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An analysis of alteration in design from garment to fashion product

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Abstract

Today, there are many actual different intended purposes of dressing just beyond the essential necessity. Thus, a fashion product requires a strategic business planning experienced the process of design, production and marketing and a management of it. This study was analysed, from clothes to fashion product, the alteration in designing depends on that fashion concept and industrialisation brought about reformation in design, manufacturing and marketing strategies. Sub-problems were defined as follows; (a) what approaches were used in the fashion design process from clothes to fashion product and (b) what are the current ones? Acquired data were interpreted by considering within designing, manufacturing and marketing triad. Finally, a conceptual model portraying the alteration of designing from clothes to fashion production was formed. It is expected that this study will come in useful for the students in fashion design education and the employees in this area.

Keywords: Fashion design, fashion product, model development, design approaches.

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1. Introduction

Although the terms that, 'dress', 'clothes', 'clothing', 'style' and 'fashion' are used synonyms, their difference can be explained as 'while every item of dress will be in a particular style, not every style will be fashion, as styles go in and out of fashion. While every item of dress will be a certain fashion, not all fashion will be stylish: some fashions set out to be anti-style. Finally, while fashion is in style, not all fashion is an item of dress' (Barnard, 1996, p. 8). With developing trade and merchandising system in the medieval age, by becoming of town to cities, by growing of population, fashion had flourished in capitalism whereby had triggered multiple new lifestyles, fashion merchandising developed and widespread in the world. Ever since the invention of sewing machine and then ready-to-wear, in the middle of the last century, clothing as a fashion product, converted splendid competitive commodity.

Products include more than just tangible goods, which can be physical objects, services, persons, places, organisations, ideas or mixes of these entities. Kotler, Wong, Saunders and Armstrong (2005, p. 539) five product levels are that (a) core benefit, (b) generic product, (c) expected product, (d) augmented product and (e) potential product. Core benefits stand in the centre of the total product. Apart from this, each level adds more customer value. 'Actual product has as many as five characteristics which are a quality level, product and service features, styling, a brand name and packaging. Augmented product has been constructed on the core and actual products by offering additional consumer services and benefits... Potential product is the final level considering how it can be modified into the future' (p. 540). Clothing as a product design follows up these levels like other commodities. 'Today, most competition takes place at the product augmentation level. Successful companies add benefits to their offers that will not only satisfy, but also delight the customer' (Kotler et al., 2005, p. 540).

Walker, Boyd and Larreche (1999, p. 45) expressed that 'Business can develop products with alternative corporate growth strategies by two steps: (a) current product for current or new markets, (b) new products for current or new markets. Business can also improve with competitive strategies for expansion into global markets by three steps: (a) the same product to all countries, (b) adapt the product to local conditions, (c) develop a country-specific product' (p. 291 and p. 292). Strategy is to create unique and valuable position by involving a different set of activities, or to choose what not to do or to create fit among company activities (Porter, 1996, p. 2). 'Strategic positioning is often not obvious, finding them requires creativity and insight' (Porter, 1996, p. 6). Porter's (1985) generic strategies depend on cost leadership, differentiation and focus (niche) strategy. 'Managers combine multiple strategy for competitive solution to achieve their goals and consider consumer needs and made a decision consumer segment, technology, materials and activities for value-added chain' (Day, 1990).

'Scientists can invent technologies, manufacturers can make products, engineers can make them function and marketers can sell them, but only designers can combine insight into all these things and turn a concept into something that's desirable, viable, commercially successful and add value to people's lives' (www.designcouncil.org.uk). Considering these reasons, the main purpose of this study is to analyse how clothing has altered fashion product. For this purpose, sub-questions of the study were formed as follows: (a) what approaches or models have been used in fashion design process from clothes to fashion product since the beginning of the making clothes, (b) what are the current ones?

It is supposed that this study can be beneficial for fashion design students, as well as professionals to make their design plans next process.

2. Method

The study is based on descriptive model. Printed, online sources and visual media tools were utilised for the literature review. For analysing, two following headlines have taken into consideration: (1) Design hierarchy related to needs hierarchy, (2) Design ladder coordinated with designing, manufacturing and marketing strategies.

2.1. Design hierarchy

As stated by Maslow's theory of human motivation, people are motivated to achieve certain needs and those some needs take precedence over others. Our basic need is for physical survival, and this will be the first thing that motivates our behaviour. Once that level is fulfilled, the next level up is what motivates us and so on (McLeod, 2018). Maslow's needs hierarchy from low to high would be physiological, safety, belonging, esteem and self-actualisation (the left side in Figure 1). The first four levels of needs are called deficit needs. The fifth level of needs is called the growth need. When every human is satisfied with the first four needs, they no longer motivate them. The fifth level is never fully satisfied since self-actualisation need drives us to the innovation and satisfaction (Maslow, 1943; Simons, Irwin and Drinnien, 1987). Bradley (2010) offered that Maslow's hierarchy could be translated to design, for which the hierarchy from low to high would be functionality, reliability, usability, proficiency and creativity (the right side in Figure 1). Namely, if clothes are made just for wearing or covering the body, it is clear that production fulfils for consumer's first three level needs (functionality, reliability and usability). However, a product that includes extra specific features such as design idea, different process, brand identity, specific value etc., it can define that product is produced for consumer's last two needs, namely, to empower themselves, to satisfy their desires and finally to perceive their passions (proficiency and creativity).



Figure 1. Bradley's (2010) design hierarchy translated from Maslow's needs hierarchy

As a system, the design thinking process includes three stages to keep in mind: (a) inspiration, (b) ideation and (c) implementation. 'Think of inspiration as the problem or opportunity that motivates the search for solutions; ideation as the process of generating, developing and testing thought; and implementation as the path that leads from the project stage into people's lives' (Brown and Wyatt, 2010). There are two principles for successful design business that are design-thinking cycle follows by system approach and short cycle depends on the shortly iterative process. As stated by Brown (2014), design thinking, introduces empathy and creativity. However, they are not enough to analyse the problem and find the final solution. Apart from two design-thinking principles, Brown suggests innovation space model. He believes that 'innovation can only work when the technology is feasible, the business is viable and the value proposition is desirable. Especially the desirable part is a new way of thinking and it connects to the empathy aspect in the design thinking cycle'. The model was integrated to analyse the design altering from garment to fashion product (Figure 2). It is true that

fashion design stands in innovation space that is trivet of human, business and technology. With among of their each other recombination is emerged to innovation types: (a) functional, (b) process and (c) emotional like hierarchies of needs and design. Finally, intersection of all of them is called as experience.

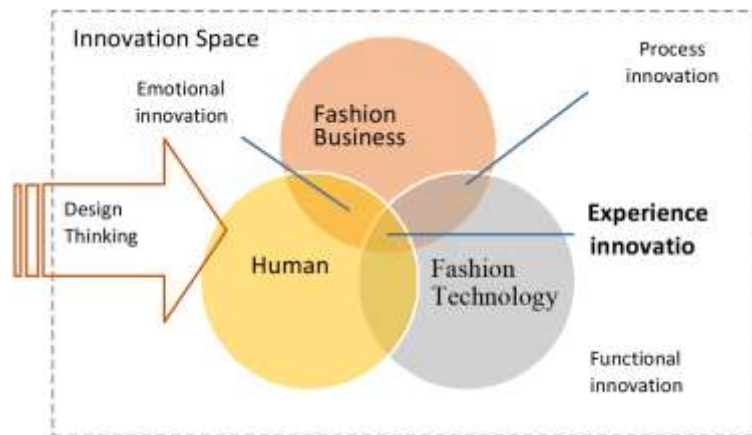


Figure 2. Fashion design innovation space integrated by Brown's (2014) model

2.2. The design ladder

Because each design project requires some steps like a ladder, as well as its stages in fashion production stages that involve designing, manufacturing and marketing strategy, the design ladder is found acceptable for discussing fashion design alteration. 'The design ladder is based on the hypothesis that there is a positive link between higher earnings, placing a greater emphasis on design methods in the early stages of development and giving design a strategic position in the company's overall business strategy' (Danish Design Centre, 2015). Its four steps are following respectively: (1) No-design, that is non-applied systematically, (2) Design as form-giving that define as styling, (3) Design as process that is integrated multiple elements in development process, for example, materials, designing, marketing, services, (4) Design as strategy, which is a key company's business visions, and as one of the elements value chain. Analysing is limited to women fashion product especially clothing from the beginning of fashion until today, periodically.

3. Findings

From clothes until fashion product, design alteration has been discussed in that part of the study in terms of innovation space model via design ladder.

3.1. Design as thinking circle

Alteration of clothes design started by getting higher up economic conditions and by shifting the status of society between different cultural groups. Clothes had first made for wearers by tailors in small store; then for customers by fashion designers in boutiques, fashion house; and finally by manufacturers in atelier or factory since the first day of being a commodity, which dates back to medieval ages. If design ladder is systematically graded by considering the clothing production, we can see that making clothes, except for the no-design level, has gradually altered from styling to strategies in Bradley's innovation space.

According to the first step in design ladder, which is an invisible part of no-design level, before 1200's, the unique process to cover on the body is to attach leaves of plants and leather afterwards. Humans had developed their own items to protect their bodies from natural conditions without

invisible design, attached textile materials with pin, and then draped them around their body after civilisation. The design at those times was not the same as the design we understand today. During the medieval period, loose robe cut and constructed from single piece of textile had been used by people. It was nevertheless the first step, which would be preliminary of dresses style. Until the end of the middle ages, neither tailoring had seen as an important business nor did they have an expertise. As well as clothing had only been perceived to cover the body, the wearer was the one that played role in assembling the product.

3.2. Design as a final form-giving or styling

As defined by Loschek (2009) 'on the one hand, fashion is explained from the perspective of sensory perception, on the other hand, clothing and fashion evolves through form and medium based on social construction theory'. Western fashion design as form and medium traced as far as the Renaissance's wealth in Italy. The tailoring and their consumers' profile developed slowly and gradually in that process. By tailoring skills such as cutting, sewing or changing pieces of loose robe established a ground of fashion business. Tailors improved their clothing construction skills in that process, gained a position as artisans in society. '...Until this time, the wearer took most of the responsibility for the design... But little by little, the tailor took on equal importance with the weaver, and gradually came to overshadow them. Master tailors in the growing towns eventually became responsible for the clothing needs of society, and the art and science of tailoring became a highly specialized' (Boyer, 1996).

Although the concept of fashion occurred at the end of the 16th century in Italy, with a shift in power and wealth, to Spain, then France, Paris had reached its fashionable peak for tailoring business in 17th century. During the reign of Louis XIV (1643–1715), his financial minister Jean Baptiste Colbert achieved fame by improving the French economy by manufacturing industry including luxury textile trade. 'Louis brought a number of artistic industries, which became the worldwide arbiter of style. For centuries to come, the highest quality fabric and materials were to be found in France' (Bergin, 2018). Under the support of the royal court, couturiers primarily Bertin (2016), prepared their best quality and alluring costumes for Europe's nobility. Having opened own fashion house to serve outstanding middle class-clients, couturiers launched remarkable development for the flourishing of fashion system. It was the first time for the beginning of fashion innovation space.

In the late 19th century, Charles Frederick Worth was the first famous fashion designer to present seasonal collections; to create international fashion trends and provide clients with a complete head to toe wardrobe for all occasions (Hare, n.d.). Worth made fashion more widely available by selling them comprehensive approach flared not only individual customers but also dressmakers, merchandiser to having sold department stores for mass production (Charles Frederick Worth, n.d.). He introduced them by modern ways including triple of design, production and distribution (Troy, 2003, p. 21). Worth's strategy that 'design, made, sold and distribute' was the first and new-brand integrated approach had not seen until that time.

Designers' strategies in framing the aesthetic qualities of their designs derived from their own perceptions as artist or artist-craftsmen. After having become successful, Worth begun to consider himself an artist rather than a dressmaker (Crane, 2000, p. 151). Ever after him, many fashion designers moved women fashion product forward as a styling. In time, couturiers took most of the responsibility for design and became specialists to create design. Thus, they had the courage to address themselves fashion designers, who approved by society appreciably and respectably. Being stylish person with fashionable product designs was very important to gain creditability in society. Design as a styling was the core of the business. Fashion was getting to be more important and respectful job. Fashion houses were getting to convert ateliers thanks to mechanisation. Women started to work in ateliers and department stores after the industrial revolution, and expressed

personality and sense of self by changing lifestyles. Industrialisation was the prominent medium as technological innovation space for spreading fashion.

‘Fashion magazines, catalogues, and department stores brought fashion awareness in the 19th century to increasingly larger audiences up and down the economic ladder. Innovations like the sewing machine, paper patterns, and factory-produced textiles made fashion ever more affordable’ (Maurer & Patrick, n.d.). American fashion industry came into prominence via entrepreneurship.

Actually, women had entered the working life in late of 1800s, however an increase in fashion product demands, and suitability of female workforce to work in fashion industry were positive reasons for the expansion of female labour in the first quarter of 1900s. Therefore, they began to pay for many dresses that they needed more comfort than before in community. Steele (1998) expressed that during the 19th century, clothing production manufactured more democratic’. By the turn of the 20th century, women wanted to have freedom, thus, democratic fashion design products started wide spreading around the world. Between 1910s and 1930s, fashion was luxurious, despite economic depression and extreme shortage of materials, fabric and accessories in Europe.

3.3. Design as manufacturing process

Fashion product manufacturing developed by fashion merchandiser in late of the Renaissance and flourished by industrialisation gradually in late of 1800s. However, ‘19th century, ready to wear clothing begun to be available to mass of growing urban population. Growing trade has been go around the globe for centuries’ (Godley, 1997). In time, businesses have continuously sought out new markets for their products. The speed, scale, depth and breadth of global interactions have changed. Increasingly, new players have become active in global value or supply chain (Elms and Low, 2013). Because globalisation was a process whereby trade was growing worldwide since medieval ages, fashion industry paid attention to how to adapt business process to global change.

After industrialisation, emerging of the pattern drafts, standardising of body measurements and sizing for ready to wear clothing before 19th century enlarged fashion industry (Aldrich, 2007). Standardisation and low cost impressed manufacturing between the years of wars. Women had gained new skills depending on their capacities in Europe by means of shortage including textile materials. On the other hand, ‘the technologies that created new markets for fashion enabled clever, creative women to design and construct fashionable wardrobe items at home in American culture’ (Maurer & Patrick, n.d.). While home sewing were arising, Americans influenced ‘cut and sew’ approach around the world, not only by developing home sewing but also with uniformity by using Hollywood sets.

Although Haute Couture was prevailing in fashion industry, ‘the 20th century was called as the age of mass production, mass consumption and mass media. Manufacturing technology supported materials, and both technology and new materials were used for clothing production to make it more comfortable, cheaper and more attractive than before’ (Tortore and Eubank, 1998). Design as a manufacturing process, depended on a system approach, which multiple participants such as the users, all technicians, specialist and staff involved in the product solution with a wide variety of skills and capacities. Design manufacturing was influenced in first Taylorism until 1940s, then from Fordism (mass production) between 1940s and 1960s, and from post-Fordism (flexible system) between 1970s and 1990s.

After the Second World War, new manufacturing concepts such as productivity, profitability, total quality and quick response emerged. Between 1960s and 1970s, quality was the higher value in product. Flexibility was the favourite factor for design form based on new textile materials, which affected fashion manufacturing. By the beginning of 1970s, science got involved rather than arts in fashion business. ‘During the period 1980 to 1988, the quality of the product and its performance ranked first, price was second and service was third. During the period 1989–1992, product quality

remained the most important factor, and service ranked above price in importance' (Module II). Beginning from the 1990s lean production started to use a 'system for reducing waste, not just material waste, but labour and time waste generated by some processes' (Teknopedia, 2018). From 2000s forward, high fashion technology became more eligible for daily life.

Japanese designers have been leaders in combining traditional craft techniques with cutting edge technology. The development of computer technology dramatically changed the process of designing and manufacturing clothing by reducing many labour-intensive processes, increasing speed and accuracy, and lowering costs. Customization may support the apparel production in moulding materials, industrial fusing methods, and seamless knitting technology—providing a glimpse at forming garments without needle and thread (Bye and LaBat, 2005, pp. 208–212).

Briefly, when design was considered as a manufacturing process, integrated marketing and manufacturing strategy questions could be defined by the creation of product as follows: the questions 'what and how' were until 1930s, the questions 'which conditions and how much' were after 1935. They were formed 'how can I sell and which price', and then the inquiries were shifted to 'how can I make my product productive and profitable' between 1950s and 1960s. Linear production methods were getting out; multiple line production methods were getting in. Total quality management systems were emerged from Far East and dominated all business. Between the 1970s and 1980s, design inquiries meant that 'how can I respond to different consumers quickly'.

3.4. Design as marketing strategy

It means that design and administrative staff work together to rethink the business concept. The key focus is the company's business visions and its target market and future role in the value chain.

'Consumer behaviour research has been formed from different perspectives and disciplines, which can be loosely characterised in terms of their focus on micro vs. macro consumer behaviour topics since the mid-1970s. The fields closer to the top of the pyramid concentrate on the individual consumer (micro issues), while those towards the base are more interested in the aggregate activities that occur among larger groups of people, such as consumption patterns shared by members of a culture or subculture (macro issues)' (Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard and Hogg, 2006, p. 24).

Pricing, quality, innovation, service, new product development, product positioning, licencing, sale forecasting, capacity and distribution planning are some of the product planning decision tactics in competitive marketing strategies. Porter (1996) has suggested that 'strategic positions can be based on customers' needs and accessibility, or the variety of company's products or services and trade-offs are essential to strategy' and for development successful strategy, market segmentation, targeting and then positioning could be useful. 'The levels of marketing segmentation start from mass marketing and go as niche marketing and finally, micro marketing' (Apparel Marketing, 2018).

Niche market strategies draw back industrialisation of clothing manufacturing in the 18th century and developed in the 19th century. 'By the 1930s, the college student and young working person were clearly identified as target consumers for fashion industry. Special markets included junior and size costumers. Size standards were widely adopted by the industry, the demand for good quality ready to wear was strong and fashion news spread quickly. American fashion brand names of manufacturers gained strong consumer recognition during the 1930s and 1940s' (Burns & Bryant, 2007, p. 16). 'In the 1950s, fashion was dominated by the tastes of wealthy, mature elite. Paris remained the engine of the fashion industry with sophisticated haute couture garments produced in regular collections... At the dawn of the 1960s, young people's income was at its highest since the end of the Second World War. Increased economic power fuelled a new sense of identity and the need to express it. The fashion industry quickly responded by creating designs for young people that no longer simply copied 'grown up' styles' (Victoria & Albert Museum, 2018).

Fashion lost its formal structure in the youth-oriented decade of the 1960's (Walford, 2014). There were many niche market segmentation and product positioning for fashion designers to create different styles such as military fashion, casual look, folkloric fashion, punk style, glamorous style in the 1970s. Between the 1980s and 1990s, 'with maximum differentiation, with low-cost production, integrated mass customisation strategies for fashion manufacturing, marketing, and post purchasing' (Pine, 1993) gave the direction of millennium design approach diverse.

'Quick response was prominent for fast fashion and vertical integration is a business strategy whereby companies control several steps of design, production, marketing and distribution of products during the 1980s. With the introduction of e-commerce in the mid-1990s, many companies began experimenting with online business' (Burns & Bryant, 2007, pp. 19–21).

Technological innovations such as 3D body scanner, computer aided designing, sizing, fitting or manufacturing systems became advantages for business strategy since the 1980s. Technological advances will be playing a great role in the future by integrating with online shopping.

Deconstruction influenced fashion design strategy in the 1980s as slow fashion vs fast fashion, Haute couture vs athleisure wear and increasingly continued after 1990s, on the one side, sustainability that is do/make it yourself; zero-waste design, re-design; co-design etc.; and on the other side, new materials, new technology, new design, new product etc. Especially, in the 2000s, consumers, with a motto that 'expect more, pay less', paid attention to their emotions more than basic product needs, because of easily accessible fashion products thanks to virtual design modelling, styling and online shopping. 'Fashion design production has lost its magic and focused on individuality' (Elmer, 2017).

Millennials have higher rates of narcissism, materialism and technology addiction in their ghetto-fabulous lives (Stein, 2013). For them, user-experience and desire have been more valuable than before. Design feature and additionally its aesthetics and physical properties such as origin, how to make, get dress, pack, where to buy, etc. have been prominence. Many brands have availed specialists for pursuing consumer's lifestyle and purchasing behaviours. Users and designers have incorporated with product design process by supported technology (for example, Nike, Levis and other companies).

4. Conclusion

The study based on two sub-questions that what approaches or models were used in the fashion design process from clothes to fashion product and what are the current ones? As per findings, brief statements could be expressed from the beginning until today as follows.

As given in Figure 3, design focus has changed the thought of functionality, styling, process, integrated design strategies and finally consumers' emotions and experiences. Considering design ladder steps (from left to right in Figure 3), after people needs had increased upwards hierarchy of needs steps, and shapeless gown shifted by tailors, they were recognised as respectful person in society. As the clothing manufacturing and merchandising developed, fashion design also evolved thanks to economic and cultural changing between social groups and then clothing value gradually.

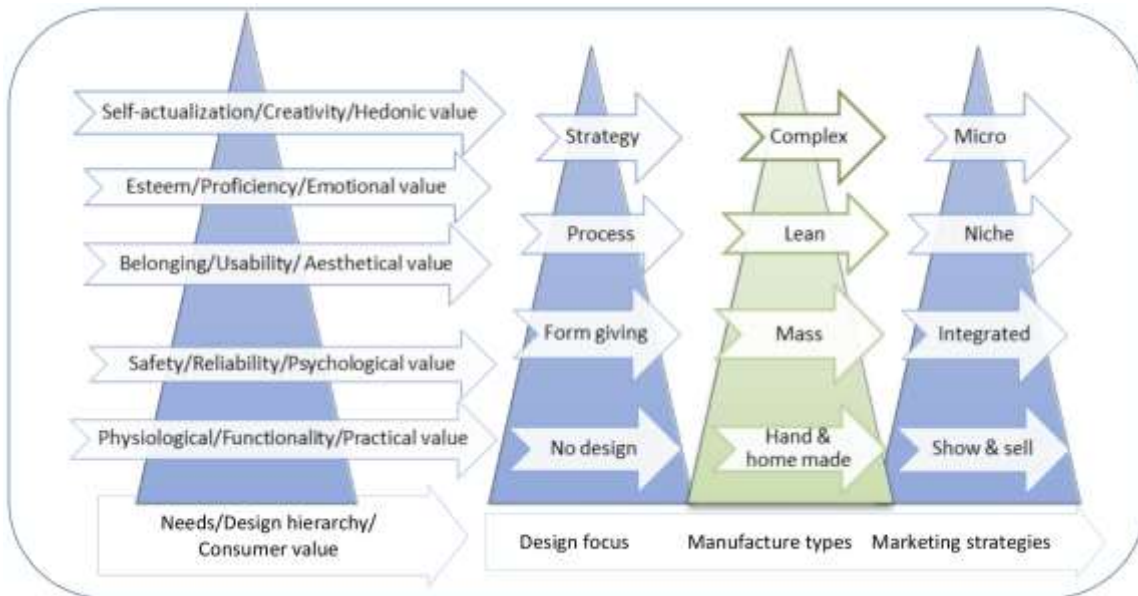


Figure 3. The ladder of design alteration in fashion product based on different perspectives

Beginning of industrialisation, as an innovation space that is in the triad of human, business and technology, design thinking as a form giving saved its position as the first target on the fashion product until World Wars. However, with changing of life conditions and styles, with shifting social, cultural roles, with emerging of recession between the 1950s and 1960s in the world, fashion business also changed with technology and design thinking also developed in favour of process productivity and profitability by triggered sharply economic conditions. By the time in 1970s and 1980s, fashion product design perception changed into process with ethics and quality than ever before. In the 1990s, it was the ground of the strategical diversity from design to marketing. 'The skills needed to be a fashion designer are changing; there is less emphasis on technical prowess and more consumers are likely to design their own clothing and order items directly from the manufacturer' (Polan & Tredre, 2009, p. 2). In millennium, design thinking of fashion product has strategically been created on multiple and proactive approaches around the world. Consumers' needs have been taken into consideration in niche or micro marketing strategy (Figure 3).

Manufacturing types have evolved from handmade to complex systems, as well as marketing from show and sell to technology-based micro marketing. Defined as Pyzdek and Keller (2013, p. 12) 'In some ways the changing business environment involves a return the craftsman era of the past; more complex job with the resulting need for workers with broader repertoire of skills. Other tendencies are continuations of past trends: international markets are the next logical step after moving from local markets to national markets. In other ways the new world of business is simply different: modern flexible systems diverge in fundamental ways from previous systems'.

Alteration of design has been going up more creative, complex, proactive and technological based direction as given in both motivation and design hierarchy. Elmer's (2017) executive summary report pointed out the global fashion business is going through a period of change and competition that, global online marketing, more start-ups and consumers, creativity, innovation and consumer attention, some of which comes from technology, some from celebrities and also experienced economy, global minimalism and global-local strategy.

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