

Research Article

AESTHETICS AND TECHNIQUES OF FASHION DESIGN IN ZARA PRODUCTS

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Received 17th January 2025; Accepted 18th February 2025; Published online 30th March 2025

ABSTRACT

This study examines the aesthetics and design techniques used in Zara products, with a focus on innovation, sustainability, and market responsiveness. By analyzing Zara's men's fashion collections through showroom visits, website analysis, and consumer trends, the study highlights how Zara successfully balances aesthetics, functionality, and environmental sustainability. The findings suggest that Zara's commitment to real-time consumer feedback and fast production cycles allows it to dominate the global fashion industry. Additionally, the research discusses the brand's use of sustainable materials and modern technology to maintain its competitive edge.

Keywords: Zara, Fashion Design, Fast Fashion, Clothing Brands, Sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

Every fashion trend starts primarily from cultural inspiration. The fashion design industry has gone through many stages throughout modern history. It is an innovative profession with a lot of entertainment culture. Fashion design's role as a conduit for memory, identity formation, and cultural expression in contemporary society (Al Sheikh, H. M., 2024). It requires creativity, thinking and imagination, in addition to a creative talent in drawing and design. Many international brands have succeeded in the fashion industry and imposed it on the culture of societies in all countries of the world. They took the lead in the global fashion market, but they soon declined. On the other hand, there are many international brands that appeared and continued for decades, but the fascination with them quickly disappeared.

Fashion design is a form of personal expression and creativity. This industry has developed over time for technological, social and cultural reasons. Contemporary fashion design market, confirmed that professional background and significantly influences how technology is perceived and embraced (Alnusairat, S., & Qadourah, J. A., 2024). At the beginning of the last century, tailoring shops were the ones that prevailed to meet the needs of some classes of society that were called well-off. These shops developed and hired many workers to implement the designed work and bring it to a commercial level. The industrial revolution introduced new technology in relation to fashion, as sewing machines and digital design programs appeared, and thus the clothing industry became easier, faster and cheaper. The art of clothing design is characterized by continuous innovation as it is a constantly changing and renewable process. Every designer must keep up with emerging trends and design ideas that suit the era and various seasons of the year.

Later, many companies emerged around the world that succeeded in this field and were distinguished by the quality of their clothes and materials and achieved a large financial return through their designs. <https://funjaan.com>

Fashion trends are constantly evolving to reflect social, economic and cultural developments. In the sixties and seventies, some clothing design companies moved towards creating new brands and designing more modern styles. Clothes became a form of personal expression, but there remained a distinction between high fashion and general fashion (i.e., clothes produced by popular stores). In the late nineties and the beginning of the third millennium, low-cost fashion spread due to the cheap materials from which these clothes are made and reached a large level of spread in poor and middle-class societies and began to produce what can be called the term "Fast Fashion", and among these brands are H&M, Zara and Top shop. Each of these brands took the design details from the most important fashion houses and copied them quickly and at low cost. Because of the inexpensive prices of these products, people were able to buy fashion clothes whenever they wanted with ease. This may explain the secret of the rapid spread of these brands to become a phenomenon called (fast fashion). This led to the greatest impact on the environment due to the accumulated quantities of these clothes that are produced in large quantities and eventually thrown into landfills every year. For example, in 2010 in the United States, 11 million tons of clothing waste were placed in landfills, which, along with other factors, contributes to global warming due to the emission of harmful methane gas (<https://jamalouki.net>).

This study aims to analyze the design aesthetics and techniques used in Zara products, particularly focusing on its innovative approach, responsiveness to fashion trends, and commitment to sustainability.

Designers at the Ministry also seek to apply the principles of sustainable design, by achieving justice in balancing aesthetics, functionality and sustainability in designs, taking into account the preservation of natural resources, which reduces waste and pollution and improves the quality of life. The modern designer also relies on the creative process in his design, which is a process that goes through several stages starting from the reality of the need and the problem to be overcome. The second stage is the design stage and the selection of materials, techniques, tools and designs that meet the taste of the consumer to achieve the goal, and ends with the evaluation stage and correcting errors in subsequent designs.

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At the present time, online shopping has taken off rapidly, and the percentage of stores that manufacture inexpensive goods inspired by the spirit of established companies that have left their mark on the history of fashion design worldwide has increased, such as the American company McKinsey & Company Founded in 1929, there are also companies such as Chanel, Gucci, Versace, and many others. One of the most important of these historical companies in the modern era is the French company Dior, owned by businessman Bernard Arnault, which was founded in 1946 and currently specializes in designing shoes, perfumes, cosmetics, and designing men's and women's clothing and bags. "Lewis Hamilton, the 7-time Formula 1 world champion, a pioneer in many fields, and a fashion icon, was appointed as an ambassador for Dior men's fashion, as this passionate character embodies the boldness and uniqueness of Dior's appeal, in addition to its timeless modern character, which Kim Jones constantly reinterprets from one season to the next." <https://funjaan.com>. But on the other hand, what about Zara?

Zara Fashion Design Company

Zara is one of the most renowned and widely recognized fashion design companies today, consistently innovating new designs and worked to spread them to become a trend and fashion that has entered the psychology of many societies in all countries of the world, and the strange thing is that these designs have entered and spread to the taste of people in all gender categories in an accelerated manner, as they are based on designing clothes for men, women and children and for all seasons of the year. Jay Calderin says in his book titled (The Fashion Design, Reference and Specification): "The dialects of style are as varied as the cultures that cultivated them. Regardless of the vernacular, successful long-term design influences are based on a close circuit, one that conveys the designer's message clearly". (Jay Calderin, 2013, p. 6).

The fashion design house and company Zara was founded in 1975 in Spain by Amancio Ortega and Rosalia Mera, and this company is part of the Inditex Group, which is one of the largest fashion design companies in the world. This company has revolutionized the fashion industry through its role in innovating and designing unique fashions that have their own character and appearance, and people refer to them at first glance as Zara designs. Here comes this research to delve into the philosophy of its designs, the shapes of these designs, their aesthetics, their connotations, and the design strategies that have contributed to its global success.

RESPONSIVE MODEL

Zara focuses its strategy on a responsive model, which qualifies it to produce collections that closely match current trends. Unlike traditional fashion houses that design their clothes months in advance, Zara produces its clothes in shorter periods, as new designs can be moved to retail within only two to four weeks, which is a much shorter time frame than most fashion brands (Chopra and Mendel, 2016). This is due to the speed of production and its close monitoring of consumer tastes and its ability to respond to market demand, in addition to the fact that Zara employs a large design team in coordination with other production teams to ensure compatibility with current fashion trends in the global market. This speed of production has made this brand an attractive tool, especially for fashion-forward consumers who seek both modernity in design and the ability to reach the tastes of the public. (Ghemawat and Nocino, 2006).

"Manipulate motif, texture, mood, and detail with confidence; challenge your conceptual abilities; discover your design vision; and

develop your ideas through process and investigation" (Steven Faern, fashion design course, second edition, fashionTrendsetter.com, 2017).



(fig.1)

<https://www.bing.com/images/search>



(fig.2)

<http://stheimpression.com/calvinluo-x-zara-spring-2023>

Zara's core philosophy is based on trends and rapid response. The design team monitors global fashion trends from high-end fashion shows to low-end fashion houses. They also draw on information gathered from social media, fashion blogs, and even customer feedback to design new collections that reflect the latest trends, which keeps them at the forefront of fashion design companies and produces designs that match consumer tastes and keep up with global fashion. The company operates a rapid, "just-in-time" supply chain, ordering raw materials only, when necessary, which reduces the time between design and delivery (Fardoz *et al.*, 2004).

The element of simplicity and diversity is considered, in terms of producing beautiful and simple designs, with neutral lines and colors and easy-to-wear designs, and creating versatile clothing pieces that can be worn on different occasions and for different audiences of tastes from children, youth, women, and men. Which results in a rapid turnover of inventory, and Zara remains able to keep up with the renewed fashion trends. (Bhardwaj and Fairhurst, 2010).

There is no doubt that the integration of seasonal and cultural influences that Zara works on by designing fashion that takes into account all seasons of the year, and carefully, to suit different times of the year. There are designs for spring and summer and others specifically for fall and winter. In addition, taking into account the beliefs of different cultures, such as some prints and design forms inspired by different cultures of the world, which makes them beloved by segments of people from different countries of the world. As for the important element, it lies in producing models of clothes designed in a limited and exclusive number through which the number of pieces produced from each collection is determined, intentionally, which creates a feeling in the consumer that this or that product will not last long and will be sold out from the market in a short time, which encourages customers to buy this or that product quickly. Also, the frequent rotation of the product, for this or that design, generates a sense of urgency to follow up, which makes customers return to shopping and follow up on what is new. This design-to-production process allows Zara to capture trends in real-time, making the brand particularly appealing to fashion-forward consumers who seek both novelty and accessibility (Ghemawat and Nueno, 2006).

One of the elements that makes Zara different from traditional fashion houses is that the company uses a highly efficient and vertically integrated supply chain, which enables it to design, manufacture and distribute products in a short period of time in addition to delivering the product to the customer on time and accurately. For example, "A heavily-detailed and extensively-researched feature on Zara was published in the November 2019 edition of Fibre2Fashion. It introduced Zara's inspiring historical evolution as an iconic fashion brand, its business model, unrivalled global status and secrets behind brand's enviable success. Zara's global as well as local performance up to 2018 was reviewed while talking about its journey in India". (Sanlai Bakshi, a trust with the times). Zara draws its ideas and design process from market feedback, monitoring global fashion shows and street style, and field visits to global fashion cities such as New York, Paris and Milan, including social media platforms, influencers and customers. All of these factors play a supporting and influential role in creating designs and innovating styles that are easy to produce, elegant, efficient and cost-effective.

Technical and aesthetic features of Zara fashion design

Zara's designs are characterized by simplicity and beauty, which are undoubtedly influenced by the latest fashion trends. It is a responsive model, as the aesthetics of the design begin with the selection of fabrics and materials that serve this trend. These fabrics are of high quality and look luxurious and affordable. There is no doubt that this aesthetics are implemented by Zara using advanced technology that is in line with consumer tastes, as well as ensuring the rapid production of designs. The advanced algorithms that Zara uses to predict trends and manage inventory levels effectively are considered among the most important technological methods that create an innovative and distinctive design experience for customers.

Zara's design approach stems from an understanding of consumer behavior. Its success is not limited to rapid production only; it also depends on its ability to predict the tastes of the consumer who makes up its diverse customer base and meets them. The company also uses a unique approach to fashion design by making frequent changes to its collections and offering limited edition items, which create a sense of increasing demand among consumers. Zara designers and product managers rely heavily on real-time data collected from customers and sales trends to quickly modify and develop products (Kim and Min, 2011).

Zara uses more sustainable materials in its designs, including fabrics made from organic cotton, recycled polyester, and sustainable wool. The company also aims to reduce its environmental footprint by incorporating more environmentally friendly dyes and processes. To highlight the aesthetic features of Zara clothing design, it is necessary to shed light, in detail, on some of the company's products. The researcher will address men's products as a model for this study:

A- Men's formal suit (fig. 3): Zara's men's suit is characterized by beautiful and unique colors that are designed by computer, and neutral colors such as gray and blue in their various shades often prevail in the color selection stage. As for the design, the jacket comes with a wide opening in the neck and chest area and a single opening in the middle of the back that is shorter than usual from the bottom and the shoulders are slightly wider than usual. The number of buttons on the front of the jacket is two buttons in the front and four small buttons that decorate the sleeves. The corners of the jacket are rounded in the front and extend some distance under the armpit. As for the pants, they widen in the waist area, equipped with buttons around the navel area, one on the right and another on the left, with an iron hook in the middle. The design of the pants is narrow down

until it reaches the leg opening, which is characterized by its narrowness and does not exceed (18) cm in width. Two pockets are designed on the right and the left, characterized by their narrowness, in addition to one pocket in the back, characterized by its narrowness and small size as well. On each garment label, it shows the size of the garment (in EU, USA and MEX) with a symbol. This symbol relates to fit and you'll see one of three symbols. Square fits true to size, a triangle means it fits on the smaller side, and a circle on the bigger side. (<https://www.tlstyleandcolour.co.uk/tag/zara-labels-hack/>).

B - Jacket (fig.4): Zara designs varied from jackets in various shapes, dominated by black, white, beige and brown colors, where beige and brown colors were distinguished by beautiful and distinctive shades. The designs of jackets at Zara Company were dominated by the shape of vertical and horizontal straight lines. We see pocket designs in jackets and pants with straight openings, and through the researcher's observations of these designs on websites or in Zara stores, the researcher came out with some of the following observations on jacket designs:



(fig.3)

(Zara symbol label guide)

- Straight lines dominate them
- Pockets, where they are found, have straight openings
- Short in length, as they do not exceed the waist or pelvic area
- Loose, so you think they are large in size
- The shoulders are wide and lower than shoulder level
- The sleeve is longer than normal
- The sleeve is wide at its ends
- The buttons along the chest area



(fig.4)

(Short quilted jacket. Short jacket made of cotton threads. High collar and long sleeves. Front pockets with camouflage zipper in the stitching. Front closure with snap buttons)

C- Blouse:

Zara blouses are characterized by a type of material that is mostly cotton, mostly in beige and brown colors. They are designed in a wide

size close to the shape of a rectangle, the width of which is equal from the chest area to the width of the waist area, the neck is round, dense in size or loose elastic. Some designs come with ornaments that are often dominated by intertwined square and rectangular geometric shapes as in Figure 6 or abstract drawings as in Figure 5. The sleeves are long, about 10 cm longer than their length on average.



(fig.5) (fig.6)

Abstract Jacquard jacket Structural jacket with fine squares

D- Pants: There are two types of pants designs, cloth pants and jeans. The design of the cloth pants is characterized by:

- Short in length so that the socks appear
- Loose from the waist area
- Gradually narrows until it reaches its end from the bottom
- Some designs tie its waist with a piece of cloth in the form of a rope, and the other design is traditional with belt loops in the waist area

As for the jeans, its design is as follows:

- Its length is excessive so that its length covers the shoe
- Narrow in the waist area wraps the belt
- Narrow in the pelvis area
- Wide from the pelvis area to the end of the legs and with the same width so that it appears as if it is large in size for the wearer.



(fig.7). The predominant color of Zara pants is black.
(fig.7)

E - Shoes: The shapes of shoes varied in Zara designs, which are often made of cowhide. However, we notice that the excessive size in the design of the shoe is the predominant feature, as the shoe appears reckless and high and has a high sole of more than one layer attached to it and a higher heel, and its front is also high. The bottom of the shoe is characterized by equal-distance protrusions and large gradations along the length of the shoe and the heel as well. There are some distinctive designs that cover the sides of the elastic lace with two pieces of leather and along the lace area in the front of the shoe and two pieces of leather at the top of the back of the shoe,

giving an aesthetic appearance and helping in the wearing process, as in (Figure 8).



(fig.8)

Zara has committed to environmental goals to make its products carbon neutral by 2040. Currently, the company is working to reduce water and waste in manufacturing processes and energy consumption (Choi, 2015). Zara has also taken the initiative to use organic cotton and recycled fabrics to reduce carbon emissions in the environment (Lozano, 2019).

CONCLUSION

Zara's rapid response to fashion trends, combined with its efficient supply chain and sustainability efforts, has solidified its position in the global fashion industry. While the brand faces sustainability challenges, its commitment to innovation and real-time consumer feedback ensures continued success. Future research could explore how Zara's model can further integrate sustainable production practices without compromising speed and efficiency.

Zara's success in the global fashion industry can be attributed to its innovative design approach, fast production cycle, and efficient supply chain. The company's ability to quickly identify and respond to fashion trends has made it a leader in the fast fashion space. While Zara continues to face challenges related to sustainability and ethical practices, it has taken steps to address these issues and position itself as a responsible player in the fashion world. The brand's combination of creativity, speed, and operational efficiency has cemented its position as a dominant force in the fashion industry, and it continues to influence the way fashion is designed, produced, and consumed around the world. Zara has created a unique style and form in the world of fashion design and a distinctive mark that is recognized at first sight. Zara has created multiple and sustainable designs in the fields of men's, women's and children's clothing, and has also created designs that meet the function for which they were designed, from clothing for all seasons.

This study is significant as it provides insights into Zara's unique design philosophy and fast fashion model, which have revolutionized the fashion industry. Understanding Zara's strategies can benefit fashion designers, business professionals, and sustainability advocates seeking to balance aesthetics, functionality, and environmental responsibility.

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