” has become a topic that attracted considerable attention on social networks, as a strong expression of self-identity, more Chinese wear Hanfu when they travel to other countries.

At the same time, the rising of Chinese traditional dresses also faces great challenges. It has always been the exclusiveness of the Hanfu community that keeps many people who are interested out of the practices. Due to Hanfu’s complex system based on dynasties, one would be criticized severely by the “seniors” when they “wear the wrong thing”, “wear it wrong”, or “not exactly following the old way”. Since there barely are clear market regulations, consumers may purchase fake items without even noticing, and then lose the interest of wearing Hanfu again. In addition, due to the lack of public awareness in Chinese society, people who wear Hanfu on the street will time to time be considered weird and be criticized directly by the folks. For the past few years, with the increasing explosions on mainstream media, and support from the government, Hanfu is obtaining more attention than ever before.

Historically, Japan absorbed many elements of ancient Han Chinese culture, which resulted in many similarities between the two nations such as arts, architecture, and garments. As Kimono and Hanfu are closely related in aspects such as origin, style, and development, Japan appears to be the best stage to develop international Hanfu practice. The latest number of the members in Japan Hanfu Association is around 600; on 7th July 2018, the first Chinese Japanese Traditional Clothes Convention will be held to promote the traditional clothes culture of both nations¹. As is known to us, Japan today is special for its high cultural diversity, where all different kinds of cultures are developed and being respected as a whole. Clothes culture in Japan is not only important as fashion, but also as the expression of self-identities. Japanese people attach great importance to the meanings of clothes, and have formed a relatively free social atmosphere of the “wearing culture”. For example, animation fans wearing character goods in

1 <http://yoneyamaui.org/2019/05/28/>

their daily lives, people in visual rock outfits, girls wearing Lolita dresses, and the mature cosplay culture, are all signs of Japanese society as “open-minded” to clothes. The diverse popular culture and the fascinating traditional side of Japan have always been appealing to foreign tourists from all over the world; according to the data from Japan National Tourism Organization, Chinese tourists take up the biggest percentage of overseas residents visiting Japan, of 8 million in total in 2018. [1].

In this research, the author is co-operating with a Kimono rental shop based in Tokyo to design a new service of Hanfu renting. Its service mainly consists of online booking, dress selecting, fitting, make-up, hair styling, and optional photo-shooting. As a background, the Kimono rental shop *Miyabi* is run by Chinese proprietors, having two shops based in Tokyo and one in Kyoto. According to their annual sales, 80% of the customers are tourists from Mainland China, 15% from other regions like Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore, and 5% are from Japan. Considering the customer component of the partnership shop, the recent trend of the Hanfu movement and the great potential of the Japanese market, the author designed this service based in Japan.

1.2. Aims and Objectives

The aim of this research is to answer the research question: to what extent can the service design of Hanfu renting in Japan create a niche and make cultural impacts on individual users. The aim will be reached in two aspects, firstly, assessing the potentials of the market and formulating solid marketing plans, secondly, evaluating the personal experiences and feelings about the Chinese traditional culture of individual users before, during, and after the service. The research objectives divide the research aims into four parts: 1. to explore the underlying factors that make Japan an applicable market of developing the service, by studying ins and outs of Hanfu movement, and investigating the potential customer needs; 2. to identify the methods, models and promotion strategies of developing the innovative Hanfu service in a cross-cultural context; 3. to evaluate the rental service design from user feedback and how it can be improved in the future; 4. to forecast the implications of Hanfu rental service in Japan in terms of reducing the

exclusiveness of Hanfu community and developing a positive image of traditional Chinese culture to a wider public.

1.3. Proposal

Regarding the needs of wearing Hanfu abroad for the Chinese, and the potential interest of customers from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Japan, Hanfu renting is a reasonable solution for the problems such as inconvenience of carrying costumes and accessories around, the difficulty of full-set Hanfu styling, the relatively high pricing and low re-using rate of Hanfu. In this thesis, the author is going to prove the hypothesis that Chinese traditional clothes renting has a market in Japan; externally, it will help create international interest in traditional Chinese culture, and internally make positive effects on traditional cultural confidence for Chinese users.

In the era of transnational culture, it is conservative to consider Hanfu and Hanfu movement merely related to the Han Chinese. For today's Hanfu movement, the author believes that the Hanfu rental service in Japan is an important and innovative practice. It will be an efficient way to raise international interest and raise up the current image on the preservation of Chinese traditional culture in modern international society.

1.4. Organization of the Thesis

The thesis is organized as follows:

Chapter 1 introduces the context, aims and objectives of the research regarding Hanfu and its movement, the reasons why Japan makes a suitable environment for creating Hanfu service, and the background of the partnership shop. Research question that will be later examined is introduced.

Chapter 2 reviews Hanfu and its movement in academic contexts on its definitions, motivations and effects, followed by the challenges and controversies that Hanfu practices are facing. Besides, several examples of rental business will be discussed concerning its development in Japan, the U.S and China. The related theories and frameworks of service design will be introduced for the later design

process.

Chapter 3 explores the path of the design process in detail, including design concept, design ethnography of online questionnaires, interviews and two fieldwork. In this chapter, the author will design the rental service entity and the brand touchpoints through the service design molecular model; user test and service modification will be analyzed as the design process.

Chapter 4 evaluates the feedback from real customer users after the service goes into operation. The author will perceive the outcome and acceptance of the overall design through qualitative and quantitative analysis.

Chapter 5 addresses the findings of this study and summarize the overall arguments. Research limitations and future steps will be discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1. Hanfu and Hanfu Movement

2.1.1 Overview

This part aims to explore the definitions and history of Hanfu, the motivations and the characteristics of “Modern Hanfu Movement”. Based on the case studies, the substance, market scale and operative pattern of “Modern Hanfu Movement” will be examined with regards to imaginary self-representation and Chinese national identity. Hanfu market will also be examined in several aspects to demonstrate the potential market needs and the feasibility of this research. By analyzing Hanfu and its movement as a cultural and economic phenomenon, the goals of this part will mainly be demonstrating the reasons for conducting this research and why specifically in Japan.

2.1.2 Hanfu History

Hanfu is a name for pre-17th century traditional clothing of the Han Chinese, the predominant ethnic group of China. The appearance of Hanfu in China can be traced back to over three thousand years ago. The basic Hanfu was developed in the time of Shang Dynasty, from 1600BC to 1000BC. [2]

However, Hanfu disappeared at the beginning of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), when China was ruled by the Manchus, a semi-nomadic ethnic group which firstly rose to prominence in Manchuria. In order to consolidate governance, Manchus government carried out a series of policies on ideology and lifestyle, including changing Han clothes to Manchus clothes and changing haircut to nomadic ways, since when Hanfu started to disappear in history. [3] In the early 20s’, Manchus dress was gradually replaced by modern style dresses in China after the end of Qing Dynasty. Modified from Manchus and western-style clothes, “Qipao”(female dress) arose in this period of time and has become a symbol of Chinese traditional clothes. Women in Qipao also have been the major image of traditional Chinese

females worldwide and on media representations [4]. In recent years, most people in China consider Qipao and Tangzhuang (male clothes) as “Chinese traditional garment” rather than Hanfu [3].

According to the data from Chinaculture.org, Han is the largest ethnic group among the 56 ethnic groups in China, making up 92 percent of the total population. However, Han is the only one that lost its traditional clothes among other ethnic groups. [4] Facing the situation of “not having their own traditional clothes”, Han Chinese has started “Hanfu renaissance movement” since the early 21st century.

2.1.3 Hanfu Movement

Amid the chaos of consumer culture, geopolitical maneuvering, and frenetic urbanized life in the early 2000s, Hanfu movement emerged as a bottom-up social phenomenon in China society, with a bunch of young people calling for a return of “Chinese traditions”. As Gan and Zhou stated [5], with the rapid modernization and westernization, there appeared a need in China to revitalize the role of Confucianism in its people’s spirituality and daily lives, which can be regarded as the basis for a new Chinese cultural nationalism. As one way of realizing cultural revitalization, this movement centers on reinforcing several performative-behavioral forms of “Han-ness” or “Chinese-ness”, including traditional norms, literature lifestyles etc., in which the most outwardly visible representation is clothes. [5]

At the early stage of Hanfu movement, it started as an internet-based enthusiast community. Some participants launched a website called Hanwang (Han network) and started to promote traditional Han clothing. They seek to restore the superiority of “traditional Chinese culture” and preserve Han identity by promoting wearing Hanfu in daily lives and special occasions such as ritualistic ceremonies and festivals. By connecting with each other in online chat rooms, micro-blogs and BBS, Hanfu enthusiasts were able to communicate, meet and hold events as a distant community. [3] With the development of Hanfu movement, the enthusiast came into the stage of seeking more ways to encourage the public’s interests, such as holding coming to age ceremonies, tea parties in their local regions and even annual Hanfu festivals cooperating with celebrities and local government. As a lecturer in Macquarie University Carrico pointed out, Han clothing made the

transition from a distant image to physical reality in the streets of China, in which one could wrap and recognize oneself [6].

Nevertheless, due to the lack of recognition, the Han Chinese society as a whole has not fully accepted Hanfu as a daily or formal wear since the early stage of the movement. Moreover, although the revival of Hanfu is a community-based movement, its participants have quite distinctive attitudes and ways of making meanings from their participation. One trend is a rapid growth of Hanfu cyber celebrities on many social network platforms such as Sina Weibo, TikTok and Bilibili; they post photos of them wearing Hanfu, tutorial videos of traditional make-up or hair setting, appealing a large number of followers including non-Hanfu enthusiasts. In recent years, with the increasing media representations like Hanfu portraits photos online and educational TV programs, an increasing number of people started to know about Hanfu and tended to wear Hanfu as an expression of identity or a pursuit of fashion. [7]

2.1.4 Hanfu, Nationalism and Imaginary Identity

According to Zhang (2008) in his study of Hanfu and Chinese ritualistic ceremonies,

“Modernization or globalization has brought to China an unprecedented prosperity. Meanwhile, amidst the fast-growing economic process many Chinese also experienced some sort of identity crisis. Never ever before have the Chinese felt so threatened in terms of their cultural identity by such an engulfing force as globalization does. They questioned, what would become of their spiritual home when the whole world seems to be melting into a big global village? What would happen to those values that were cherished by generations of Chinese, their forefathers?” [7]

It is also mentioned by Kang (2014) that “How can mainland China construct a cultural nationalism that transcends the boundaries of the nation-state in an era of globalization?”

On the one hand, it seems like the Chinese are confronted with a dilemma of the growing global economy, western ideology and the lack of national “faith”

or traditional culture confidence to distinguish who they are or how they can be “unique” among other nations, especially the ones with long histories; on the other hand, it also implies a crisis for all the Chinese on their notions of nationalism and national identities, of how to draw a cultural boundary to represent themselves “elegantly” similar to the ancient times.

According to the theory of banal nationalism, nationalism is not merely an exotic force that only strikes the nation-states on special occasions, such as wars and crises; on occasions when there are no such crises or movements, nationalism can still be seen in terms of “us”. In the established nations, national identities and ideological habits enable a continual “flagging”, or reminding of nationhood in the everyday lives of its citizenry; relatively, national identity can be found in the using of language, the way of thinking, life styles and the expression of emotions, which depends upon judgments, shared beliefs, or representations about nationhood that tells “us” from “others” [8]. In this case, nationalism can be found in Hanfu movement when referring to “us” by emphasizing “Han-ness” in a national-ethical sense, which can also be regarded as an expression of national identity, not in a political but more in a cultural dimension.

In Anderson’s (2006) notion of nationalism, the nation is imagined as limited and sovereign with their fellow citizens share national identities; the identities become more clear when they encounter with an exotic force [9]. As an expression of national identity, there is a tendency among Hanfu enthusiasts towards “Wearing Hanfu abroad” in recent years, started by several Internet celebrities by posting their pictures wearing Hanfu in different regions of the world, and followed by many Hanfu supporters by also “wearing Hanfu while traveling”. When it comes to a cross-cultural context, the expression of national identity can be more obvious and strong when the participants’ intentions are not only being a unique individual but also promoting Chinese traditional culture and obtaining a sense of self-satisfaction.

It is also pointed out by some scholars that, in the modern age, nationalism can be negative since it might represent a way of resisting the encroachment of economic globalization, being narrow-minded and detrimental [7]. Therefore, how can this research interpret nationalism in a cross-cultural context? The main approach will be individual focused on personal identity and feedback rather than

paying too much attention to macro-nationalism in a nation-state dimension. As argued by Zhang, in the case of Hanfu movement, especially when it related to its development abroad, the promotion of Hanfu reflects a tendency toward narrow-minded nationalism or even populism, it is not the case.

Therefore, it is better to consider Hanfu practices as personal, which asserted by Karl (2006) that

The signifying practice of garments—or, fashion—...is the theoretical focus, which emphasizes “imagination,” not merely in the Benedict Anderson sense of expansive media materiality but...in the affective bodily sense of individuals’ fantasies of how to suture the gap between, on the one hand, a lived individual reality of near-failure, and on the other, a conjured social order deriving from the deep past imagined as a stable community of harmony and authenticity. [10]

which in other words, makes a reasonable explanation on people’s motivations of wearing Hanfu—an expression of imaginary self-identity, not only for the Chinese, but also for the second target group “the young Japanese who has special interests in fashion and self-representations on social media”.

2.1.5 Hanfu Market Overview

Since Hanfu movement started in 2003, it has generated a wide range of businesses, and has been economically deterministic in an economic-cultural-ideological mode. As an internet-based movement, the market is also highly internet based; unlike Kimono market, which has a solid base of physical stores and a long history, Hanfu market is a “quickly developing new business”. The stores are mainly on Taobao, the biggest e-market in China. With the development of Hanfu industry, despite of Hanfu makers, a growing number of related business emerged, such as traditional accessories, photo studios and ceremony agencies. As a newborn business, Hanfu market has a large potential, while accompanied by a series of controversies and obstacles required to be solved.

As the 2017 Hanfu Industry Report shows, until January 2018, the number of females takes up 89.2 percent of all the Hanfu enthusiasts; and has still been growing in the recent 5 years, which indicates a females dominant market, even

without adding in the females who are merely trying Hanfu for fun. It is also suggested in the report that new Hanfu brands have been increasing over 25.96 percent in 2017, 655 of them are normally operated on Taobao; the whole production value is over 8 billion yen annually and the number is definitely larger at present. With the prosperity of the market, more consumers tend to buy Hanfu out of aesthetic pursue or curiosity. Rather than totally following the old ways, like the conservative group insisting, the data also shows that 72.35 percent of the consumers tend to be in favor of Hanfu with basic structure but are more “beautiful” and “in style”.

2.1.6 Controversies and Problems

According to Karl (2006) [5], the essence of Hanfu movement at the starting point, is exclusive, it “purified of all so-called extraneous ethnic, racial, or foreign contribution and taint”; and is also a form of “exclusion of the non-Han minorities” [2]. Similar to many non-mainstream communities emphasizing other-ness, Hanfu community seeks to employ “han” as “boundary-spanner” and self/othering process in modern China [2]. There are also some online cultural conservative thoughts in Hanfu community that go well beyond advocating for a comprehensive revival of traditional Chinese culture, they urge contemporary China to embrace traditional social thoughts, religious beliefs, norms, and dress in an exclusive way [11].

During the process of the movement, although people generate their own meaning from their participation, the exclusivity or conservative thoughts keeps many people out of the practices.

By pointing out the controversies of current Hanfu practices, this research will, to some extent, work on solving the problems of the conservative Hanfu movement.

2.2. Rental Service

2.2.1 Overview

In this section, in order to better understand the rental service, two models of rental business will be investigated in terms of their characteristics, target audi-

ence, and business revenue stream; one is Kimono rental business in Japan and the other is online rental platforms like Rent the Runway in the U.S and Mechacari in Japan.

2.2.2 Kimono Rent In Japan

According to the marketing research conducted by Yano Institution in 2018, the domestic Kimono market size in Japan is 271.00 billion Yen in 2017, including general Kimono stores, Kimono chains and sales of recycled Kimono, which takes up 63 percent of the whole retail values¹. In 2019, as speculated by Status Marketing Magazine published in January 2019, the revenue is predicted to be 287.00 billion Yen in total at the end of this year.² Compared with Hanfu market in China, Wafuku market is far more developed in Japan, with larger market size, stabler business basis of physical stores and recycle sales.

As for the rental business, the target audience of Kimono in Japan is mainly divided into two groups: young Japanese females and overseas tourists. For the first category, with a long tradition of wearing Kimono, there exist stable needs for ceremony wears in the Japanese domestic market, such as Houmongi, Tomesode, Uchikake or Hakama for special occasions. As argued by Valk (2017), these kimonos were mainly worn out of the sense of duty and social obligation, and had been the mainstay of Kimono consumption until 1990s. Due to the relatively high pricing and low rate of reusing, most people tend to rent rather than purchase in recent years. As shown by the online data, the prices vary from 20,000 to 150,000 Yen for one day's renting in average.

Except for the ordinary needs for ceremony wears, according to Status Marketing, there is a rising consumption of Kimono renting among 10-30-year-old Japanese females, to the purpose of being "Kawaii", photo shooting and making SNS posts, especially in the seasons of vacations and summer Matsuri.³ It

1 Kimono Market in Japan: Key Research Findings 2018 <https://www.yanoresearch.com/press/pdf/1812.pdf>

2 Kimono Market Investigation 2019 <http://status-marketing.com/20190127-3850.html>

3 Kimono Renting Rising, More Customers and Popular on Instagram <http://status-marketing.com/20180426-2987.html>

is pointed out that renting Kimono are more like a pursuit of fashion, and the Kimono itself, is a fashion item [12]. Until 13th May, there are approximately 289,000 posts with the hashtag “KimonoRent” (in Japanese) on Instagram, which can be seen from the photos, are mainly posted by young female Japanese users; similar with Hanfu market in China, both mainly consisted with young females enthusiastic about media self-representation.

Additionally, the second category, overseas tourists, also take up an increasingly important role in today’s Kimono renting market. In some Kimono rental shops in famous tourist attractions, such as Asakusa and popular regions in Kyoto, tourists from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Southeastern Asia even take up more than 90 percent of all the customers [12]. Instead of attending events or ceremonies, tourists mainly wear Kimono to experience a sense of Japanese culture and take photos while walking around the street. As the largest percentage of foreign tourists visiting Japan annually, the Chinese tourists are also the largest group of Kimono rental consumers among other overseas tourists. With the growing popularity of Kimono portrait photos on Chinese social networks, Kimono renting has become a “must do” for most of the young Chinese tourists. As shown by the data on Red app, a famous fashion information sharing application in China, there are over 13,500 posts on the topic “Japanese Kimono Renting Experience” and 27,900 posts on “Japanese Kimono”.

Confronting with the growing market needs and competitions, Kimono rental stores are seeking strategies to enhance their services and expand the business scope, such as developing domestic online delivery service, increasing exposure among international customers and setting up co-operation with other institutions.

2.2.3 Online Rental Platforms

Online rental is becoming a popular way for retailers of all sizes to provide products to consumers. From FashionPass ⁴ to the launch of Rent the Runway ⁵ in 2009, there is an increasing demand for online rental services in the e-economy era.

4 <https://thefashionpass.com>

5 <https://www.renttherunway.com>

Rent the Runway, an online service that provides designer dress and accessory rentals, was launched as a pure e-commerce company, and later opened brick-and-mortar retail locations in 5 cities in the United States. Rent the Runway's clothing is mainly rented for special occasions such as parties, proms and weddings. Customers can rent one of the firm's designer clothing for a 4 or 8 day period for as low as 10 percent of the retail price. Recently, RTR also allows subscribers to rent four items a month for 89 dollars, and 159 dollars on constant rotation each month for fashion items. In addition to the subscription service, members can visit any of Rent the Runway's five stores, work with a personal stylist, and either take items directly with them or book dresses and accessories to be delivered for a future event. ⁶ When a customer rents something from Rent the Runway, that piece goes through a multi-step process in their 150,000-square-foot fulfillment center, including allocation, inspection, regular cleaning, stain removal, mending and ship out. According to the comments on Jilt.com (2018),

“Taking the mom-and-pop roots of the clothing rental business and building it into an eCommerce subscription juggernaut had never been done before. By focusing on scaling their logistics, collecting as much customer data as possible, and working to stay ahead of the trends, Rent the Runway has been able to take this rental model into the twenty-first century.” [13]

Over the past decade, Rent the Runway has grown its e-commerce clothing company to an over 100 million yearly revenue company, with 9 million members and a recent valuation of 800 million dollars [14].

Behind the success of Rent the Runway, it does not only represent a transition from old pattern rental service to a “trendy” e-commerce, but also a sign of digital influencer economy. At present, digital influencers are having a very real effect on shopping and spending. According to a recent survey from Episerver, 52 percent of online shoppers who use social media have clicked on an influencer's post, and 31 percent have made a direct purchase from the post ⁷. Influencers constantly

⁶ Rent the Runway A closet in the Cloud <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/05/22/rent-the-runway-2018-disruptor-50.html>

⁷ Survey: What features do e-commerce shoppers want? <https://www.chainstore->

promote new products, post photos and videos of outfits, encouraging followers to buy more and more merchandise. In this case, rental platforms provide an easy solution for those who want to keep in pace without spending too much money.

While online rentals are developing prosperously in the United States, similar platforms in Japan also keep a steady increase in the market place. Like air Closet, RCawaii, EDIST and Mechakari, Japanese online rental services mainly provide female fashion items. The primary business model is also a subscription with a monthly charge. From 2015, the startup period of most online rental platforms in Japan, to 2019, the number of users has been rising and approaching 190,000 in total.⁸ Nevertheless, there are three major differences between American and Japanese online rental platforms; firstly, instead of high-priced items and formal wears, Japanese platforms mainly provide normal-priced items from the brands that most young females might purchase in a daily basis; secondly, users are not able to see the products that the platforms provide, unless they become the members and pay the subscribe fee in the first place; lastly, nearly a half of the top platforms do not let customers choose the items on their own, instead, after putting in personal information during registration, the stylists from the websites will pick up the suitable items for them, which seems more time-saving. As it can be seen above, although sharing a similar business model, the rental services in those two countries still reflect a significant cultural difference.

2.2.4 Online Hanfu Renting in China

Unlike the U.S and Japan, online clothes rental service in China is almost an undeveloped area. In the case of Hanfu rental service, it is better accepted by Chinese people and further developed than daily clothes renting, mainly taking the form of online shops on Taobao.com. Until 2019, there are around 15 related shops on Taobao platform, within which the most highly rated shop named “Yunpeiyuechang” has about 80,000 followers. On the homepage of “Yunpeiyuechang”, wedding dresses take up four fifths among the top seller list; according to the reviews, most of the customers rent Hanfu for wedding ceremonies and others for

age.com/technology/survey-what-features-do-e-commerce-shoppers-want/

8 Compare 6 Fashion Rental Company <https://www.hapmexico.org/i-35>

photo shootings.

2.3. Service Design

2.3.1 Service Design overview

According to Stanford University's definition of service and service design, a service is a means of delivering value to clients by facilitating outcomes that clients want to achieve without the client having ownership of the costs and risks associated with the service.

A service differs from a product in that services:

- 1.Span a life-cycle of interaction that includes the discovery of the service, a decision to use the service, subscribing to or purchasing the service, using the service, and ending the use of the service;

- 2.Form a relationship over time between the client and the service provider. ⁹.

The figure below presents a scale of elemental dominance that differs a product from a service (see fig.2.1 on next page) [15].

⁹ Stanford University: Service Design Process: <https://uit.stanford.edu/service-management/toolkit/designprocess>

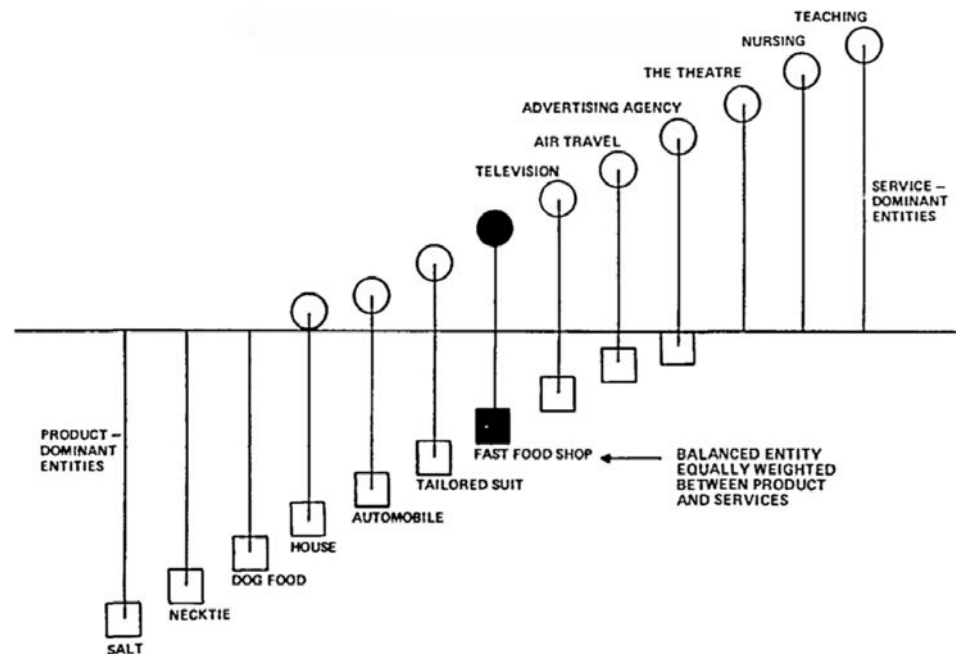


Figure 2.1 A scale of elemental dominance: products and service

In developed economies, services are dominant in terms of both Gross National Product and employment, but the designing of services has only recently become an area of focused research. Existing knowledge about service design appears within distinct areas of management studies. Current trends in service design research mainly consist of case studies and similar approaches that aspire to reveal what the practice of service design looks like. Blomkvist, Holmlid, and Segelstrom (2010) have defined the trends in service design as follows:

- 1) design theory, exploring the fundamental questions of service design, the language of service design and co-creation,
- 2) the overlap between and contribution from service management,
- 3) systemic approaches to service design, such as product-service systems,
- 4) design techniques, such as tools and processes and
- 5) the practice of service design researched through case studies. [16]

Meanwhile, Kimbell's (2009) has shown several interesting features that characterize the practice of service design as a designer: looking at services from both a holistic and detailed point of view; considering both artefacts and experiences; making services tangible and visible through visualizations; assembling sets of relations; and designing business models [17]. Corresponding to Kimbell's notion, Holmlid and Blomkvist also give importance to service visualization by arguing that service prototypes not only help designers explain services to others, but also make them more feasible to themselves, it lets them "obtain a glimpse of the future". The service design process is an iterative process that the designer should do at the start of designing a new service, or at a time when improvement for service is needed. As going through the process, the designer might need to go back through a step based on what has been learned (Stanford Uni, 2019).

2.3.2 Strategic Value Creation

Both products and services incorporate productive processes, this is figure of a productive process for a service [18]:

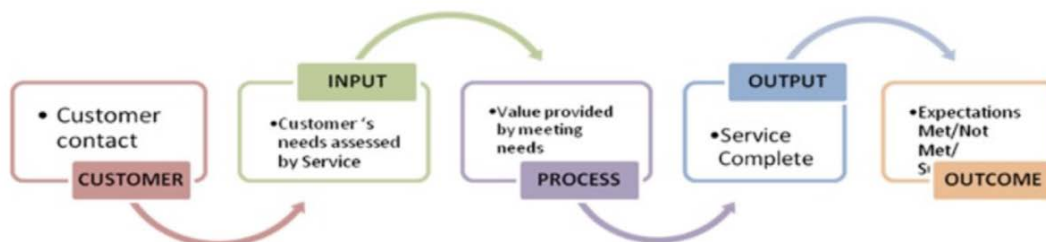


Figure 2.2 A productive process for a service

It shows a basic flow-path of customer's interaction with a service. As concluded by the authors of *Service Design and Delivery* (2011), the prime aim of a service is to satisfy and ideally, to surpass, customers' expectations. To achieve this, a business needs a value proposition as a means to establish a sustainable and profitable business model.

The strategic value creation map, shown in Fig. 2.2, highlights the series of analyses that need to be carried out to understand the company's competitive

position and realize offerings that better suit the customer’s value-in-use [18]:

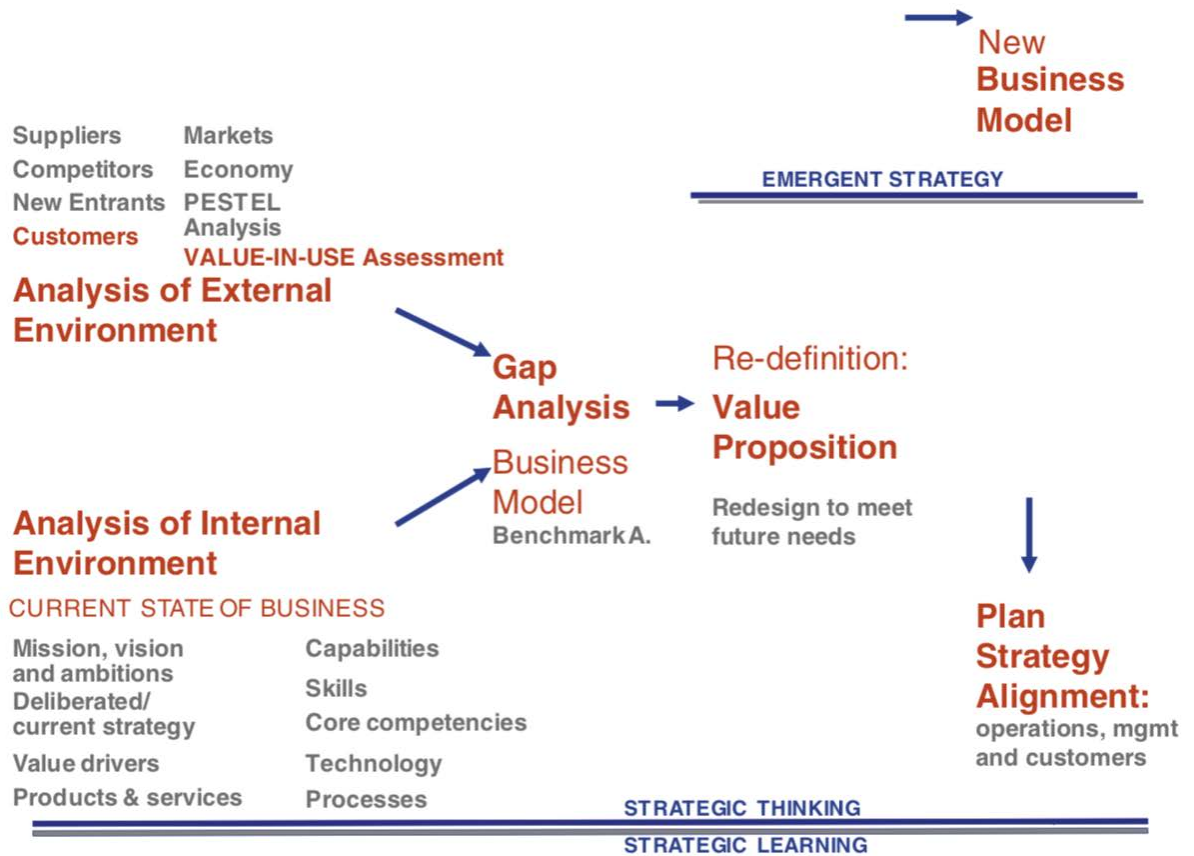


Figure 2.3 The strategic value creation road map

It suggests that a strategic value creation for serve design should start with an analysis of the external environment, once the customer value-in-use and the external environment are understood, an analysis of the current state of the business should be done, including the business objectives, ambitions, capabilities, skills, technology and competitive processes. After that, the resulting analysis points out the gaps in the current business model, and potential new ways to do business. As the Martinez and Turner assert, “the better understanding companies have on the value that their product/services provide to the customers, the better the operating business model could be” [18].

Chapter 3

Design Process

In this chapter, the process of Hanfu rental service design will be presented in detail. During this design, the author's role is the proposer, consultant and general designer, while the Kimono rental shop *Miyabi* is the sponsor and the service provider. In the following sections, Martinez and Turner's (2011) findings on designing competitive service models will be used as a theoretical approach to understand potential customers and improve the service; Stanford University's model of service design process will be applied on the directions of the overall design. In the first section, the author will introduce the design concept by referring to the assemblage theory; the second section will present the ethnography by analyzing the data gathered in the preparation period of the service; after that, the results of fieldwork will be examined to perceive customer needs and improve the future service accordingly.

3.1. Concept

When human wearing certain clothes are no longer a simple behavior to survive in the natural conditions, it raises the thoughts of what else can a person acquire from the status of wearing. In terms of Hanfu, similar to many other traditional clothes around the world, it has special meaning for people from its cultures. It can be a representation of self-identity, or merely a pursuit of unique fashion values.

As is asserted by Kimbell (2009) [17], an ideal service was at the intersection of three things: desirability (do customers want it?), viability (is it profitable?) and feasibility (can it be built?). At the first time of considering possible Hanfu practices in Japan, it came to the author's mind that "would there be any related market needs that are not yet met currently" and "is that viable to be built". As a result, a special market for Hanfu rental in Japan is noticed; the service can simplify the purchasing and wearing process of Hanfu for the Chinese Hanfu enthusiasts, appeal to more "Hanfu community outsiders" who are interested,

and ideally raise international awareness and cause positive effects on Chinese traditional culture.

The theory of assemblage commendably explains why Japan could be an ideal foreign country to carry out the service. As Delanda (2016) states, an assemblage is a multiplicity which is made up of many heterogeneous terms and which establishes relations between them across boundaries; the assemblage actively links these parts together and produce meanings although they are not uniform in nature or origin [19]. Wearing Hanfu in Japan is actually an interesting assemblage of domestic and foreign, tradition and modern, cultural tolerance and resistance, lost and preservation, human behaviour and environment, self-fantasies and existing reality... which can produce even more meanings than limited Hanfu practices in China.

The concept development and design procedures are based the model as follows:

To begin with, the author identified the concept as “a Chinese traditional dress rental service that provides comprehensive clothing experiences in a cross-cultural context”. The author conducted two surveys by posting online questionnaires on Chinese traveling websites in order to get a better understanding of the customer needs and potential market. Then, the author performed another user background research by interviewing several Japanese friends to get a general idea of Japanese people’s impression on Chinese traditional culture especially on traditional clothes. Furthermore, before the ideation, several field works were conducted as a way of “user research” and “problem definition”, which will be discussed in the following section of Ethnography”.

3.2. Ethnography

According to Kimbell (2009), the service designers generated the information they needed to map the customer journey by ethnographically-inspired methods such as observations, interviews, surveys and walk-through of the customer’s experience of a service [17]. In this design research, all the four methods will be used to better construct the service and obtain feedbacks.

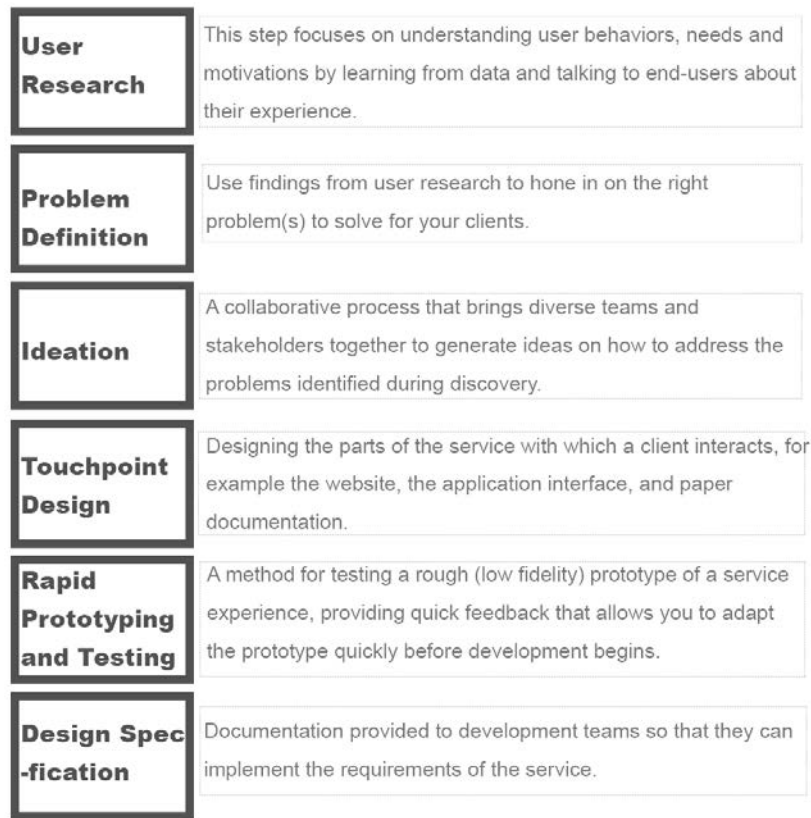


Figure 3.1 Service Design Model

3.2.1 Design Preparation

Online Questionnaire 1

Since Chinese people in Japan are the main target audience of the service, two questionnaires are made to study their attitudes towards Hanfu rental service if there were any in Tokyo. This group is divided into two sub-groups: Chinese tourists and long-term residents in Japan (including students, migrant workers and immigrants) since their purposes of Hanfu renting could be quite different. Except the common needs of wearing Hanfu while walking around and taking memorial photos, long-term Chinese residents living in Japan might want to rent Hanfu for events and special occasions such as “coming-to-age” and graduation ceremonies when they would like to be more “culturally identified” or unique.

The first questionnaire is designed to understand Chinese tourists who have

visited or have the intention to visit Japan, about their traveling experiences, knowledge about Hanfu and attitudes towards Hanfu rental service in Japan. The online questionnaire was posted on a Chinese traveling website on 26th May 2018, with 194 responses in total ¹. The major goals of this survey are:

- understanding Chinese tourists' attitudes towards cultural-experiencing activities while visiting Japan;
- understanding the desirability of the service;
- obtaining advice and expectations of the service from users' perspectives.

Among the 194 questionnaire participants, 66.49% of them are females and 33.51% are males. As the figure 3.2 shows, the age group of 20-30 takes up the majority with 111 in total.



Figure 3.2 Age Groups Of the Participants

79.4% of them are frequent social network users who enjoy looking at others' posts and posting traveling pictures on those platforms. The percentage of "I enjoyed/I would like to try traditional experiences in Japan such as Kimono renting and tea ceremony" is around 80%. In the following questions about Hanfu, 86.6% and 77% of the participants chose "yes" for the questions "I have a basic idea of what Hanfu is" and "I might want to try it if there are any Hanfu related experiencing in Japan". For those who chose yes for the last question, the reasons of their choice have been asked and the answers are as follows:

¹ <https://www.wjx.cn/jq/24321916.aspx>



Figure 3.3 The Reasons of “Why I might try Hanfu renting in Japan” (answers translated by author)

It is noticed that the Hanfu beginners or “outsiders” take up about 60% among the potential users who have the willingness to try the service, and could be an important customer group in the future. The next question is about the expecting price of the service, under a half (44%) chose 100-200RMB (1600-3200 Yen), while 34% chose 200-300RMB (3200-4800 Yen) and only 20% of the respondents consider lower than 100 or higher than 300RMB are reasonable.

To conclude, although the data could be affected by the original user component of the traveling website where the questionnaire was published, it can still present us a glimpse of the potential market and customer needs as a whole. It would seem appropriate to state that Chinese tourists’ attitudes towards Hanfu renting in Japan is overall positive, among which young females from age 20 are the most likely to use this service. In spite of the most popular expectations for a single time renting service is 1600-3200 yen, it is considered too low and hardly could be achieved in the future business.

Online Questionnaire 2

The second online questionnaire is designed to understand the attitudes of Chinese residents in Japan². There are 112 responses in total, consist of 65% women and 35% men mainly of age 10-30 (80%). More than half of them has stayed in Japan for more than 2 years, and had Kimono renting experiences during their stay (77%). 78% of them know what Hanfu is, among them around 70% would

² <https://www.wjx.cn/jq/24319035.aspx>

like to try Hanfu rental service when there is one in Japan.

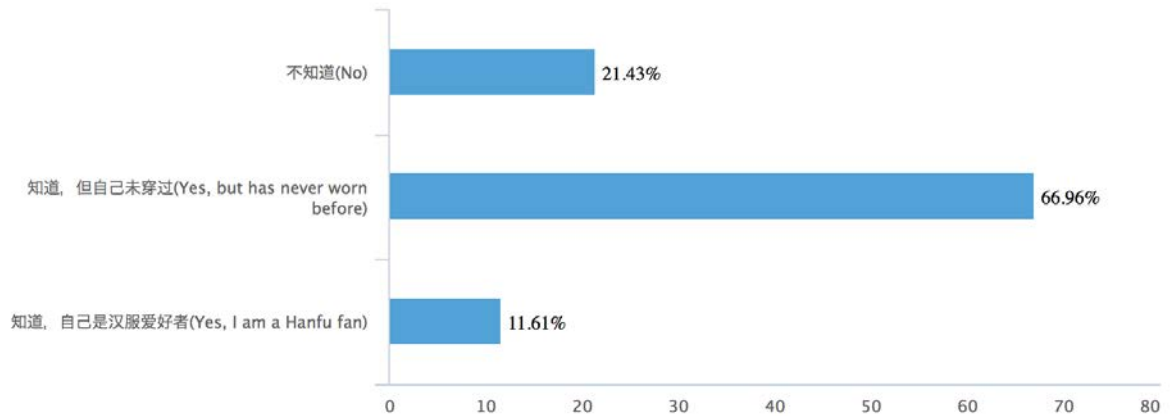


Figure 3.4 Results for “Do you know Hanfu?”

The chart below presents the result of the multiple choice question “In what kind of occasions you would like to rent & wear Hanfu in Japan” (see Figure 3.4):

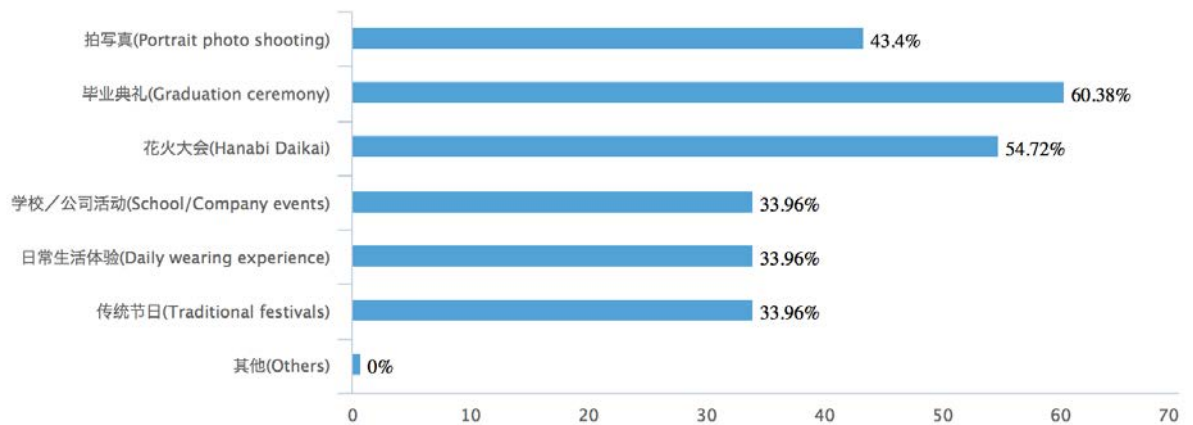


Figure 3.5 Occasions of renting and wearing Hanfu

As expected, the most frequently occurring responses are “Graduation ceremony”, “portrait photo shooting” and “Hanabi Daikai”, while occasions like events and festivals are also frequently chosen. The results above imply that the

respondents are mainly young students who have the willingness to be culturally represented in the cross-cultural context, which can be a vital reference for the design of the service. In the following question about price expectation, it seems that Chinese residents in Japan accept relatively higher pricing than visitors, with more than a half think over 3200 yen is reasonable.

Interviews: Understand Japanese Market

In order to learn about the current recognition and attitudes of Japanese people towards traditional Chinese culture and garments, the author chose a more straightforward method to talk to respondents face-to-face. The author conducted 3 interviews with 6 Japanese friends and part-time job colleagues, by asking them questions as follow and presenting them related photos:

- What is your impression of traditional Chinese culture?
- What comes to your mind when it refers to traditional clothes in China?
- What do you think of Japanese people wearing traditional costumes during festivals, events and in their daily lives?
- What do you think of Kimono renting and other forms of rental service in Japan?

...

The first interview is conducted with a 21-year-old female college student from Tokyo. She stated that her first impression about Chinese traditional culture is “China has a long history but poor protections of its cultural products”; her impression on traditional Chinese costumes is “Qipao”, which is considered an image of “old-Shanghai”; she could recognize Hanfu when the author showed her pictures, which roused her memories about Hanfu in Chinese and Hong Kong films. The second group is two young Japanese girls who like cosplay and stylish clothes. They have a basic idea about Hanfu and know the difference between Hanfu and Qipao. They find trying different kinds of clothes rather exciting, and have shown great interests of trying Hanfu someday. They enjoy the form of rental service by which they are able to try new things with fewer costs. The third group is the author’s colleagues, three females from ages 30-45. It is stated that they have a basic knowledge of Chinese traditional cultures such as literature and architecture; as for traditional clothes, they have the image of colorful dresses

of the minority groups in China, but hardly know the word “hanfu” or what it represents.

The senses those three groups share in common are 1.they all consider China as a nation with a long history and attractive traditional culture, however, they hardly have the chance to know more about it in Japan; 2.they all firstly thought of Qipao/cheongsam when it comes to traditional Chinese dress, and consider it less formal or “traditional” than Japanese traditional Kimono; 3.they all did not show a strong resistance towards Chinese culture and have interest in Hanfu; they consider it “very traditional”, “typically Chinese” and “elegant”. Although the answers could be biased due to the limited groups, it can be briefly concluded that Hanfu is rather a new thing for Japanese people, it is viable to introduce Hanfu and raise interests to a wider public in Japan; among those three groups, the young age cosplayers show the most interest in Hanfu and are most likely to use the rental service in the future.

3.2.2 Fieldwork

In the following section, the processes of two fieldwork will be presented according to the time order. Observation and interviews are used as the major methodology during the fieldwork. The results from the following fieldwork will be utilized in hypotheses testing, marketing strategies and design developing for the next steps of the research.

Fieldwork 1. Wearing Hanfu in Tokyo: a Hanfu enthusiast from China

The first fieldwork was conducted on 14th April 2018 in Tokyo with Yuebing, a Hanfu enthusiast from Hangzhou, China. The aim of this fieldwork is to learn about the mental model of Hanfu enthusiasts who devoted themselves to “wearing Hanfu while traveling abroad”. The author’s role is the companion, photographer and interviewer in this fieldwork.

Yuebing is a senior Hanfu lover who has involved herself in Hanfu practices for more than 5 years. She is also a part-time Hanfu model who often has her photo taken by several Hanfu brands on *Taobao*. She has around 7500 followers on Weibo, where she frequently posts her Hanfu portrait pictures. For Yuebing,

wearing Hanfu in her daily life is as normal as wearing modern clothes, by which she can feel a sense of “peace, elegance, confidence”, as well as a harmony of being “traditional and modern”. It is stated that she frequently visits Japan because of her profession, and she would always bring and wear Hanfu during her stay in Japan.



Figure 3.6 Photos of Yuebing wearing Hanfu in Tokyo

On the day of fieldwork, the author and Yuebing started off from Shibuya station and spent an afternoon visiting Shibuya and Harajuku area. According to time order, the activities of Yuebing roughly include photo taking, trying on clothes and shopping in several shops, making phone calls, and having dinner. The author has observed that she acts very naturally and confidently in Hanfu. In our conversations about Hanfu, she claims that “I prefer combining hanfu with modern elements, and wear it more like a common dress.” During clothes fitting, it is noticed that she was able to take off and put on the outfit in a very short time, although the dress has a relatively complex structure. “I bring and wear lighter hanfu and accessories when I travel around, since they take less room of my suitcase and easy for me to move around”, claimed by Yuebing.

Through the fieldwork, the goals and mental model of Yuebing are concluded as follow:

Goal

- Be herself and wear light Hanfu in a foreign country.
- Post nice photos on social network platforms as self-representation;

Mental model

- Taking photos when come across scenic spots.
- Enjoy being photographed while wearing traditional dresses and traveling in a cross-cultural environment;
- Hanfu is not easy to carry and the process of wearing and hair-setting is complex and inconvenient.

Therefore, the author concluded that Hanfu rental service in Japan has a niche among Hanfu enthusiasts. For those who bring their own while traveling, the service can reduce the burden of their luggage by providing them a full set of Hanfu styling.

Fieldwork 2. Kimono Shop *Miyabi*: A Need Of Expanding Business Scope

The second fieldwork was conducted on 20th May 2018 in Ueno, Tokyo, with the staffs from the Kimono rental shop *Miyabi*. The aims of this fieldwork are

1. understanding how the staff work and how they interact with customers in rental business;

2. understanding the current needs and issues of the sponsor shop;

3. formulating marketing strategies and design plans for the forthcoming new service.

The target shop is one of the 3 branch shops of Kimono rental shop *Miyabi*. It is also the target shop where the first Hanfu rental service would be established. From 13:00 to 17:00, the author observed and interviewed the manager Kay and three other staff at the shop when they were at work. The manager and one of the staff are from China, the other two are from Taiwan and Japan respectively. The staff showed the author around the shop, introduced the characteristics and prices for different kinds of kimonos. The shop has two floors open for business; the lower floor is for exhibiting Kimono and the second floor is for clothes changing, hair setting and make-up.

During the period of fieldwork, two groups of customers came for Kimono rent-

ing. Both groups are Chinese females around age 20, and have made reservations for the service online. Staff one greets the customer, leads them from the front door to the Kimono exhibition area, and suggested them to choose the Kimono they like. Then, staff one and two guided the customers to the second floor, where the customers get changed and store their bags. On the second floor, the elder Japanese staff helped the customers choose their Kimono belts and set up the outfits. It takes approximately 20 minutes per person to finish a whole set of Kimono styling. Then, the former two staff helped with hair setting and final styling, and see the customers off the shop. The staff actively chat with customers and make the conversations relaxed and lively.

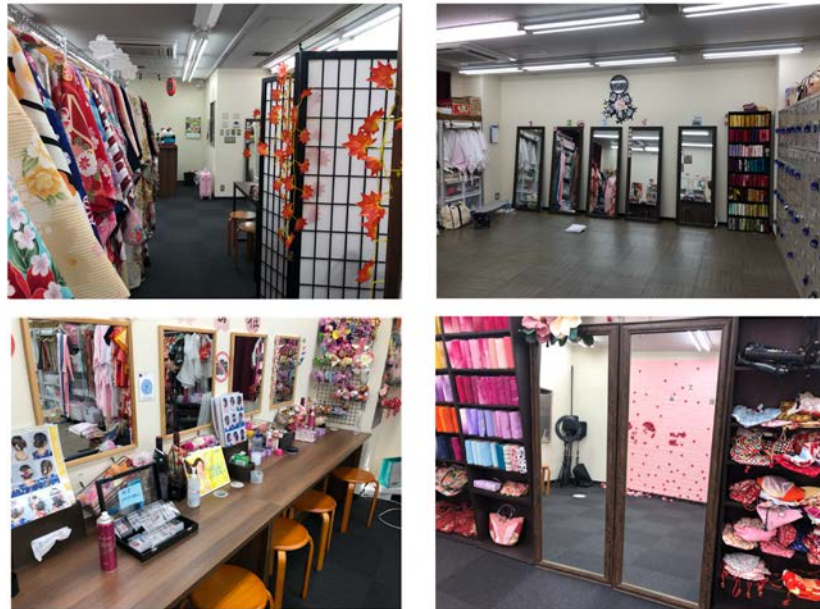


Figure 3.7 Interior Of the Shop

As the manager Kay states, this shop mainly targets on tourists from China and other Chinese speaking regions at present. Therefore, building up an easy communication environment for Chinese speaking customers is currently an important business strategy for the shop. In recent years, the shop has already built a good reputation among Chinese tourists on social media, and has a steady customer flow monthly. It is also an advantage for the shop in promoting Hanfu renting among potential Chinese customers. However, this “advantage” can also

be a “disadvantage” that keeps out Japanese customers. “Japanese customers may consider that a Chinese ran Kimono shop is not reliable,” claimed by the manager. Therefore, in the manager’s opinion, for a Chinese ran Kimono shop, starting Chinese traditional dress rental service can be a viable solution to expand the shop’s business scope and attract a wider range of customers.

The goal and mental model of the manager are concluded as:

Goal

- Raise up awareness and trust of the shop in both Japanese and international market;
- Raise up overall revenue of the shop.

Mental model

- Constantly check reservation list and internet reviews on his PC to obtain customer information and feedback;
- Occasionally interact with the customers when they ask questions about the products.

3.3. Service Design

3.3.1 Problem Definition&Design Ideation

The problem definition of the service design is based on an understanding of market needs from a users’ perspective. As Macintyre (2011) states, the customers’ perspective brings an important dimension to the value propositions of a design, which makes organizations aware of continuous changes in the business environment [18]. Through the user research discussed above, there appears a niche for Hanfu rental service in Japan.

The design of this service mainly consists of three aspects: the design of service entities, the design of touchpoints&social media marketing strategies, and design modification based on user tests. A service design is combinations of product and service that form larger market entities like a molecular model, which can be viewed very much like “atoms” connected in unique “molecular” configurations [15], as the figure presents below:

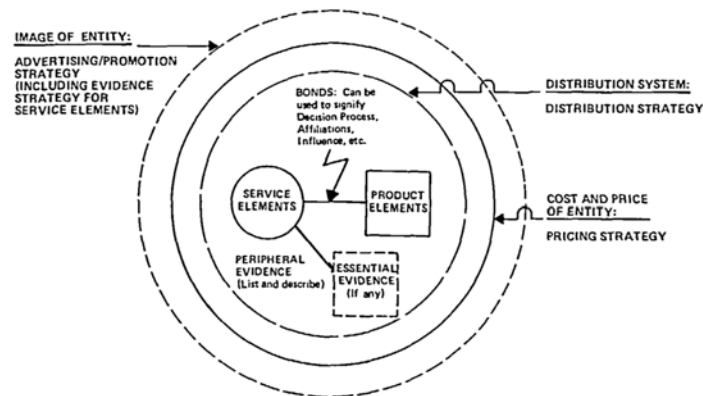


Figure 3.8 Components of a Complete Molecular Model

Accordingly, the design of service entities mainly consists of “product elements” and “service elements”, which will be discussed in the following section.

3.3.2 The Design of Service Entities

The product elements of this service are virtually the Hanfu and Hanfu accessories for renting. In this stage, the author serves as the products buyer of the service. The author selected several highly reviewed Hanfu brands on Taobao.com and created a purchase list with a provided budget. Since the quality and price vary greatly for different Hanfu makers, brief market research is conducted to grasp the most favored brands in the contemporary Hanfu market.

It is found out that material, embroidery and style are the three most important elements for a piece of Hanfu. In the first round of preparation in September 2018, 15 sets of Hanfu were purchased based on the three criteria above. The other 2 batches of purchasing were conducted later on in the winter and spring to meet the seasonal needs. Currently, the product elements of the service include Chinese traditional dresses, accessories, hairpieces, shoes, and photo props.

In the next stage, the design of service elements is conducted with the shop staff. As they possess little knowledge about Hanfu, the author serves as a Hanfu styling consultant as well. Through market research and fieldwork, it is understood that the potential users will not only need rental products, but also a supportive service that makes simple “renting” to complete “experiencing”. Since a service is basi-



Figure 3.9 Products Display

cally a process, service blueprinting rests on systems that have been developed to deal with processes, acts and flows [15]. The basic process of Hanfu rental service is identified as reservation, clothes selecting&fitting, hair-setting, and makeup. The users will be provided a customizable Hanfu fitting experience based on their needs. For example, the customers are allowed to rent a single item instead of a full set service, choose a hairstyle based on their preference, keep the rental items for several days, or bring in their own clothes for dressing up and hair setting with different prices.



Figure 3.10 Hairstyle Samples for Choosing

Despite the primary elements which will be purchased or used by the consumer, sub-service also plays an important role in a complete service system. As is mentioned before, photo shooting is one of the main motivations of potential users. Therefore, photographing is added to the service system as a core sub-service. For those who want a photographic portrait shooting, a professional photographer will be assigned to come along, and be a guide at the same time.

3.3.3 Touchpoint Design&Social Media Promotion

Touchpoint design might alter the way that a customer feels about a product, brand, business or service, it is part of the service with which a client interacts. According to Ridson, the Design Director of Adaptive Path, touchpoints should provide a customer with the following interaction types [20]:

- Appropriate: both the context of the interaction and the cultural tone of the interaction meet the needs of the customer or user;
- Relevant: the function performed by the interaction meets the utility requirements of the customer or user;
- Meaningful: the interaction was perceived as important or purposeful by the customer or user;
- Endearing: the interaction created some form of bond with the user or customer for example through desirability.

In this case, the design of touchpoint consists of social media homepages and Hanfu sample websites. Since social media is considered the most common way for Hanfu information sharing today, several popular social media platforms are selected as the main customer touchpoints with the distinctive target audience.

Before building the homepages, a logo and brand name is designed to create uniformity for the service. The service is named *Kankoubou*(in Japanese)/*Hangongfang* (in Chinese), which means Hanfu studio/workshop, corresponding to the naming of the parent Kimono shop: *Edo Kimono Koubou- Miyabi*. The basic colors of the logo are red and black, representative colors for traditional Chinese culture. In logo design is based on Chinese calligraphy with traditional Chinese characters.



Figure 3.11 Logo Design

In the touchpoint design, the first interaction standard “appropriate” is achieved by targeting specific customer segments on different social media platforms. Specifically, the cultural tones, post contents and in-use languages are set accordingly on those platforms. Firstly, as Facebook is one of the leading sites commonly used by users outside mainland China, such as Taiwan, Hong Kong and other regions of the world, the languages being used in the posts are mainly traditional Chinese characters and English, as the figures have shown below:³

Similarly, since Insta-Bae has become a popular trend among young generations in Japan, an Instagram account is established as the major touchpoint to raise up awareness among Japanese users. Considering its general user segment, the languages used in the posts are Japanese and the complex form of Chinese. Relevant hashtags in Japanese and Chinese have been added under each post as a strategy of increasing exposures. Likewise, brand accounts have been created on Weibo and Red app, two of the most popular social networks in China, mainly aimed at Chinese customers.

Then, the interaction standards “relevant” and “meaningful” are achieved through the functional aspects of the touchpoints. As is mentioned above, the touchpoint interactions should meet the utility requirements and be perceived as important or purposeful by the customers and users. All the Kankoubou social media accounts are established to offer useful service information. Each account is assigned to a specific shop staff for updating posts and answering customer inquiries. Customers will get a timely reply in the direct message systems when they make an

3 <https://www.facebook.com/Kankoubou/>

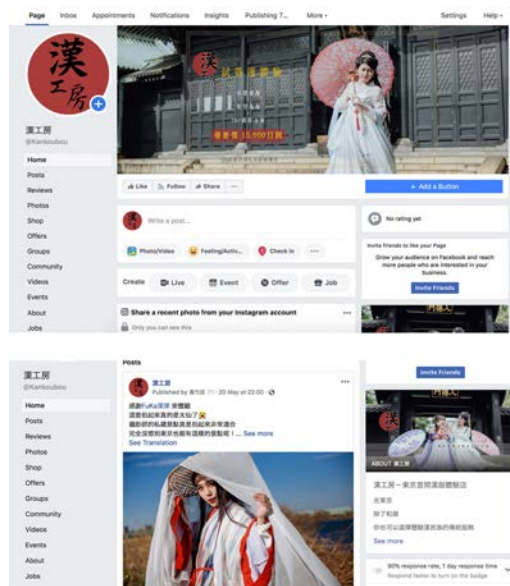


Figure 3.12 Screenshots of Service Facebook Homepage

inquiry. Compared with traditional online reservation websites, the direct message function will reduce the time waste of emailing and the inconvenience of international phone calls between customers and businesses.

In order to provide the inquirers direct-viewing service contents, an online gallery menu is established on Flickr.com. The link will be sent to the customers who request a preview. Clear sample photos are shown with list prices, including rental Hanfu dresses, optional items and sub-services. For customer from mainland China, a similar online menu is made on BaiduCloud, a Chinese online cloud system. The following figures present the screen-shots of Flickr menu: ⁴

4 Flickr Gallery Menu <https://www.flickr.com/photos/144577936@N02/albums/>

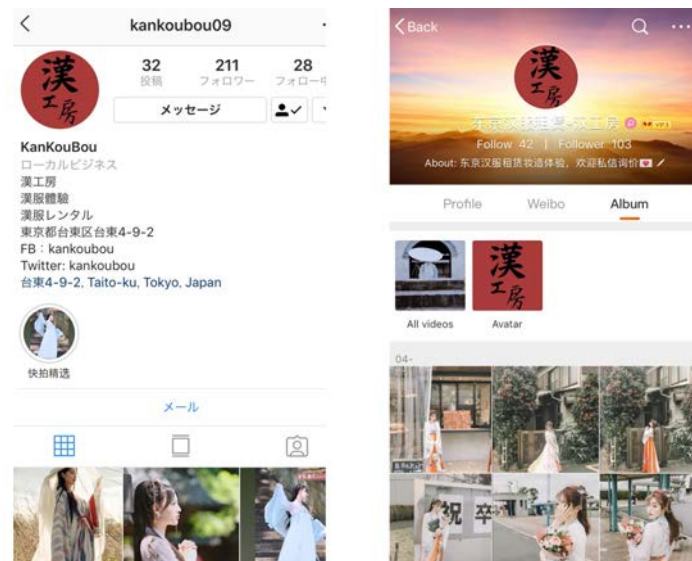


Figure 3.13 Screenshots of Instagram and Weibo Accounts

Lastly, “endearing”—the interactions create the users’ desirability, is achieved by social media promotions; specifically, by the regular posts of sample photos and promotional collaborations with internet influencers.

Social media, like any other form of expression that takes its roots in word of mouth, it can boost viewership and purchase by reinforcing the underlying marketing message [21]. In today’s e-commerce, customer behaviours are largely influenced by online messages from the business providers, fellow customers and cyber celebrities. Therefore, two major strategies are adopted to implement social media promotions:

1. Kankoubou touchpoints directly passing useful and appealing messages to the viewers;
2. collaborative parties increasing indirect viewership by their reviews and recommendations.

As for the contents of the posts, since Chinese and Japanese ancient architectures share many elements in common, it looks rather harmonious of wearing Hanfu in those traditional scenic spots. However, many customers barely have knowledge about the suitable traveling routes or photo shooting spots while wearing Hanfu; therefore, Kankoubou accounts will regularly post attractive sample photos, recommend “places to visit in Hanfu” and “photo shooting spots” to raise

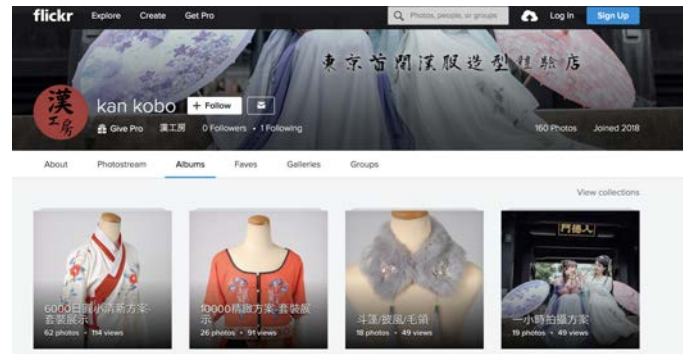


Figure 3.14 Screenshots of Flickr Service Menu

up viewer's desirability. In addition, since there are also customers who enjoy a sense of cultural contrast, and like their photo taken in a modern, cross-cultural environment, sample photos taken in modern landmarks in Tokyo will also be posted as an appealing point.

In order to create those sample photos, Kankoubou collaborates with models and photographers who are relatively popular online. The collaborative parties will be asked to try the service, take photos and make posts on their accounts. The photos will be used in promotional activities in the future. After four times collaborations, there have been several obvious growths on viewing and inquiry rates on the main Kankoubou platforms.



Figure 3.15 Screenshots of Item Details



3.3.4 User Test&Design Modification

The design modification is based on the feedback from six trial users. As a service is evolved through continuous adjustments, this part of user test is analyzed as a design process. The author is interested in different group of users' feedback regarding their backgrounds and knowledge about Hanfu. The test targets are divided into three groups: the users who have Chinese cultural background but little knowledge about Hanfu, Chinese Hanfu enthusiasts who possess his/her own Hanfu, Japanese users who never tried Hanfu before. The tests were conducted



Figure 3.16 Promotional Sample Photos

from September to October 2018 with 2 users for each group each time contacted by the author and Kankoubou staff. The users tried the whole set of Hanfu rental service and photo-shooting as sub-service, while the author was allowed to observe the processes.

The two users in the first testing group are female Chinese students studying in Japan, they only have basic knowledge about Hanfu. The author learned that they considered the experiences as novel and enjoyable. It raised their interests in wearing Hanfu next time in the future. The part they enjoyed the most was the photo-shooting in the Japanese traditional garden Rikugien. However, they pointed out that the time spent on Hanfu changing and hair-setting was too long, which made the process tiring.

The second group of Hanfu lovers also consisted of Chinese students living in Japan, they considered that the service was overall satisfying. It would save their money and time spending on purchasing new Hanfu, yet from their perspective, the types and numbers of Hanfu provided were far from enough. Since they already possess their own Hanfu, they were expecting something more rare and expensive for the rental service. When asked about the advice for future improvements, they suggested that the process of styling and sub-services should be more customized, accordingly, the future price of the service should be more variable concerning the service types.

For the third group of Japanese users, they considered the service as freshly new and educational, by which they could learn more about Chinese traditional culture. Based on their feedback, two problems were identified, firstly, since the

service was established in the Kimono shop, the display space was not arranged in a clear way; secondly, the interactions between staff and users were insufficient; as the customers might want to know more about the dresses and the culture behind it while completing the outfit, the staff should also serve as interpreters.

To sum up, the goals of the user test are to acquire in-depth knowledge about what the users enjoyed and expected most from the service, and what they found problematic afterwards. From the overall observation and feedback, most of the users found the service interesting and enjoyable, while improvements should be taken in both product and service elements. For the first and third group, the author compared their impressions towards Hanfu before and after the tests. It was noticed that the service generated their overall interest in Hanfu and changed their impressions on “Hanfu is only for certain enthusiasts”. For the second group of Hanfu experts, the author perceived that the market prospects would be promising if the professionalism of the service could be raised for Hanfu lovers in the future.

After the user test, measures are taken to modify the service: 1. More rental items were purchased to expand the products scope; 2. Staff training workshops were conducted to increase their Hanfu knowledge, practice the fitting process and design new hair-setting samples.

Chapter 4

Evaluation

4.1. Methodology&User Data

The data of Hanfu rental service evaluation is collected from real customers after the service goes into operation. The evaluation is conducted through the quantitative questionnaire, qualitative observation and interview. The author also collected data online from the inquiries and comments on Kankoubou social media platforms to support related hypotheses. The hypotheses of evaluation are as follow:

- There exists a promising market for Hanfu renting in Japan;
- Customers will give positive comments on the overall service;
- Hanfu rental service in Japan can create interest in Hanfu culture for both Chinese and international users;
- The rental service will appeal more to individual customers who have not worn Hanfu before and help reduce the exclusivity of the Hanfu practices.
- The rental service in Japan will help with the Chinese users who would like to be culturally identified in a positive way.

Customers are asked to fill out a questionnaire after the service. The questionnaires are used in studying the customers' motivations, overall feelings, satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the service. The observations and interviews are conducted with a part of the customers. The author followed up with several service journeys and served as an assistant during the process. The aims are to closely study their reactions towards the service procedures, and get in-depth knowledge about customers' motivations, comments and the likelihood of reuse and recommendations of the service.

Since the official start of Kankoubou business in November 2018, to May 2019, 38 customers have tried the service, within which 35 have filled out the questionnaire. The observation and interview were conducted with 5 groups of them. Among the 38 customers, 36 are females and 2 are males.

The user component of the evaluation are listed in Figure 4.1:

Evaluation method	User identity	User from China, Taiwan, Hong Kong	User from Japan	Total number
Quantitative questionnaire	Hanfu first-timer	21	9	30
	Tried Hanfu before/ Hanfu enthusiasts	5	0	5
Qualitative observation &interview	Hanfu first-timer	5	2	7
	Tried Hanfu before/ Hanfu enthusiasts	2	0	2
	Total	26	9	35

Figure 4.1 Evaluation user component

4.2. Questionnaire Evaluation

The questionnaire contains four main sections about the following topics: user's personal information (age, gender, nationality, staying status in Japan), ways of knowing the service, motivations, and service evaluation. Within the overall respondents, 34 are females from age 18 to 32, one is male at age 21. As figure 4.1 shown above, most of the respondents are from China, Taiwan and Hong Kong (74%), and 9 of them are from Japan(26%); among the former group, 17 of them are long-term residents studying or working in Japan, others are temporary visitors staying less than three months.

As for the ways of knowing the service, 91% of the users get to know about Kankoubou online, through the posts on social media platforms especially on Weibo, Facebook, and Instagram. The remainders are introduced by friends who already knew or tried the service before. While being asked "Have you worn Hanfu before today's rental service?", 30 of them chose "This is the first time I wear Hanfu", while 2 of them responded "I have worn Hanfu for a few times before", and 3 chose "I am a Hanfu lover/I am an expert in Hanfu". Among the Hanfu first-timers, about 83% of them choose to rent Hanfu because they "saw Hanfu photos and videos online" or "saw someone wearing it in real life", since when they developed an interest in Hanfu but "don't know where to buy" or "don't want to buy" the outfits themselves. In regard of the multiple-answer question "What are the main purposes for today's Hanfu renting?", most users

chose “Want to try the outfits and experience Hanfu culture”(70%), some chose “For portrait photo shooting” (56%); 7 of them rent Hanfu for special events like graduation ceremony(5), friend’s wedding(1) and school event(1).

In the service evaluation section, the respondents are asked to rank Kankoubou’s service from a 1-to-5 scale (from dissatisfying to very satisfying). The most frequently appeared answers are from 3 to 5, from general to very satisfying. Specifically, the overall service got 19 “very satisfying”, 10 “satisfying”, 4 “general” and 2 “dissatisfying”. The satisfying aspects are divided as “Hanfu types and styles”, “styling and hair-setting”, “customer interactions”, “overall price”, “staff attitude”, “photography service”. It appears that most of the users are satisfied with the interactions with Kankoubou staff, for both inquiries online and the service in the shop. Over 90% of them are satisfied with the outfitting and hair-setting process. Among 17 users who also purchased the photo-shooting service, 14 of them are satisfied with the photo-shooting process and the final photo works. Most of them enjoyed wearing Hanfu while walking around, many were praised by passerby. In the next question of “What do you think need to be improved for Kankoubou service?”, less than a half considered the service price as a bit high and should be lower; 15 of the users pointed out that the type and number of Hanfu being provided should be increased.

4.3. Observation and Interview Evaluation

The observations and interviews are aimed at studying how the customers’ feedback can be different based on their Hanfu knowledge, nationality, purposes, and the activities involved on the day of Hanfu renting. The evaluation targets are divided into three groups, 1.Hanfu first-timers from outside China mainland who book the service for experiencing; 2.Hanfu experiencers or Hanfu lovers from China; 3.Hanfu first-timers or beginners who book the service for special uses or occasions/with specific purposes or requests. In the last part of this section, which kind of customers are most likely to use and give high rate for the service will be examined, to identify the most promising target market and to decide the future strategy for Kankoubou service. Within each group, two or more customers will be selected for the evaluation.

4.3.1 Group 1: Hanfu first-timers

The two groups of users are Hanfu first-timers from Taiwan and Japan. They are interested in the outfits and book the service as the first time experience.

The first user is a Taiwanese freelance photographer/model Kuma, who loves traveling and trying different types of clothes. The evaluation is conducted on 26th November 2018. As Kuma states, she has a particular interest in “fancy” and “beautiful dresses”; “photographing and being photographed give me the chance to express my own aesthetic sense”, she claims. She knows about Hanfu in recent 3 years through Tik Tok videos; however, it is hard for her to buy or rent it in Taiwan. This time she discovered Kankoubou service on Facebook before coming to Japan. As Kuma states, “I visit Japan a lot. I have tried Kimono for several times and always want to try Hanfu someday”. This time she chose a one-day Hanfu rental set and visited Asakusa while wearing Hanfu. With Han Confucianism cultural background, she enjoyed wearing traditional Chinese dress and being “recognized” in a cross-culture environment in Japan. She likes the overall experience and gives a 4 point in the questionnaire. The author asks how she feels about Hanfu before and after the service, and it is claimed that this first-time Hanfu experience makes her more interested in Hanfu culture, and she will highly likely reuse the service in the future. In her posts on social media, she comments “finally achieved my Hanfu dream”, “surprisingly, we can rent Hanfu and take pictures in Tokyo”.

The second customer interview was conducted on 23rd May 2019 with a Japanese internet influencer Kawasaki. The main aim of this evaluation is to understand Japanese customers’ needs and modify the service accordingly.

Kawasaki is a cosplay lover and a frequent social media user. She has around 19,000 followers and 750 posts on Instagram, where she enjoys sharing pictures of her cosplay works and lifestyle. She discovered the Hanfu rental service on Kankoubou Instagram account, and made a reservation afterward. She has checked Flickr menu online and already decided which set of Hanfu to wear before she comes. The changing process takes 20 minutes to be finished. The author interviewed her during the hair-setting period. It is stated by Kawasaki that she has always been fond of Chinese ancient outfits in Chinese TV dramas and films; the chance for her to know about Hanfu in real life is when she saw Chinese girls

wearing this kind of clothes around Asakusa. As she claims, “I have been looking for this kind of clothes in Tokyo for half a year, and I finally found the rental service when I saw your posts online.” For Kawasaki, the main purpose of wearing Hanfu today is to “try the clothes and take pictures”. According to Kawasaki, she is not a big fan of Chinese culture, but she enjoys trying on different kinds of garments; Hanfu renting for her is a fresh experience. She gives 5 points for the overall service, which she described as “pleasant” and “smooth”.

On 4th June, she reserves the service again with one of her friends. On her second time of Hanfu renting, she explains that “the (hanfu) photos I took last time received many good comments”, so “this time I want to wear it with my friends”. The part she finds less satisfying is the dress itself, which gets loose easily. The similar series of Hanfu provided are limited, leaving fewer choices for her and her friends to set a pair look. Figure 4.3 below shows the screenshots of Kawasaki’s comments online, under her posts, there are many other users’ comments implying their interests of renting Hanfu in Japan:



Figure 4.2 Kawasaki’s Posts on Instagram

4.3.2 Group 2: Hanfu experiencers

The two Hanfu experiencers are both from China. One is a female Hanfu enthusiast living in Tokyo, the other one is a male visitor who tried Hanfu before in China. Both of them possess a certain degree of Hanfu knowledge, therefore, their

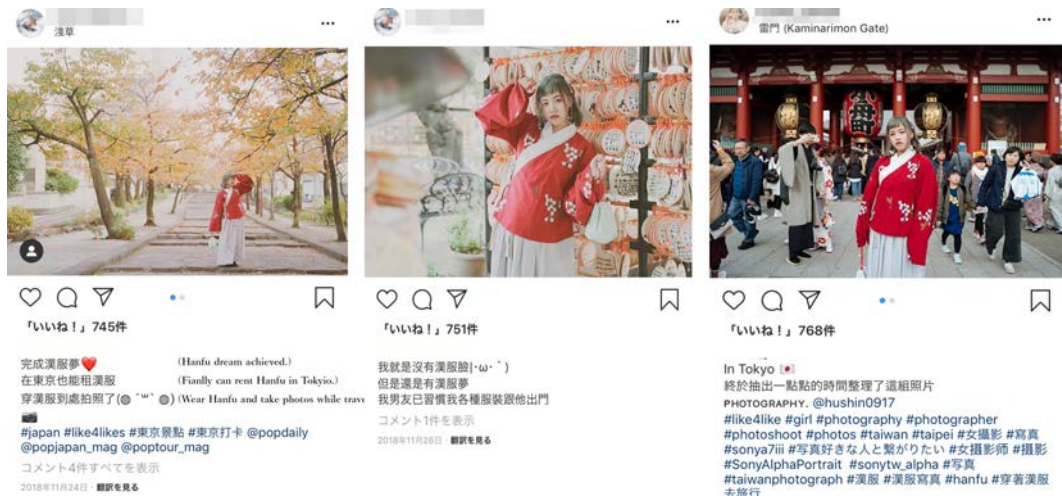


Figure 4.3 Kuma's Posts(translated by author)

responses can act as references for understanding Hanfu experiencers' attitudes towards the rental service.

Both of them give positive response to the idea of Hanfu rental service in Japan. The first user rate 3 points for the overall experience. She explains that Kankoubou service does not fully meet her expectations. She likes the service for it allows her to save the money of purchasing Hanfu from China and the time of waiting for the outfits to be shipped to Japan. However, the hairstyles that Kankoubou provide are too simple, since the hair-setting staff are the original staff of Kimono shop who start to learn Hanfu styling; "I was expecting more complex hairstyles that require higher skills of the stylists", "professional Hanfu stylists are in need of your shop", she adds. As a Hanfu enthusiast, she is expecting the shop to provide special styling skills that she does not have herself. The other male customer gives 4 points for Kankoubou service. He points out that there are not many choices for male outfits. Since the customers are currently 95% females, the outfits being provided are mainly female wear. In order to increase male customers, the author is planning to purchase male outfits soon in the future.

4.3.3 Group 3: Hanfu beginners (with special purposes or customized needs)

The third group consists of 4 customers who rent Hanfu for special events or the ones with special requests. Studying this customer group helps understand a wider range of market needs of Hanfu rental service in Japan.

The first interview is conducted during the graduation period in Japan in April 2018. The author talked to one of the customers who booked Hanfu rental service for the graduation ceremony. Kay, a Taiwanese girl at age 19, is graduating from a Japanese language school in Tokyo. It is her first Hanfu experience. As Kay states, she gets to know about Hanfu from a Chinese friend who likes Hanfu when she studies in Japan. This time for her graduation ceremony, she has decided to wear traditional Chinese dress rather than suits or Hakama, “I want to wear special clothes for this special occasion”, she explained, “I saw people wearing Hanfu; (it) is beautiful and unique; for me, the rental service makes it easier for dressing up on occasion like this.” As Kay states, she finds Hanfu community is quite exclusive for those who barely have relevant knowledge like herself; “although I am interested (in Hanfu), it is hard for me to wear it or participate in Hanfu activities in Japan.” She enjoyed the experience of wearing Hanfu during graduation ceremony, and described it as “pleasant” and “memorable”. She rated the overall service as “4-like”. She finds the service procedures smooth and the shop environment comfortable. According to Kay’s feedback, she received many positive comments on her Hanfu outfits and social media posts afterward. She will recommend the service to her friends in the future. She raises up two main dissatisfaction: the dresses of her size are limited, there are not many choices available; since the dress should be returned before 17:00 pm, otherwise there would be an extra expense, she needs to rush between school and Kankoubou shop.

The other two groups of customers are both Hanfu beginners from China mainland, rather than booking the general service, they proposed some customized needs that the shop has not been providing at that moment.

The second group of customers are two Chinese students studying in Nagoya, they are looking for rental Hanfu for their graduation ceremony. Since they live far away from Tokyo, it is hard for them to come to the shop on the day of graduation, therefore, the first delivery service was adopted to meet their needs. The dresses

and accessories are sent from Kankoubou shop in Tokyo to Nagoya, the tutorial videos of Hanfu styling and hair-setting are sent online. The styling process is completed by the customers themselves with the one-to-one online guidance of Kankoubou staff. It is stated by the customers that Kankoubou Hanfu renting is convenient for those who “are not a big fan of Hanfu but only want to wear it for special occasions in Japan”, it “saved the time and money of buying (Hanfu)”. They find the the service procedure “quick” and “efficient”. For the pricing, they state that “it will be better if there were any discount for two people or more, or a set menu”.

The third group of customers are family visitors. They borrowed Hanfu from a friend in China and were hoping to wear it when they traveling in Japan. They are looking for someone who can help with hair-styling and setting up the whole outfits. The mother states that although she likes Hanfu, she has never set up the outfits on her own; the hardest part for her family to wear Hanfu is how to “wear it correctly” and “make the outfits look nice”; they are actually in need of Hanfu knowledge as service elements rather than the product elements, therefore, styling service is provided with a special price. Besides, they also purchased the photographing service and visited Shinjuku Goen in Hanfu afterward. About this experience, they comment that “it is a very special experience of wearing Hanfu in Japan...(the experience) will be a good start for them to try Hanfu in the future.” Based on the feedback, this group is basically satisfied with the customized solutions provided by Kankoubou.

4.3.4 Summary

From the evaluation with the three types of users, it is found out that 1. the recent cross-cultural Hanfu practices are creating international interests on Hanfu culture; people wearing it in Japan raises up awareness and encourages potential Japanese customers to use Kankoubou service; 2.Young social media users who like special clothes, photo-taking and enjoy making social media posts are more likely to use the service. Through social media exposure on Tik Tok and Instagram etc., the number of international users showing interests towards Hanfu is more than predicted. 3.Oversea students and residents from China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, etc. make up a considerable target audience beyond expectation; 4.Hanfu

first-timers and beginners tend to like the service better and give more positive comments. Hanfu enthusiasts focus more on details and are pickier than the others. In order to attract customers and increase positive comments, the service should be continuously modified in the following steps.

4.4. Social Media Evaluation

The data of views, comments, reposts and inquiry on social media platforms present brand recognition and market trend. The three most viewed Kankoubou platforms are Weibo, Facebook and Instagram. Since the establishment of those social media accounts, Kankoubou service is gaining a steady exposure and follower increase. It is found out that the posts on Facebook are getting the most positive comments, mainly from Taiwanese and Hong Kong users. Users often tag their friend under the posts, and describing the service “interesting”, “amazing”, and “will try someday”. Weibo account has the most inquiry rate from mainland China users, while Instagram has the most “likes” compared with other platforms. The inquiry rate is 1 person every 3 days in average on all the platforms. The following chart shows the monthly inquiry and customer reservation numbers from November 2018 to May 2019 (See Figure 4.4):

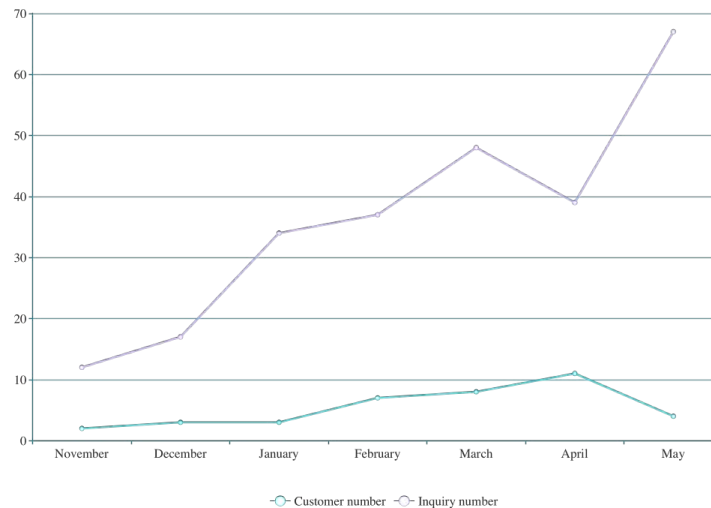


Figure 4.4 Online inquiry and customer numbers

As is shown in the figure, from the start of the business, the online inquiry and customer numbers have been grown by and large. In the cherry blossom season and graduation period in Japan (in March and April), a small peak can be found for both two types of data. It can be seen that the business is closely related with tourism season and graduation events, which inspired the author to formulate future business plans based on the seasons and festivals.

Value co-creation is taken as one of the strategies in Kankoubou social media branding. As a new frame of reference for achieving the fundamental business goal of value creation, co-creation is premised on the notion that the firm is no longer the sole arbiter of value as consumers take increasingly active roles in the creation of their own value. To some extent, Kankoubou brand and customers co-operate in innovative and productive efforts to create co-values. The ideas of co-creation put the spotlight squarely on the company-consumer interface, and suggest that personalized interaction between the company and consumers, as well as between consumers themselves [22]. In this case, when a customer uses Kankoubou service, she/he is not only using the product itself, her/his media posts and reviews also act as co-creation factors that attach new meanings to the brand. The process of producing Hanfu media work by customers reveals their creative zeal, which is employed toward creating individualized value propositions. The customer to customer reviews has greater energy than what the company can achieve alone. It is found out that customers' reviews can directly increase inquiry and bring other customers to the service. Every time after the cooperation with influencers or photographers, there will be a clear increase in viewership on social media platforms.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

5.1. Research Conclusion

This research aimed to identify the feasibility and effective strategies for developing Chinese traditional clothes rental service in Japan. Based on a quantitative and qualitative analysis of user intention in response to the service and its touch-points, it can be concluded that there exists a niche for the service of Hanfu renting in Japan. The design of Kankoubou service actually conforms to the trend of current Chinese traditional clothes movement and act positively on creating international interest in its culture. This design helps fill in the vacancy of Hanfu related service in an international context, and reduce the exclusivity of its culture by providing easier access to a wider range of audiences. The results indicate that both the Chinese and international users are receptive to Hanfu renting in Japan.

Along with the fast-paced modernization and globalization in recent years, people start to look back on what has been lost in history and pay more attention to traditions. The prevailing ideology of bringing back Chinese traditional clothes and reinforcing its international impacts has become a special precondition of developing Hanfu service abroad. Unlike any other type of traditional clothes, Hanfu has the largest target user group and a unique historical background; its disappearance in history and the recent re-emerge movement have produced numerous business opportunities. It creates a fast-developing market where it did not exist. In this case, developing international Hanfu practices functions positively on carrying forward traditional Chinese culture. It is proved that the Hanfu rental service in Japan meets the needs of different groups of users, especially the beginners and those who have less Hanfu knowledge.

This study provides new sights into Hanfu culture by focusing on a more practical aspect of the international Hanfu business. The model of traditional clothes renting can also be used as a general model in developing any type of clothes rental service in a cross-cultural context, for example, Kimono rental in China. The design of Kankoubou service is based on the theoretical frameworks of rental

service, strategic value creation and service design models; through the creation of physical Hanfu rental store in Japan, the outcomes can be directly evaluated from the real customer data as well as the online feedback.

5.2. Research Limitations

The research limitations are as follow:

- **Sample bias:** the samples of participants selected for the survey in the design process can be biased. The questionnaire respondents from the Chinese traveling websites are limited in their age, gender and habits of using social media platforms, etc.; besides, due to the limited access to a wider range of Japanese respondents, the samples of Japanese interviewees are mainly the author's acquaintances, causing the results more subjective. However, the data from the real users later on makes up for the sample bias in the early stage of this study.

- **Insufficient sample and user sizes:** in the design process, the numbers of user test samples are limited; as the service is lack of recognition at the current stage, the user number is also insufficient. User data will be continuously collected in future operation.

- **Cultural bias and other personal issues:** the author might be biased views due to her Chinese cultural backgrounds or preconceived perspectives of Hanfu culture. The author might unconsciously perceive the research background and the service design process in a highly subjective way, which might affect the study's legitimacy.

- **Time constraints:** this study is conducted from May 2018 to June 2019, while the service starts to be operated from November 2018. The efficient period of data collecting and operation is less than a year. The time available to do more detailed research and to measure change during the research period is constrained. As a physical business, more time is needed to conduct in-depth market research and implement modification.

5.3. Future Development

Based on the overall results, the target users are modified and divided into the following groups:

- The ones who are interested in Hanfu yet barely have related knowledge; namely, the ones who have difficulties in Hanfu styling or purchasing the outfits on their own.

This group takes up the largest percentage among the other users. It is proved in the user feedback that this group gives the most positive reviews on Kankoubou service, and is most likely to reuse the service in the future.

- Hanfu experiencers who need special products or service elements.

Since this group of users might possess their own Hanfu and are capable of setting up the outfits, higher quality products and service need to be added in the future development.

- Oversea students (in Japan) with Chinese cultural background.

As the younger generation is the most active group in today's Hanfu movement, it is easy for them to develop interests. This group is one of the most receptive groups on Hanfu as a cultural symbol or an aesthetic pursuit. In order to gain attention and encourage more uses among this group, promotions will be emphasized in the future steps.

For the future development, firstly, the author suggests promoting Kankoubou service to wider audiences. New promotion plans will be made to obtain potential viewership on Kankoubou platforms. Special attention will be paid to increase Japanese customers through online branding or co-operation with other local organizations. For particular periods such as graduation season, spring festival or summer matsuri, promotional campaigns will be made to increase exposure.

Secondly, based on the most come up feedback concerning the lack of products, more Hanfu will be purchased and added into the display for future improvements. In order to attract Hanfu enthusiasts, the author will continue looking for high quality and rare Hanfu to expand the product range. For professionalizing

the overall service, the author will look for partnership with Hanfu specialists, supervise and urge the shop staff learning more related skills.

Thirdly, new service types and a complete reservation website will be established shortly. After the recent success of the first Hanfu delivery service, as well as inspired by other online rental platforms, a complete delivery Hanfu rental system in Japan is under discussion. Customer will be able to directly book and make a payment on Kankoubou website. Accordingly, the range of target users can be greatly expanded beyond the geographic distance.

Lastly, in the long term, new shop locations will be expanded if the business turns to be positive. For the next step, Kyoto, where the partner shop has a branch in, will be the ideal site to develop a new Kankoubou branch. Furthermore, positive interactions will be taken to engage with Hanfu community in Japan, to raise up recognition and create international impacts. The author and the shop staff will participate in the Kimono-Hanfu Convention in Tokyo in 7th July 2019, promote the service to the participants and search for future co-operation.

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Appendices

A. A survey on Chinese tourists' attitudes on Hanfu rental service in Japan

您的性别是(You are) [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
男(Male)	65	33.51%
女(Female)	129	66.49%
本题有效填写人次	194	

您的年龄(Your age) [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
10-20	39	20.1%
20-30	111	57.22%
Over 30	44	22.68%
本题有效填写人次	194	

您是否有计划来日本旅行(Are you planning to visit Japan) [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
是(Yes)	144	74.23%
否(No)	50	25.77%
本题有效填写人次	194	

您是否是微博 / 朋友圈等社交网络用户，并常在此平台上发布照片，分享生活(Do you often user social media platforms such as Weibo and Moments and post photos?) [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
是(Yes)	154	79.38%
否(No)	40	20.62%
本题有效填写人次	194	

此次来日本，您是否准备体验特色传统日式服务，如温泉旅馆，和服租赁，茶道等(Will you try traditional cultural experience in Japan, such as Onsen, Kimono renting and tea ceremony?) [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
是(Yes)	154	79.38%
否(No)	40	20.62%
本题有效填写人次	194	

您是否知道汉服(Do you know Hanfu?) [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
是(Yes)	168	86.6%
否(No)	26	13.4%
本题有效填写人次	194	

如果东京有店铺提供汉服服务，您是否愿意体验(if there were any Hanfu service in Tokyo, are you willing to try?) [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
是(Yes)	150	77.32%
否(No)	44	22.68%
本题有效填写人次	194	

您愿意体验的理由是什么(Why do you want to try the service stated above?) [多选题]

选项	小计	比例
I am interested in Hanfu but never tried it before, I find it interesting of wearing Hanfu while travelling.	75	40.76%
I have my own Hanfu but I feel like the service is convenient.	65	35.33%
I have no special interest in Hanfu but I may try it if there are any rental service.	36	19.57%
others	8	4.35%
本题有效填写人次	184	

您能接受的定价是(What price do you think is acceptable for Hanfu rental service in Japan?) [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
100人民币以下(Lower than 100RMB)	16	10.67%
100-200人民币(100-200RMB)	66	44%
200-300人民币(200-300RMB)	51	34%
300人民币以上(More than 300 RMB)	17	11.33%
本题有效填写人次	150	