

**AKENTEN APPIAH-MENKA UNIVERSITY OF SKILLS TRAINING AND  
ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT**

**FACTORS INFLUENCING THE CREATIVE DECISION-MAKING OF  
FASHION DESIGNERS IN GHANA: A CASE STUDY OF KUMASI  
METROPOLIS**

**Teddy Boateng**

**(ID 7201210009)**

**M Tech in Fashion and Textile Design**

**April, 2023.**

**CANDIDATE DECLARATION**

I, Teddy Boateng (ID 7201210009), hereby declare that this study was carried out and written by me, and that all sources of information have been acknowledged and that I am wholly responsible for any acts that may infringe on the research ethics policies of the University.

Name: Teddy Boateng (ID 7201210009)

Signature: .....

Date: .....

**SUPERVISORS' DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the work contained in the thesis entitled “factors that influences the creative decision-making of fashion designers in Ghana: A case study of Kumasi Metropolis, submitted by Teddy Boateng (ID 7201210009), for the award of the degree Master of Technology in Fashion and Textile Design to the Akenten Appiah-Minka University of Skills Training Entrepreneur Development, was carried out by him under my direct supervision and guidance. I considered that the thesis has reached the standards and fulfilling the requirements of the rules and regulations relating to the nature of the degree.

Supervisors Name: Dr. Isaac Abraham

Signature: .....

Date: .....

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my son Bryan Boateng and my Daughter Elisheva Nora Boateng

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

First and foremost, I am incredibly grateful to my supervisor, Dr. Isaac Abraham of the Akenten Appiah-Minka University of Skills Training Entrepreneur Development, for the invaluable advice, continuous support, and patience during this study. The immense knowledge and ample experience have encouraged me, building my interest and capacities in research. I would also like to acknowledge the immense support and encouragement I received from my lovely wife Charity Amoako. It is her kind help and assistance that has made my study more accessible. I cannot forget the extraordinary role my friends, Losford Kwadjo Doe and Muftawu Hussein played. They followed me to the field and spent significant portions of their precious time collecting data in the Kumasi Metropolis. Again, I would like to express my gratitude to Charles Katere. A lot more friends offered a diversity of spiritual and technical support throughout my days in school. Finally, I want to extend a special appreciation to the study respondents and the field assistants. Without you guys, this work would not have come this far. Thank you all, and God bless you.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CANDIDATE DECLARATION .....	i
SUPERVISORS' DECLARATION .....	i
DEDICATION .....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENT .....	iv
LIST OF TABLES .....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES .....	viii
ABBREVIATIONS .....	ix
ABSTRACT .....	x
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Background of study .....	1
1.2 Problem Statement .....	3
1.3 Research objectives .....	5
1.4 Research questions .....	5
1.5 Significance of the study .....	5
1.6 Scope of study .....	6
1.7 Limitations of the Study.....	6
1.8 Organisation of study .....	7
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW .....	8
2.1 Introduction .....	8
2.2 The concept of fashion .....	8
2.3 Fashion in Ghana .....	11
2.4 The functions of fashion and clothing .....	15
2.4.1 Material functions .....	16
2.4.2 Cultural functions.....	17
2.5 Fashion design .....	19
2.6 The concept of creativity .....	21
2.7 Nature of creative design activity .....	23

2.8 Design Process .....	25
2.9 Creativity in the process of fashion design .....	26
2.10 Dimensions of fashion in the creative fashion design .....	30
2.10.1 Shoes/Footwear .....	30
2.10.2 Makeup and Cosmetics .....	31
2.10.3 Attire and Accessories .....	32
2.11 Methods and Methodologies in Fashion Design Practice .....	33
2.11.1 Knowledge founded on practice .....	33
2.11.2 Research based knowledge .....	36
2.12 Factors that influence fashion designers' fashion-related decisions .....	39
2.12.1 Aesthetic factors.....	39
2.12.2 Historical factors .....	39
2.12.3 Socio-cultural factors .....	40
2.12.4 Psychological factors .....	41
2.12.5 Marketing factors .....	42
2.13 Theoretical Framework .....	42
2.13.1 Theory of Optimal Experience.....	42
2.14 Conceptual Framework of Study .....	44
<b>CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>46</b>
3.1 Introduction .....	46
3.2 Research Approach .....	46
3.3 Research design .....	47
3.4 Description of research site .....	48
3.5 Sampling Method .....	50
3.5.1 Sampling procedure .....	50
3.5.2 Sample size determination .....	51
3.6 Data Collection Methods .....	52
3.8 Data Analysis .....	54
3.9 Validity and dependability of research instruments .....	54
3.10 Ethical Considerations .....	55

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS .....	57
4.1 Introduction .....	57
4.2 Background Characteristics of Respondents .....	57
4.2.1 Respondents' Gender .....	57
4.2.2 Age of respondents .....	58
4.2.3 Educational Status of Respondents .....	59
4.3: Objective one: Dimensions of fashion in the Kumasi Metropolis .....	60
4.3.1 Perspectives on fashion .....	60
4.3.2 Classification of respondents according to the key dimensions of fashion? .....	62
4.3.3 Respondents impression about their specialized dimension of fashion .....	63
4.4. Objective two: Design methods fashion designers use to make creative fashion design decisions .....	64
4.4.1 Origin of the knowledge for fashion design and entrepreneurship .....	64
4.4.2 Fashion designers decision making process .....	66
4.5 Factors that influences the creative fashion design decisions of fashion designers	68
4.5.1 Aesthetic factors and design decisions of fashion designers .....	68
4.5.2 Historical factors and design decisions of fashion designers .....	69
4.5.3 Cultural factors and design decisions of fashion designers .....	70
4.5.4 Size of community and its influence on design decisions of fashion designers .	72
4.5.5 Influence of Self-oriented, peer-oriented and commercialised creativity. ....	73
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	75
5.1 Introduction .....	75
5.2 Summary of the research findings .....	75
5.3 Conclusions .....	77
5.4 Recommendations .....	78
References: .....	80
Appendix A: Interview Guide .....	89

**LIST OF TABLE**

<b>Table</b>		<b>Page</b>
Table 4.1: Educational status of respondents .....		58

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure</b>	<b>Page</b>
Figure 2. 1: Conceptual framework that guides the study .....	45
Figure 3. 1 Map of districts of Ashanti Region .....	48
Figure 3. 2: Map of Kumasi Metropolis .....	49
Figure 4. 1: Sex of Respondents .....	58
Figure 4. 2: Age of Respondents.....	59
Table 4. 1: Educational Level of Respondents .....	60
Figure 4. 3: Categorization of respondents in dimensions of fashion.....	62
Figure 4. 4: Word cloud showing the design impression of respondents .....	64
Figure 4. 5: Origin of the knowledge of fashion design and entrepreneurship .....	65

## ABBREVIATIONS

FI	Fashion Industry
ATL	Akosombo Textile Limited
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GTMCT	Ghana Textiles Manufacturing Company Limited
GTP	Ghana Textiles Printing
ICT	Information Communication and Technology
MMDA	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies
KMA	Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly
KM	Kumasi Metropolis

## ABSTRACT

Since the 1990s, there has been extensive research on the creative decision-making and practices of designers in fields like architecture, industrial design, and engineering, but relatively little on fashion design. The purpose of this study was to contribute to the corpus of knowledge on creative decision making by examining the factors that influence the decision making strategies and processes of fashion designers in the Kumasi Metropolitan Area. The study used a qualitative research approach to collect data from 33 respondents chosen through a snowball sampling techniques. The study discovered that the creative design decision making of fashion designers in the Kumasi Metropolis are influenced by art, nature, cultural heritage, belief systems, religious ideologies, color, architecture and the nature of the community in which fashion design decisions are made. Designers spend a lot of time in researching trends, materials, colors, and techniques, and experiment with fabric, shapes, colors and incorporation of unusual materials such as recycled materials, to stay up-to-date on current and future trends in fashion, and create designs that are fresh and relevant. Based on the findings the study recommends that fashion designers in the Kumasi Metropolis can use technology to enhance their creative designs, for example, by using 3D printing, virtual reality, and augmented reality. These tools, together with collaborating with other creatives such as photographers, artist and musicians can help designers to visualize their designs and bring them to life in new and exciting ways. It can also push the boundaries of fashion design and create innovative, futuristic designs.



# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of study

The decisions of human beings have had a profound impact on the health and very existence of our planet. As a result, researchers have maintained an interest in understanding how individuals make decisions and the factors that influence their decision making (Nurfadila and Riyanto, 2020). In the fashion industry, creative decision making is a highly emotive topic, and fashion designers cannot concur on its definition. It is argued that inappropriate or uninteresting designs are the primary causes of the difficulties faced by numerous prominent fashion brands (Hwang, 2013). Fashion designers are increasingly discovering that their ability to identify trends and mimic market leaders, rather than innovate, has become an important part of their job (Carter 2012). Recently, fashion designers' primary concern has been how to create fashion designs that are both more creative and beneficial to consumers and the environment (Nurfadila and Riyanto, 2020).

According to Hwang (2013), fashion is a culture that is inherently dynamic and short-lived; across time and space. It is argued that human nature is one of the most significant causes of fashion change, as it constantly demands new and fashionable products (Nurfadila and Riyanto, 2020). Thus, every individual in the fashion design process contributes to the formulation of fashion trends. In the words of Hodges and Karpova (2010), fashion designers receive inputs from textile designers, color experts, stylish personalities and marketers. Every fashion designer is therefore responsible for determining the upcoming season's color, fabric, and style. As with any other creative industry, the fashion design process requires extensive research and consideration of

how a product will ultimately be utilized. Like many other creative fields, fashion design involves taking an idea through a number of steps that don't always happen in the same order every time.

Fashion is referred to as a hybrid topic by some academics because it "brings together diverse conceptual frameworks and disciplinary approaches (Hwang, 2013). These disciplinary methods come from a variety of fields, including anthropology, art history, cultural studies, design studies, economics, history, literature, semiotics, sociology, visual culture, and business studies, among others (Skov & Melchior, 2008). As a result, varied researchers have found that fashion is subject to change based on economic conditions, technological advancements, socio-cultural differences, the influence of environmental factors, and a multitude of other variables (Sajja et al, 2021; Hwang, 2013; Nurfadila and Riyanto, 2020). Comparing the practices of architecture and fashion design, Lawson (1997) came to the conclusion that fashion design appears to be more creative, unpredictable, and spontaneous than other design fields like architecture or industrial design. The fine arts, history, music, and performing arts are just a few examples of the societal influences on fashion designers. According to Kim and Ha (2010), fashion design "has expanded to include value as culture that packages the industry as a whole, considering social environment, corporate environment, and design environment".

According to Kim and Ha (2010), seasoned designers concentrate primarily on design principles that influence information-seeking behavior and design strategies for task completion. To be creative, to solve problems, and to develop concepts, fashion designers require particular knowledge and skills. Furthermore, creativity and

originality in design are the most essential qualities for becoming an effective fashion designer as opposed to merely a dressmaker. The designer's ideas, particularly their knowledge of themselves and others, must be conveyed to consumers through design in order to describe what the designer is attempting to construct.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Since the 1990s, fashion studies and scholarship have grown from a minor field of study to a flourishing research community (Petersen and Riisberg, 2017). There has been extensive research on the creative decision-making and practices of designers in fields like architecture, industrial design, and engineering, but relatively little on fashion design (Norris-Reeves et al., 2012; Hwang, 2013). As economics, politics, and businesses become more globally oriented, it is essential to examine how economic conditions, technological advancements, socio-cultural differences, the influence of environmental factors, and a multitude of other variables affect fashion designers' ideas in regards to their design work. It is advantageous to understand how fashion designers incorporate these variables into their designs and how design embodiment is shared across cultures. Particularly, the essential competitive advantage in the modern fashion industry is experienced human resources, such as creative designers who serve as translators when designing products (Jin, 2004).

Researchers have previously described how cultural values and personal experiences influence the creative work of fashion designers (Hwang, 2013; Rosihan and Aris, 2022); however, they did not address whether successful fashion designers solved design problems through the use of life experiences, training, or work habits, and they suggested future research on how socio-cultural, economic, technological,

environmental, and other variables may influence fashion designers' creativity. Razzaghi et al. (2009) discovered that the cultural heritage of designers influences

### **1.3 Research objectives**

1. To explore the dimension of fashion in the Kumasi Metropolis in the Ashanti region of Ghana,
2. To identify the design methods fashion designers use to make creative fashion design decisions,
3. To determine the factors that influence the creative fashion design decisions of fashion designers.

### **1.4 Research questions**

1. What are the dimensions of fashion in the Kumasi Metropolis in the Ashanti region of Ghana?
2. What are the design methods fashion designers use to make creative fashion design decisions?
3. What are the factors that influence the creative fashion design decisions of fashion designers?

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

The creative decision making of fashion designers in the fashion industry appears to be an understudied topic, which makes this research both practical and academically relevant. This research contributes to the reduction of the literature gap in this area while offering a deeper comprehension of the factors that influence fashion designers' decision-making strategies and processes.

Again, the results of this study may be useful in assisting fashion designers in understanding the dynamic of the factors that influence creative decision-making and developing strategies for dealing with the critical challenges that plague the fashion

and other academics. Thus, it is anticipated that the study's findings will serve as a reference for other researchers.

### **1.6 Scope of study**

Geographically, the study's scope is limited to fashion designers in the Kumasi Metropolis in the Ashanti region of Ghana. This area of research was chosen because it is situated in one of regions that have the most fashion designers in Ghana (Sarpong et al, 2011).

Contextually, the study explores the factors that influences the creative decision making strategies and processes of fashion designers. Specifically, it investigates how the individual experiences, historical, psychological, aesthetic and socio-cultural factors influences the creative decision making process of fashion designers.

### **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

Any research project will undoubtedly encounter limitations, which will have an impact on the quality of the data gathered. One limitation with the study is that there isn't much written about how fashion makers make creative decisions, especially in Africa and Ghana in particular. Therefore, it is difficult to compare the research findings to similar publications in the same context. Consequently, comparing research findings to those of other studies with implications for contexts other than the Kumasi Metropolis of the Ashanti region may be misleading.

## **1.8 Organisation of study**

The study is organized in five major chapters. Chapter One covers the background to the study, problem statement, research questions, research objectives, and significance of the study among others. Chapter Two presents a review of literature that is relevant to the study. This chapter among others presents the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that guide the study. Chapter Three presents the methodology used in the study. It covers the research design, approach, population, and sampling procedure among others. Chapter Four presents the study results. The study concludes in chapter Five, and presents summary of key findings and recommendations.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter reviews the literature on the factors that influences the creative decision making of fashion designers. Literature from a variety of sources was analyzed in order to lay the groundwork for an effective study. The foundation of this study was formed by readings on qualitative research techniques, theory development, pertinent academic research and analysis, business practices, and current trends and shifts in the global economy and the apparel industry. Due to the dynamic nature of the field of creative fashion design and its reliance on forces outside the realm of academia, a thorough study of trade periodicals was added to the academic literature review. Journals and books unique to the industry of textiles and apparel as well as studies pertinent to retailing, consumer sciences, anthropology, psychology, aesthetics, design, marketing, economics, and business were reviewed as part of the academic literature for this research. This review of the literature showed that a particular topic that has gotten little attention in both academic and trade press is the factors that influence creative fashion design inspiration.

#### **2.2 The concept of fashion**

Drew and Sinclair (2015) define fashion in a rather simplistic manner as "a style accepted by the majority of a group." The definition of style is the combination of design elements that give a garment its distinctive appearance. Webster's Third New International Dictionary defines fashion as "1) the prevailing or acknowledged style or group of styles in dress or personal decoration established or adopted for a particular time or season. 2) [When capitalized] such prevalent customs or fashions are regarded

as an abstract force" (1986). The Fashion industry is comprised of all companies and individuals involved in the design, production, and distribution of textile and apparel products (Sajja et al, 2021). Accessories, jewelry, and perfume are frequently included in discussions of the fashion business (Sajja et al, 2021). There have been clear advances in elevating the fashion discussion to a more respectable light, despite the fact that many authors who write about the social, cultural and psychological aspects of fashion preface their work by discussing the many ways fashion is reluctantly accepted in academic circles (Kawamura, 2004).

According to Carter (2003), fashion involves change and ongoing stylistic modifications, or "stylistic restlessness." Carter (2003) identifies a few enabling factors for this system: Continuous change in which some new values replace devalued old ones; a variety of clothing, color, and pattern options that provide choice and add complexity; the emergence of a commercial society characterized by luxury consumption, improved accessibility, and increased circulation.

Widespread usage of the term "fashion" refers to a particular mode of expression that may or may not be appropriate for everyone. The term implies that the trend will evolve faster than humanity as a whole. The terms "fashionable" and "unfashionable" are used to describe whether a person or object conforms to the prevailing popular mode of expression. Typically, the term "fashion" is used in a positive context to convey elegance and style. In this way, styles serve as a form of collective art, allowing a culture to reflect on its conceptions of virtue and beauty. "Fashion is always evolving in a series, as the preferences of a given group of people fluctuate, which may or may not be complemented by utility, nor are they determined by it," said Shirazi. (2020).

People express themselves increasingly through their attire and fashion sensibility. AlbogachievaIa (2020) asserts that consumers dress in accordance with the most recent fashion trends to enhance their self-esteem. According to this study, those who are contented with their physical appearances are more likely to be outgoing, joyful, and productive at work. This is especially true for individuals who dress well and follow fashion trends. When analyzing the self-concept of fashionable individuals,

fashion-aware behavior becomes an essential factor. Lam and Yee (2014) define "fashion consciousness" as "the extent to which a person identifies with fashionable attire." According to AlbogachievaIa (2020), this trait is admired by clothing retailers because it requires minimal effort to pique a customer's interest in fashion apparel discounts and promotions. It is not required to be a fashion innovator in order to be fashion-conscious.

The level of fashion consciousness varies from country to country. Parker and Wang (2016) conducted a study that revealed significant differences between Chinese, Japanese, and American adolescents. However, fashion extends far beyond apparel and accessories. Fashion can signify different things to different people. As with all other subjects, there are differing opinions regarding fashion. Some people consider only apparel, while others also include shoes, bags, and other accessories (Tarlos and Moors, 2013). Some people believe that cosmetics are the only fashion-relevant factor.

According to Moors (2010), the term "fashion" encompasses a variety of components that comprise the whole. In actuality, the fashion industry is continually expanding. Prior to the last two or three years, a fashionable phone case, for example, would not have been considered such an essential fashion element. People today, however, believe that it is essential to have cellphone covers that match their outfit, or at the very least, that their phones appear particularly stylish and flashy. Although there are additional significant elements of fashion, this study will concentrate on those elements derived from apparel or clothing.

### **2.3 Fashion in Ghana**

Ghana has always been at the forefront of fashion. Although the fashion industry has been significantly influenced by the West, the country has made every effort to maintain its distinct identity. As there are no written documents of Ghana's fashion history, fashion history is only discussed. The origins of Ghana's fashion can be traced back to the pre-colonial era, when people wore bark from trees and animal garments. Among other items, fashion includes clothing, furniture, housing, toys, and automobiles. However, in Ghana, fashion is restricted to a style of clothes, cosmetics, and dress accessories that is widely admired and worn by a large number of people

during a specific time or season (Essel, 2019). The Ghanaian fashion industry is responsible for the production and distribution of fashion items. It is a significant contributor to the nation's economic growth because it helps people earn a living and provides them access to clothing (Sarpong, et al, 2011).

Dressing well is an integral component of Ghanaian culture, so the majority of Ghanaian fashion relates to clothing (Adjabeng, 2022). In the 1700s, the majority of Ghana's population donned traditional attire that had not been altered by western culture. In 18th-century Ghana, a person's social rank and status were indicated by the clothing he or she wore (Amankwah et al, 2012). Typically, clothing was wound around without seams so that it hung from the navel down and covered the lower half of the legs. Occasionally, it was also draped around the neck and shoulders (James and Kent, 2019).

Additionally, people wore a loincloth between their thighs, which was looped over a leather bead belt and hung lower in the back than in the front (Adjabeng, 2022). The garments were oversized, serving as comforters at night and loungewear in the morning. Typically, they were worn by winding them around the body such that one arm was exposed. This practice was widespread among the southern Ghanaian population. The inhabitants of the northern region typically wore between five and six layers of garments that were elegantly wrapped around their bodies. Moreover, the young men and women of this region donned a goatskin cap on their heads, a staff in their hands, and a coral chain around their heads (Amankwah et al., 2012).

Despite this, colonialism began to dominate, and the traditional Ghanaian style of apparel began to give way to the western style. This gradual influence of clothing began along the coast with the arrival of the first Europeans, the Portuguese, followed by the Dutch and the English, who traded European clothing and other products in exchange for gold. This gradual influence on clothing began along the coast with the advent of the first Europeans, the Portuguese, followed by the Dutch and the English (Nyarko, 2022). In both the coastal and central regions of Gold Coast, loincloths were utilized. In contrast, when Europeans acquired access to the hinterlands, particularly Akwamu, Asante, and Bono around the year 1700, their usage changed significantly.

Prior to the 1960s, the process of developing new fashionable cloth styles was highly centralized, and the most popular designs were those that originated in Paris. The preponderance of how fashion works today is derived from this time period, despite the fact that the way fashion works today is quite different. Because of the political climate at the time in France, the French may have been the greatest at what they did. This may be related to the fact that Paris had a large textile industry that competed with Lyon for a long time, the fashion of the "hundred years," and Paris's role in

Christian Dior's 1947 New Look, which brought French fashion back to the international stage (Waquet & Laporte, 2002).

The close relationship between the fashion industry, haute couture, and political influence in France contributed to the expansion of the fashion industry. Local political and business actors collaborate with national and sometimes international association actors to advance the local economy. This activity is occasionally observed internationally. Today, four oligarchies control the fashion industry: London, Milan, New York, and Paris. These four communities are renowned for hosting "Fashion Week" events.

The term "fashion" refers to the alteration of designs. Throughout history, fashion has always appeared drastically different at various times. Fashion evolves over time as a result of people's desire for new and distinct designs and their interactions with members of other societies. In Ghana, traditional institutions wear garments that are emblematic of their values and heritages. These garments also feature the institution's logo. The history of fashion identifies the various costumes that various cultures have used to communicate personal and social statuses, from the simplest to the most intricate. Clothes and adornments were used as a means of communicating one's personal and social statuses because clothes continue to play a significant role in the non-verbal communication of the fashion language (Nyarko, 2022).

Clothing is an integral part of the Akan and Dagomba fashion cultures, and it plays a crucial role in determining a person's social status. In most instances, costumes are the most expressive and fundamental aspect of a society's culture. This not only has an effect on the individual, but it also reflects the larger culture of the past and present. Sociopolitical and religious factors have shaped the nature of costumes by dictating which body parts should be concealed and which should be uncovered. This has

resulted in the creation of intricate costumes. Textiles and apparel account for the vast majority of fashion industry sales. Wax prints emerged as a consequence of colonization, which had an impact on the traditional Ghanaian dress and contributed to its development.

Over time, the Ghanaian fashion industry has expanded, creating a large market on which designers, retailers, and manufacturers can sell their clothing. Daily, businesses such as Akosombo Textiles, Vlisco, and Woodin produce materials. These materials have become extremely essential and useful to local fashion designers, who in turn create styles that are worn by people. Fabrics, clothing styles, and accoutrements are designed in Ghana by fashion designers who draw inspiration from a wide range of hues, tones, and concepts found in their surroundings. The Ghanaian fashion industry offers an escape from the mundane in order to embrace and commemorate the nation's rich traditions. At its foundation, the Ghanaian fashion industry is about preserving a sense of history and national pride while also serving a purpose that makes a great deal of sense.

In addition to clothing, Ghana's fashion industry produces a variety of fashion accessories, including handbags, shoes, jewelry, and purses. The rise of locally produced textiles and garments in apparel peaked during the Kufuor administration, when Friday Wear was introduced as an incentive for both public and private sector employees. This incentive was intended to highlight the uniqueness of the Ghanaian identity through the extensive use of locally produced fabrics and patterns. The majority of Ghana's textiles are embossed with the Adinkra symbols that are worn by the numerous ethnic groups living in the southern regions of the country.

From 1977 to 2005, the number of fibers utilized in fabric production decreased from 129 million to 39 million. This represents a significant decline. In addition to the

presence of large commercial textile manufacturers that dominated the industry, there were also locations where smaller textile companies could operate. The majority of these businesses were screen printers, batik fabric manufacturers, and dressmakers; they also manufactured traditional hand-printed garments such as fugu and kente (Aboagyewaa-Ntiri, et al, 2016). Although style alterations are inevitable, globalization largely determines how they manifest.

Globalization has altered the standard operating procedure for where and how fashion is manufactured and sold. Globalization is now a solely economic phenomenon, as it is the means by which corporations generate and distribute their economic wealth in exchange for economic benefits. It is related to technological advancements that make interstate travel simpler for people and goods. Additionally, globalization has become synonymous with globalization (Sarpong et al., 2011). Even the fashion industry is not immune to globalization's effects, as fashion has become an integral component of the global economy. More than 3.38 billion people are employed in the industry, and the estimated \$3 trillion worth of its products accounts for 2% of the global gross domestic product (Fashion United, 2022). The Ghanaian government has taken a number of measures to expand and enhance the fashion industry, despite the fact that fashion exports generate only a small amount of revenue.

#### **2.4 The functions of fashion and clothing**

In general, the functions of fashion and apparel fall into two categories: material functions and cultural functions (Barnard, 2002). Material functions include protection, decorum, impoliteness, and ornamentation (Barnard, 2002). However, material functions also have cultural functions, such as the ways in which people

choose to safeguard themselves and dress in a culture reflecting the ways in which they express their identities (Barnard, 2002). Moreover, material functions are evolving and vary from culture to culture. Earlier research indicated that people wear clothing to shield their bodies from injury, the environment, and insects (Bush and London, 1960). In addition, Bush and London (1960) divide the reasons for donning clothing into four (4) categories: modesty, immodesty, protection, and ornamentation. The functions of apparel, according to Barnard (2002), are protection, modesty, attraction, and communication. In a similar manner, clothing is believed to boost self-esteem and self-identity, allure the opposite sex, evoke emotions, and communicate with others (Barnard, 2002).

#### 2.4.1 Material functions

##### **Protection theory**

The protection function denotes that clothing is used as a barrier between the body and the environment in order to shield the wearer from the elements (sun, wind, temperature, etc.) (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009). In addition, some people dress or accessorize in hopes of attracting good fortune or for spiritual reasons; this serves more as psychological than bodily protection (Solomon and Rabolt 2009). Conversely, apparel protects the body from hazardous occupation-related animals or hostile forces. (Barnard, 2002). However, people in various cultural regions respond differently to physical and psychological needs.

##### **Modesty theory**

According to the modesty theory, individuals conceal their private parts with clothing (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009). It originates from the biblical account of Adam and Eve

and the fig leaf that people find ways to cover their bodies because they recognize being naked as shameful (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009). But modesty isn't the same in all cultures, and it changes over time. For example, in Muslim society, women wear veils, but in other cultures, it's okay to show your swimsuit (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009). In addition, Solomon and Rabolt (2009) argued that there is no inherent link between modesty of clothing and other cultural norms of modesty because the idea of modest clothing varies greatly from one culture to the next. Even within the same culture, various conceptions of modesty can be found (Barnard, 2002).

### **Immodesty theory**

On the other hand, clothing is frequently used to draw attention to particular portions of the body rather than repel it. For example, tight sweaters and jeans not only conceal the body but also draw attention to it (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009). In the same way that men have historically chosen wives based on the beauty of their wives, women have historically used clothing in an effort to increase their attractiveness to men. Women choose a life partner based on a man's ability, whereas men use attire to demonstrate and improve their social status. Thus, women use clothing to demonstrate sexual attractiveness, whereas men use clothing to demonstrate social status to allure the opposite sex (Barnard, 2002).

#### 2.4.2 Cultural functions

### **Communication**

Numerous studies have been conducted on the communicative properties of products such as automobiles, houses, etc.; these products can convey a vast array of demographic information and social identities regarding their owners (Solomon and

Rabolt, 2009). Clothing is also regarded as a form of communication that can convey a great deal of social information. Clothing conveys a person's position in the social hierarchy (Barnard, 2002). Symbolically, clothing can unite a community, and the societal agreement surrounding what to wear can strengthen other ties within a group.

Dressing in a certain way shows that you belong to a certain group (Barnard, 2002). Protection, modesty, and immodesty also communicate cultural groups and social norms to both members and non-members of the group, such as the veils worn by women in the aforementioned Muslim culture (Barnard, 2002). Holman (1980) classified the functions of apparel from a social-psychological perspective.

### **Individualistic expression**

Clothing can be used to convey, conceal, and reflect emotion (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009). Some people wish to alter their moods by purchasing new clothes, and an increasing number of people appreciate the feelings they experience when wearing new clothes because they demonstrate their individuality and a distinct appearance to others (Barnard, 2002). Moreover, Solomon and Rabolt (2009) argued that fashion is determined by the equilibrium between conformity in society and the maintenance of self-identity and individuality. Clothing could distinguish an individual from others, preserve self-identity, and express individuality (Barnard, 2002; Solomon and Rabolt, 2009). However, maintaining one's individuality and uniqueness requires a high level of self-esteem and social acceptance, particularly during adolescence (Miller, 2001).

### **Social worth or status**

Clothing can also indicate social worth or status, and people frequently judge the social worth or status of others based on what they are wearing (Barnard, 2002). Social status is closely related to achieved characteristics, such as occupational

prestige, marital status, and educational background, which are modifiable, and ascribed characteristics, such as gender, ethnicity, age, and family position, which are fixed (Barnard, 2002).

In all cultures, clothing is used without regard to fashion to distinguish males from females (Barnard, 2002). In addition, the change in marital status, such as from single to married, will be signified in all cultures by unique attire. In the majority of western nations, the white wedding attire for females typically signifies the transition from single to married (Barnard, 2002).

## **2.5 Fashion design**

Fashion design is an art form concerned with the creation of garments and other lifestyle accessories (Sarpong, et al, 2011). There are two fundamental categories in contemporary fashion design: haute couture and ready-to-wear (Han et al, 2017). The haute couture collection is dedicated to specific clients and is tailored to suit them precisely. Because ready-to-wear collections are not produced to order, they are more suitable for mass production. Additionally, they are divided into two categories: designer/creator and confection collections (Rissanen, 2007). The quality and polish of designer collections are superior, and they also feature an original design. They frequently represent a particular philosophy and are created to make a statement, as opposed to being sold. On international catwalks, both ready-to-wear and haute-couture collections are exhibited.

In the 19th century, Charles Frederick Worth was the first fashion designer who was more than a mere seamstress (Rissanen, 2007). Before he established his fashion house in Paris, clothing was produced by anonymous dressmakers, and fashion

standards were based on the styles worn by royalty. Worth was the first designer to truly dictate to his clients what to wear, as opposed to merely responding to their requests. People were able to put a face and a name to his designs when they knew they were from the House of Worth, which he founded. This marked the beginning of the tradition of having a house's designer not only create apparel but also represent the brand's logo (Rissanen, 2007).

Fashion design is an artistic endeavor. To be a designer, one must possess an artistic and imaginative personality. Fashion designers must also be adept at drawing and capable of communicating their ideas through designs. According to England et al. (2020), fashion designers do not need to be exceptional artists, but they do need to have the ability to combine colors, tones, and hues. They must be able to deal with fabric and utilize textiles in an original and creative manner. Fashion designers have a strong visual imagination, can conceive in three dimensions, and can translate their ideas into garments (England et al, 2020).

Fashion designers are cognizant of the requirements of the fashion market. They are very interested in acquiring new knowledge and read periodicals, journals, and books on the history of fashion design and emerging trends. They must also be engaged in art, visit art galleries, and interact with artists of all types whenever possible. According to (England et al., 2020), fashion designers have some knowledge and experience with tailoring (cutting, draping, stitching, etc.) and can distinguish between various fabric quality levels. In fashion design, it is also necessary to have a solid grasp of the audience's lifestyle and consumer preferences. Designers must have effective communication skills and be able to articulate their concepts clearly. But most importantly, they must be highly original and have innovative, fresh concepts.

## **2.6 The concept of creativity**

Typically, commerce, education, and philosophy are the origins of creativity-related studies. Sartre (1940) approaches the fantastic from an existentialist standpoint. His discussion of the "consciousness of imitation" (Sartre, 1940) is highly pertinent to the creative process in fashion design, where "the sign consciousness serves to motivate the image consciousness simultaneously a functional transformation of the perceived object, which passes from the state of signifying matter to the state of representative matter" (Sartre, 2004). Sartre continues to discuss how the unreal affects our perception and, consequently, the reality we recognize, describe, and create.

The creative process, according to Sartre's "phenomenological psychology of the imagination," proceeds through four stages: Consciousness, Quasiobservation, Post the object as nothingness, and spontaneity (Sartre, 2004). Ambrose and Machek, (2015) describe a similar progression in the creative process: (1) broad, comprehensive, open and purposeful, selective perception; (2) analysis and synthesis; (3) logical combining and free associative thinking; (4) a broad general knowledge base and topic-specific knowledge; and (5) 'pieces of reality' and imagined elements. (Ambrose and Machek, 2015).

Design creativity has been characterized as consisting of the following stages: "(1) Inspiration; (2) Identification; (3) Conceptualization; (4) Exploration/Refining; (5) Definition/Modeling; (6) Communication; (7) Production" (Asojo, 2007). Fiore, et al, (1996) conducted a review of aesthetic literature and reported their findings by categorizing them into design process components: (1) the logical mental component; (2) the unconscious mental component; (3) the sensual component; (4) the emotional component; and (5) the spiritual component. Labat and Sokolowski (1999) outline a three-step design process consisting of the following steps: (1) Problem definition and

research; (2) Creative Exploration; and (3) Implementation. Lamb and Kallal (1992) created a design framework for apparel that consists of the following steps: (1) Problem Identification; (2) Preliminary Ideas; (3) Design Refinement; (4) Prototype Development; (5) Evaluation; and (6) Implementation.

In her 1989 phenomenological study of the creative process, Linda Melrose conducted extensive interviews with "individuals described by their peers as displaying exceptional creativity" (Melrose, 1989). In addition to addressing typical aspects of creativity that involve the creative process, she examined the influence of numerous personal psychological factors, such as formative experiences, life issues, and self-perceptions, on an individual's creativity.

Richard Florida (2002) describes a new social category called the creative class, which is defined not by the tangible possessions of its members but by their creative contributions to the economy. Technology, talent, and tolerance are described as the "three Ts" of economic development in Florida. He contends that creativity flourishes and matures most effectively in an open, diverse environment. Thomas Friedman (2006) stresses the significance of creativity, not only in the production of tangible goods, but also in the development of business models and the manner in which individuals adapt to a changing global environment.

As evidenced by the topic of a symposium sponsored by New York fashion institutions, there has also been an increase in fashion-related creativity awareness. In 2006, Initiatives in Art and Culture sponsored a conference titled Cutting Edge: Fashion and the Avant-Garde at The Parsons New School, where prominent fashion designers discussed creativity in their work.

## **2.7 Nature of creative design activity**

While designers share many characteristics with scientists and artists, they are typically distinguishable from those two professions (Owen, 1998). Some believe that designers acquire design skills primarily through practice as opposed to theoretical discourse (Yee, 2007). Some designers may view their work as stifling their creativity and frequently see no utility in employing theoretical models in their daily design work (Yee, 2007). While a designer may pursue new knowledge in order to innovate, the process of asking questions is frequently concealed, and the resulting solution may be the only one that is visible. In design research, the creative process must be apparent and transparent so that anyone can regenerate the processes that may remain concealed in design practice (Yee, 2007). Owen (1998) states that theory, methodologies, and processes can improve design quality.

Despite the fact that fashion designers may appear to be more "imaginative, unpredictable, and spontaneous" (Lawson, 1997, p. 109), in comparison to architects, who may work in close collaboration with clients, fashion designers are still obligated to fulfill the requirements of customers, and design problems and solutions are interconnected based on the requirements of customers. (Sinha, 2002). Fashion design is influenced by the designers' personal experiences, the needs of their employers, and the garments they produce (Stecker, 1996). A fashion designer must also comprehend social, cultural, economic, and political elements in order to create a successful design.

Despite the fact that different fashion houses may independently and privately present their designs for each new season, it is evident that they frequently produce collections that share a common trend theme with collections created by other designers working for other companies (Sinha, 2002). The overlap and synchronization of fashion designer outputs occurs because designers must assimilate

and reflect societal and cultural shifts and trends in their work. They view many of the same films and television programs, keep abreast of street and art trends as well as the work of couture and avant-garde designers, monitor the political and economic climate, consult trend observers and forecasters, and attend many of the same trade shows. In addition to copying one another, designers also engage in design piracy. Designers must be methodical and astute "readers" of societal trends; therefore, fashion designers must know how to analyze and gather information related to design problems, as well as how to interpret the market and embed meanings appropriately in the decision-making process (Potter, 1998). Through the presentation of a collection, fashion designers typically use a catwalk, fashion stage, or the media to convey their stories and demonstrate their imagination.

Worldwide, fashion designers have adopted a more conceptual approach to communicating their creative concepts (Bugg, 2009). More influential designers are abandoning the commercial side of fashion and adopting a more progressive approach to fashion, articulating and incorporating their personal philosophies and approaches. (Bugg, 2009). Bugg (2009), for instance, devised and conducted research for her collection of "concept-based work," which is driven by concepts and processes. It was tested and analyzed in a variety of contexts, and three main case studies were written about the relationship between the body, movement, and its behavior. Instead of focusing on commerce, market, and trend, Bugg (2009) sought and identified new and alternative methods to deliver fashion design and communication through concept and context.

## 2.8 Design Process

Design is a creative endeavor. Design can be viewed as "a magical, intuitive, and elusive process" (Regan, et al, 1997). It is a procedure for developing solutions to a given problem. In actuality, design is a form of problem-solving or a method of examining a problem whose primary objective is to solve a complex problem and generate or explore novel options. Based on the conceptual ideas of designers with regard to practical solutions, the design process transforms concepts into actuality. Designers can come up with design solutions based on their skills, what they already know, their thoughts, experiences, ideas, and their ability to solve problems. Ultimately, design success can be defined as the capacity of designers to identify a suitable solution to a particular design problem. (Regan e al, 1997).

Regarding the problem's parameters, designers generate solutions based on their prior knowledge, experience, inspiration, skill, and problem-solving techniques. According to Yee (2007), designers go through three fundamental phases of process -- analysis, synthesis, and evaluation -- to arrive at an applicable conclusion regarding the design problem (Yee, 2007). Some designers, rather than relying on textbooks and lectures, prefer to "learn by doing," or gain experience in the field through real-world projects. (Yee, 2007). "Creative individuals appear to have a similar cognitive style, exhibiting recurring patterns in the way they approach problems and process information," according to Fiore et al (1996). The design method is a spiral that includes image, presentation, testing, and re-imaging.

Various fashion designers and pattern-makers have used a variety of techniques to achieve the final design of a prototype garment (Rissanen, 2007), and apparel and fashion designers typically employ a variety of mental processes when designing and creating innovative works. Numerous fashion designers around the globe have

increasingly adopted a conceptual approach to communicating their story (Bugg, 2009).

A small number of design researchers have devised a framework for the fashion design process stages. Lamb and Kallal (1991) established a conceptual framework for apparel design that divides the functional design process into six steps: problem identification, preliminary ideas, design refinement, prototype development, and implementation. The creative design process, according to Parsons and Campbell (2004), consists of four major phases: problem identification, conceptual design, prototype, and solution. In conclusion, the design process begins with problem definition, followed by information gathering and problem analysis. The next stage is to synthesize the collected data and generate new ideas and concepts. Finally, output formulation and evaluation is conducted. The most significant observation is that the design process is not linear, but rather iterative. (Parsons & Campbell, 2004). In examining the design process and the outputs of fashion designers, the influence of aesthetics, psychological, historical, socio-cultural and market factors has not been accounted for extensively.

## **2.9 Creativity in the process of fashion design**

Creativity is one of the most unresolved concepts regarding human cognitive behavior (Liu, 2000). Numerous studies on creativity have been conducted by scholars from diverse academic disciplines, such as psychology, social-cultural studies, philosophy, biology, education, and cognitive science, who have investigated cognitive, emotional, social-personality, and cultural perspectives of human creativity. Problem-solving,

conclusion-drawing, and decision-making are facilitated by creative thinkers' use of prior knowledge.

Regarding the definition of creativity, the debates persist (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999). There are four terms used to define creativity: product, process, type of individual, and set of conditions (Torrance, 1965). Creativity in fashion design is viewed as a form of problem-solving involving a spiraling process that includes identifying problems, generating preliminary ideas, designing, creating prototypes, evaluating, and implementing. The capacity to produce distinctive and valuable work is creativity. (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999). It employs inherently common cognitive processes to generate novel and valuable elements

Csikszentmihalyi (2008) described the characteristics of creative people: (a) "people who seem to be unusually bright," (b) "people who experience the world in new and original ways," and (c) "people who have changed our culture in some important way". Sternberg and Lubart (1999) described a creative person as "a vessel that a divine being would fill with inspiration".

The vividness of a creative individual's imagination can be observed in the design of objects such as apparel. Complex figures and asymmetrical forms are typically preferred by creative individuals, but these characteristics do not necessarily appear in all creative design solutions. Sternberg and Lubart (1999) cited Amabile's (1983) definition of creativity as "the intersection of intrinsic motivation, domain-relevant knowledge and skills, and creativity-relevant skills." A cognitive style that involves coping with complexities and breaking one's mental set during problem solving is one of the latter skills (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999).

Creative individuals typically share similar cognitive patterns. For instance, they are able to recognize recurring patterns, approach problems in a similar manner, and think metaphorically and adaptably (Lewis, 2005). Individuals' problem-solving experiences are influenced by their cognitive approaches. In order to comprehend the mental representations and processes underlying creative thoughts, psychologists have studied cognitive approaches to creativity. A generative phase and an exploratory phase are the two primary cognitive processes employed in creative thought. The generative phase has characteristics that foster innovative discoveries (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999). Lewis (2005) identified analogical and metaphorical thinking, conceptual combination, productive thinking, and divergent thinking as the means by which cognitive thinking is generated.

Divergent thinking has played an important role in the study of creativity using a variety of approaches (Sinha, 2002). Divergent thinking is a way of generating creative ideas by seeking for multiple solutions to a set of problems, and it is applicable to the fashion design process. Divergent thinking is regarded as one of the characteristics of creative minds (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999). Divergent thinking has been the primary tool for measuring creativity (Lewis, 2005). Torrance's (1965) Test of Creative Thinking (TTCT) is assessed on the basis of four scales: fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration, in order to assess divergent thinking and problem-solving skills, with an emphasis on creative thinking abilities (Torrance, 1965). Divergent thought requires only a minimum amount of intelligence.

Four factors comprise divergent thinking: fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. Divergent thinking primarily relates to fluency. There are numerous other characteristics of creative people and factors that contribute to creativity. First, "independence of judgment, self-confidence, attraction to complexity, aesthetic

orientation, and risk-taking" are frequently observed personality traits among creative individuals (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999). A person's personality and motivation, such as "courage, freedom, spontaneity, and self-acceptance," can contribute to the realization of his or her full potential (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999). Tolerance for ambiguity during the creative process is frequently cited as a characteristic of creative individuals, such as fashion designers (Plucker & Renzulli, 1999). Knowledge is also closely related to originality and is characterized by the potential to produce significant work based on in-depth knowledge of one's field (Weisberg, 1999). It's conceivable that these characteristics of creative people are also necessary for being a creative fashion designer. Expertise in a field necessitates great effort and abundant experience; thousands of hours of deliberate practices may be required to create a first significant work (Feldman, 1999; Weisberg, 1999). Theoretically, it takes an average of ten years for a novice to acquire the numerous skills and levels of technical expertise necessary to become a professional capable of producing exceptional products (Feldman, 1999; Policastro & Gardner, 1999), although this time can vary. For instance, 10 years of practice and experiences may be necessary to become a creative musical composer; 6 years of preparation and practice may be typical for a painter; and 5 years of preparation and practice may be typical for a poet. (Weisberg, 1999). Insufficient research has been conducted to determine the average number of years required to become an expert fashion designer.

A potential fashion designer should be proficient in both technical and creative skills, such as stitching, draping, tailoring, patternmaking, construction techniques, and illustration, given the nature of fashion design and its associated skills. Gaining professional status in the fashion industry requires at least four to five years of industry experience and ongoing practice in order to acquire such skills. The

researcher has received anecdotal information from Korean fashion designers and company administrators regarding the time required to attain professional status.

Experts concur that cultural, social, and environmental factors can contribute to creativity (Feldman, 1999). Csikszentmihalyi (2008) contends that creativity is never the result of a solitary individual but rather a system of cultural norms. He suggests concentrating on community and social systems because they can have a significant impact on an individual's creativity. Cultural factors may either increase or diminish the likelihood of creative design development (Feldman, 1999).

## **2.10 Dimensions of fashion in the creative fashion design**

### **2.10.1 Shoes/Footwear**

The shoe is one of the most indispensable garment components. According to a survey conducted in the United States, the average American possesses ten pairs of shoes, and the global shoe industry produces 20 billion pairs of shoes annually (Albers et al., 2008). There are numerous styles and categories of footwear, including high heels, athletic shoes, and sandals. There may be available designer, bespoke, or mass-produced footwear. According to Robinson et al., individuals regard their footwear as an extension of their identity (2012). In addition to influencing how individuals perceive themselves and others, shoes serve as an extension of an individual's personality, he continued. For instance, image-conscious women in Ghana and Nigeria place a greater emphasis on aesthetics than quality when purchasing footwear (Prempeh, 2022). However, American women purchase only branded footwear because they see them as an extension of their personal style and identity (Tarlo and Moors, 2013).

Shoes, also known as footwear, are fascinating articles of clothing that enable people to express themselves and reveal who they are and what they are capable of (Koda, 2017). According to Koda (2017), the footwear women don is indicative of their social status and authority. In addition, according to Goodman (2017), women are more attracted to and particular about the footwear they select due to comfort and personal preferences. The interaction between a woman and her footwear demonstrates the importance of footwear for women. It is not only a reflection of fashion, but also the psychological pleasure of creating a good first impression, as evidenced by women's efforts to have attractive footwear.

### 2.10.2 Makeup and Cosmetics

When it comes to managing one's appearance, wearing the proper attire is not sufficient. Additionally, it may incorporate the use of cosmetics, handbags, watches, and other accessories to enhance one's appearance. To improve their social standing, individuals desire to purchase additional clothing in dazzling hues and designs from a variety of retailers. To enhance their distinctive style and appearance, individuals purchase cosmetics from a variety of companies (Jan and Abdullah, 2015). According to Joelle (2016), women frequently purchase cosmetics after clothes. Women purchase cosmetics that complement their attire in order to achieve a flawless, alluring appearance. "Makeup imprints our identities and personalities onto our bodies," wrote Jan and Abdullah (2015). Additionally to enhancing our appearance, cosmetics serve as a "positive affirmation of an individual's own self." Women in Western societies regularly use cosmetics to enhance their appearance. According to Mulhern et al. (2003), cosmetics are necessary to improve one's appearance because

they promote facial symmetry. Foundation and concealer, for example, serve to conceal all facial flaws and irregularities, leaving the skin flawless and smooth; lip gloss and eye makeup help to accentuate and tone the lips and eyes; and so on.

According to Jan and Abdullah (2015), both sexes are inherently attractive if their bodies and faces are proportionately balanced. This consistent symmetry can assist both men and women in projecting a self-assured, vibrant, and confident demeanor, which can help them flourish in the business world. When women wear makeup, they are more confident and have a greater propensity for positive expression, according to Joelle (2016). In his discussion of apparel as a "adaptive function," Koda (2017) suggested that it can help a person improve their appearance and self-esteem. Similar to apparel, cosmetics provide women with confidence and self-esteem.

### 2.10.3 Attire and Accessories

All aspects of the fashion process pertain to the administration of an individual's external appearance. According to experts such as Workman and Lee (2011), dressing is "the act of selecting and deciding how and with which products/items a person can enhance his or her unique appearance." Since clothing contributes to a person's sense of self, females are more engaged in fashion than males. According to Workman and Lee (2011), women are more concerned about their appearance and personalities than males. Men are perceived to care less about their appearance than women. Moreover, according to Jan and Abdullah (2015), women wear contemporary clothing to enhance their sense of self and self-image.

Adolescent females place greater emphasis on distinguishing themselves from other women. Other studies, such as Rocha et al. (2005), entirely contradicted this finding,

indicating that women of all ages—young and old—share a passion for attractive clothing and fashion awareness that does not diminish with age. Kozar and Damhorst (2018) hypothesized that in the majority of cases, family and close acquaintances of older and senior women assist them in choosing clothing that accentuates their self-esteem and sense of self.

No fashion discussion would be complete without mentioning accoutrements. Accessories include hosiery, mittens, headscarves, sunglasses, hats, belts, and jewelry. (Kozar and Damhorst, 2018). According to Kozar and Damhorst, when one mentions fashion, the first item that comes to mind is clothing (2018). Nonetheless, as the fashion discourse expands, the significance of accessories becomes apparent, as they only serve to enhance the beauty of an ensemble. (apparel). In addition, according to Koda (2017), many women believe that accessories play a significant role in enhancing their beauty, whereas they believe that clothing alone is adequate to make them appear beautiful. Consequently, just as one could argue that fashion is more than just clothes, one could also argue that accessories are significantly more than just clothes.

## **2.11 Methods and Methodologies in Fashion Design Practice**

This section contains both practice- and research-based texts. Consequently, not all of the texts are founded on empirical investigations in the scientific sense. As the study intends to produce research-based knowledge development in and for the field of practiced fashion design, it is essential to evaluate both existing practice-based and research-based knowledge.

### **2.11.1 Knowledge founded on practice**

The literature on how to perform fashion design is extensive if one includes publications on various types of fashion drawing (e.g. Zaman, 2012; Smith, 2013), garment draping and pattern construction (Knowles, 2014), and other techniques (e.g. Rissanen & Mcquillan, 2016) known to be used in fashion design practice. The examples included in this article were chosen because they (a.) demonstrate a

temporal progression in the maturation of area (b.) originate within a context of fashion design education comparable to the present study's context, and (c.) objective to impart methodological knowledge to students. Fashion Design goes beyond the technical issues of, for example, drawing and draping and examines both the practice of a fashion design student and the industry context they will eventually enter (Jones, 2005).

A contribution from an expert in the field intended to elucidate procedures and decipher terminology in a dense field. Jones (2005) states that the book "explores the differences between markets and manufacturing styles, traditional methodology and cutting-edge computer-aided processes and systems" as she discusses the shift in the designer's role due to the widespread outsourcing of production. The author warns the reader that the book is a guide and does not purport to be an in-depth analysis of the concepts and ideas presented.

Jones (2005) further addresses the increase in complexity in the design process by providing a systematized method for addressing the complexities of design problems. Seven thematically dissected chapters, such as Context, From manufacture to market, and In the studio, provide direct "how to" instructions. Thus, the volume functions as a miniature encyclopedia. It covers the ideas, concepts, terminologies, disciplines, technical terms, and instructions that comprise a comprehensive fashion curriculum.

The author briefly mentions the significance of the body by emphasizing the significance of the bodily sensations associated with the garments that must be sensed during the design process by merely trying them on, thereby introducing the body not only to the design process but also to the garment. As an external framework for labor, but also as something with an embedded style or garment expertise that needs to be activated. In addition to introducing the fashion industry's temporal settings and structures through the 'fashion cycle' diagram, a linear and singular representation, Jones briefly addresses the concept of collection through the fabric-centered concept of Rangebuilding, where she recommends keeping in mind "the general principles of design" (proportion, rhythm, and an awareness of the human body in motion) when designing an entire collection.

Following in Jones's footsteps, Gaimster's (2011) primary objective is to equip fashion students with guidelines and tools for conducting visual study and analysis, as well as for strategically planning the implementation of various processes. The motivation for the book *Visual Research Methods in Fashion* reflects the author's position between fashion practice, academic research, and education. It was during her doctoral studies that she became aware of the need for articulated knowledge on research methods in fashion design, as she observed students struggling to engage with and transform the material. As suggested by the title, the text focuses on visual research and, as a result, predominantly addresses the two-dimensional representation of design work. Nevertheless, the author includes research on vintage garments and provides an in-depth chapter on textiles; however, the emphasis is on the initial visual research process rather than the three-dimensional development of garments; consequently, neither temporal nor bodily dimensions nor the collection format are addressed in great detail. The text is a comprehensive blend of foundation theory, case

studies conducted as interviews in the professional field, student research projects, and the author's professional experience.

#### 2.11.2 Research based knowledge

There are fewer research-based studies on fashion design methods and methodologies than practice-based studies, but there appears to be a similar trend of increasing awareness of the topic. *Understanding Aesthetics for the Merchandising & Design Professional* (Fiore & Kimle, 1997) addresses the vast topic of aesthetics in apparel design through a multiplicity of sources. The authors address their readers in the first person throughout the entire text, posing queries and providing prescriptive guidance on procedures and methods of working. The stated objective of the work is to "bridge the gap between textbooks emphasizing the "nuts and bolts" of apparel industry fundamentals and textbooks based solely on scholarly thought and research." Thus, the authors combine research and practice-based knowledge regarding the evolution of fashion design. The approach to the motif as a whole is predicated on the idea that aesthetic experience is a multisensory event in which all senses may contribute. Thus, the authors highlight the significant interaction between clothing, the body, and the environment, where each provides multi-sensory experiences, and assert that multi-sensory experience "consists of all sensory information available through sight, touch, kinaesthetic, smell, hearing, and taste" (ibid.). The impact of the multisensory concept of aesthetics on the practice of apparel design is discussed and elucidated in four chapters devoted to 1. fundamental definitions of aesthetics. Aesthetic qualities of the apparel product and the surrounding environment. The application of aesthetics-related skills utilized by the apparel professional. Consequently, the text addresses not

only the visual aspects of the design activities, but also the importance of somatic experiences in the development of garments. In addition, the text seeks to develop a comprehension of skills and their application in the context of apparel design. This may be relevant to the present study, as skills and their application relate to the method of practice.

Berglin et al. (2007) contend that many fashion design practice studies rely on knowledge transferred from other design disciplines (Lamb and Kallal, 1992), and if specific design process models are developed, they are "explicitly business-oriented models" (ibid. p. 29). The authors observe that even though "timing – the fit in a general fashion trend and aesthetics – the silhouette" are elevated as essential designer qualities in fundamental textbooks, they are not critically incorporated into any methodology. (ibid). Moreover, the authors build an argument for a need for change in the way fashion design method is commonly perceived and taught as "fashion concept" or "fashion sketching" (ibid., p. 29) based on the observation that 'fashion design concerns the expressiveness of clothes as they dress the body' and 'also concerns the expressiveness of the acts that define given clothes in use'.

In a later paper, (Hallnas, 2009) asserts that methodologies in fashion design are approached differently than in other design disciplines. According to Hallnas, the absence of a "problem" is a fundamental aspect of fashion design. Hallnas observes that fashion design is an exception to the rule that design identifies and solves problems. The author proposes a replacement for "solving a problem" as a fundamental concept in fashion design: "introducing a difference." This means that when fashion designers are certain of what they are designing, e.g. garments, the issue becomes how these garments differ from previously designed garments, i.e. the distinction between variations.

Lindquist (2013) similarly articulates the concept of the body as central to fashion design practice. It is based on in-depth practical experimental studies that result in a proposal for a new system of form giving – a system that is defined as being based on a qualitative approximation of the body; 'instead of a static matrix of a non-moving body, the suggested approach for cutting garments is based on a qualitative approximation of the body, visualised through balance lines and key biomechanical points'. Thus, the work seeks to comprehend how fashion design methodologically can be seen to develop in dialogue with the body, thereby posing an inherent critique of more conventional pattern cutting techniques.

Lindquist's musings on this subject began during his tenure at Vivienne Westwood. Here, he observes manufacturing processes that are solely based on the three-dimensional nature of the body. That is '...the body we were adorning was always the focus of our attention (...)' Iris, the senior cutter, took a pragmatic approach by working on her own body in front of the mirror as much as on the dress-stand or cutting table while designing. (ibid. p. 30). Lindquist's realization concerned the necessity of the cutter's direct connection to her own body. Its motions and interaction with the fabric and form. He quotes Westwood's spouse and co-designer Andreas for stating that 'it is not about the pattern, it is all about the body and what the garment does with the body' (ibid. p. 31).

Nixon and Blakley (2012) investigate what they perceive to be a recent phenomenon, namely the adoption of fashion logics or fashion design methods of working and strategizing in a variety of contexts outside the fashion industry as such. Thus, the authors assert that "the powerful instrumentality of fashion thinking has flown under the radar for centuries" (ibid., p.158) due to the fact that "there is only sporadic

recognition that this commercial art offers a unique way of combining aesthetics, engineering, and business strategy."

## **2.12 Factors that influence fashion designers' fashion-related decisions**

In the theories and research examining how fashion designers are inspired during the design process, it appears possible to identify five general factors. These are known as the "aesthetic factor," "historical factor," "sociocultural factor," "psychological factor," and "marketing factor."

### **2.12.1 Aesthetic factors**

"Changing fashions have reflected the art movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries" (Sproles, 1985). Designers draw inspiration from various art movements in order to create new designs. Neoclassicism, Romanticism, Eclecticism, Functionalism, Cubism, Expressionism, Abstraction, Pop Art, and Op Art are among these art movements. Contemporary fine arts and commercial illustrations have a significant impact on color combinations and fashion trends in general (Tate, 1999). "All the arts provide visual inspiration to designers, whether for color, mood, or a particular spirit that seems to capture the times" (Frings, 1991). "Societies have aesthetic ideals. These are criteria for the most desirable or ideal aesthetic expression" (Sproles, 1985). These perspectives suggest that a certain standard of beauty is recognized at various times and locations. When making decisions about fashion purchases, individuals adhere to the prevalent ideal of attractiveness.

### **2.12.2 Historical factors**

The human body has been clothed and adorned in every conceivable way throughout fashion history. Designers draw inspiration from history, and fashion frequently reflects the past (Sproles, 1985). The predominant designs of particular eras, such as the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, frequently have an influence on fashion. Some designers find inspiration in the fashions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. "Vintage clothing is an invaluable source of design inspiration" (Tate, 1999). Nevertheless,

contemporary designs are never identical to their predecessors. Designers continually reinvent styles so that only the beauty and unique qualities of the past can be admired. "They must develop sensitivity to the color, motif, line, shape, and space combinations of each historical period's art and costume" (Frings, 1991, p.63). "Designers frequently look to the past for innovative line and silhouette concepts" (Frings, 1991, p.63). For example, the length of the skirt is frequently shortened or prolonged by an inch to several inches in accordance with the latest fashion trends.

In general, people are more inclined to accept incremental changes than radical ones. "Each new fashion is an evolutionary development and refinement of the preceding fashion." (Sproles, 1985, p.62).

### 2.12.3 Socio-cultural factors

Anthropologists and historians investigate how social and cultural factors influence the creative endeavors of individuals. Roach (1989) argued that cultural realities, such as political and religious ideologies, as well as scientific, technological, and other innovations, influenced the manner and techniques of artists. Berlo (1991) suggested that the gender of the creator has an impact on the aesthetic objects they produce. Jopling (1977) discovered that the aesthetic preferences of textile art in small-scale

societies were influenced by the economics of production and marketing for external markets. According to Silver (1981), "the emergence of creativity in any social system, as exemplified by the introduction of novel innovations, follows regular patterns that are shaped by numerous socio-economic forces." Hamilton (1987) advocated the use of a cultural paradigm that incorporates ideology, social structure, and technology in order to examine the socio-cultural influences on fashion and textile designers. Subcultural influence can create a fashion statement through its distinctive style and originality. As soon as such a fashion is promoted to the general public, it will become a significant trend. "Analysts may believe that subcultures exert a more silent or subtle influence on contemporary trends today." Subcultures such as punk, new wave, and homosexuality are the origins of subtle fashion trends. (Sproles, 1985).

#### **2.12.4 Psychological factors**

Individuals who are creative appear to have a similar cognitive approach to problem solving and information processing. Amabile (1983) proposed that intrinsic motivation is superior to extrinsic motivation for the continuation of creative activity. Instead of external evaluations of creativity and task constraints, the creator is driven by his or her own personal interest in the activity. Hirschman (1983) proposed three categories of creativity: self-oriented, peer-oriented, and commercialized. The principal audience and purpose of the self-oriented creator are, respectively, the self and self-expression. The primary audience for a peer-oriented creator is industry professionals, and the primary objective is recognition. A commercially minded creator views the public as his or her primary audience and focuses primarily on marketability. Gardner (1983) identified seven categories of cognitive abilities: linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, personal, and

interpersonal intelligence. Depending on the type of creative activity, these cognitive abilities have varying effects on creators. There are attitudes, motivations, interests, values, and other personality traits that encourage creative thinking and behavior (Davis, 1975).

### **2.12.5 Marketing factors**

The most broadly adopted innovations are those that are simple and enjoyable for consumers to adopt. This is achieved by expanding the availability, variety, affordability, and enjoyment of adoption (Sproles, 1985). The marketing influence implies that the strategies for designing, producing, and distributing correspond to the desires and requirements of the target market. "The most accomplished designers must always be in tune with the times.

They must comprehend the individuals for whom they design, as well as their interests, attitudes, and values regarding dress, lifestyle, and professions (Kefgen and Touchie -Specht, 1976). "They are studying individuals in every region of the world in greater detail to determine their fashion preferences and requirements. The streets provide manufacturers of apparel and accoutrements with limitless inspiration for their collections. The product concepts are readily transferable to the appropriate target markets.

## **2.13 Theoretical Framework**

### **2.13.1 Theory of Optimal Experience**

In order to better comprehend the creative process and individual experiences of Ghanaian fashion designers, Csikszentmihalyi's (2008) theory of optimal experience

or flow will serve as a framework. The theory of flow also provides a foundation for comprehending how an investigation of originality and the creative process of designers are related. The theory was founded on the idea of flow, which is a mental state or psychological experience that a person has when they are completely immersed in something they enjoy and are interested in. According to Csikszentmihalyi (2008), flow is the mental state in which people are in when their consciousness is harmoniously ordered and they want to continue their current activity for its own sake. The theory of flow explains a perfect situation that inspires an invention in a creative individual (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008).

Csikszentmihalyi (2008) examined experts, such as athletes, musicians, chess masters, and surgeons, who are people who prefer to spend their time doing what they love. He then described experiences with the state of flow. Based on years of study, he put forth a framework for explaining how creative flow entails a person's enjoyment and happiness while engaging in a creative process. It was believed that feeling the condition of flow did not depend on one's gender, age, ethnicity, or cultural background. The seven main components that make up the experience of flow are as follows: 1) "Clear goals every step of the way;" 2) "Immediate feedback to one's action;" 3) "Balance between challenges and skills;" 4) "Action and awareness are merged"; 5) "Distractions are excluded from consciousness;" 6) "No worry about failure;" 7) "Self-consciousness disappears". In a state of flow, action and awareness are fused together, and individuals know what needs to be done without consciously considering the next move.

When engaged in a creative process, people who are creative frequently lose sight of things like time and their immediate surroundings. In order to be categorized as being in the flowing period, certain prerequisites must be met. An individual must balance

the difficulties and requirements of their profession (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008). The creative process that leads to a creative outcome is where the fundamental idea of flow is found. The act of innovating is a form of creativity. According to Csikszentmihalyi's (2008) explanation, the aim of the creative process is to solve problems that have been presented to the person by others or suggested by the state of the art in the field. For instance, Csikszentmihalyi's study revealed that for artists, the more creative the artwork, the less likely is for discovery of the activity's objective (2008).

It is conceivable to infer that one factor influencing fashion designers' decision to work in their chosen profession is their enjoyment of making clothing. The ultimate aim of their practice might be recognition or financial gain, but they also value their roles as designers and the chance that designing affords them to do what they love. Numerous research studies covering topics like the study of happiness, life satisfaction, and motivation have used the concept of flow developed by psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008). The study of designers, particularly fashion designers from developing countries like Ghana, has not received much attention. The theory of flow can be used to explain the dynamics of the design process and the creative process in general because fashion design involves cognitive skills like originality, critical thinking, and combining creative ideas from various sources.

## **2.14 Conceptual Framework of Study**

Figure 2.1 shows the conceptual framework that guides the study. In the framework, the the factors that influences the creative decisions making of fashion designers

namely aesthetic, historical, socio-cultural, psychological and market are captured under the independent variables, while the creative decision making of fashion designers which leads to fashion (the dimensions such as shoes/footwears, makeups and cosmetics and apparels and accessories). figure 2.1 show the details.

Independent Variables

Dependent Variables

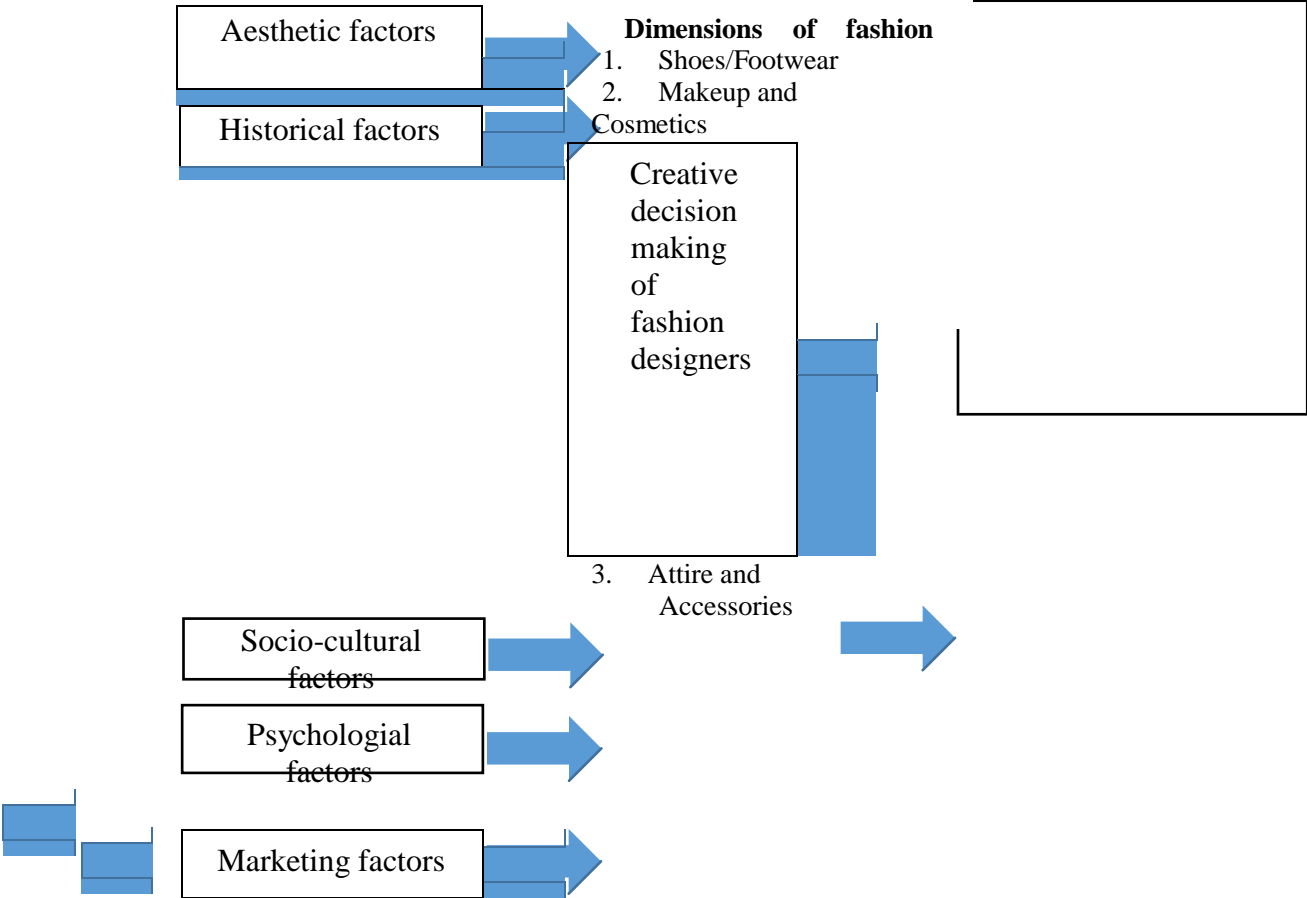


Figure 2. 1: Conceptual framework that guides the study

Source: Authors’ Construct, 2023.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The methodology is the procedure used to organize data collection and analysis in a study (Polit and Beck, 2012). Methodology is discussed in this chapter, with special emphasis on the research paradigm, research approach, research design, study setting, study population, data collection process, data analysis, validity and reliability and ethical considerations.

#### **3.2 Research Approach**

Choosing the appropriate research design to investigate the issue is one of the most crucial steps in developing a study. Creswell (2018) distinguished between quantitative, qualitative, and hybrid research designs. When selecting a research design, it is crucial to consider the character of the research problem, the target population, the techniques of inquiry, and the specific methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Understanding the variables underlying a phenomenon is necessary for quantitatively evaluating objective theories (Creswell, 2018).

The qualitative approach with semi-structured, in-depth, one-on-one interviews is used as the primary research method that can provide insight and a comprehensive understanding of the investigated topic. This qualitative research is based on the constructivist philosophy of "understanding and reconstruction of the constructions that people (including the researcher) initially hold, aiming for consensus but remaining open to new interpretations as information and sophistication improve" (Lincoln and Guba, 2004). Qualitative research is used to obtain a more in-depth

understanding of a social setting and participants' behavior from their perspective (Ponelis, 2015). An in-depth and prolonged interview method provides access to the "mental world of an individual, to glimpse the categories and logic by which he or she sees the world; it also allows us to see the content and pattern of daily experience" (Ponelis, 2015).

Therefore, the qualitative method of grounded theory is most suitable for investigating the internal descriptions of the factors that influence fashion designers' creative decision-making. "The contemporary popularity of qualitative research is largely attributable to its adaptability and lack of methodological constraints" (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996).

### **3.3 Research design**

Before data are collected, a number of decisions must be made concerning how to gather of data (Nwana, 1981). Research design directs the researcher towards the solution of the research problem and may vary based on the nature of the problem being investigated. Consequently, it is an outline or plan that functions as a useful guide for the researcher as he attempts to collect data for his study.

This study's chosen research design is a case study of the factors that influence fashion designers' creative decision-making in Kumasi Metropolis. The case study is a research design that "examines a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-world context, particularly when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clear" (Yin 2009, p. 18). The case study comprises a single case, multiple cases, and embedded multiple cases. Multiple embedded case studies and semi-structured interviews are utilized for this study. In light of this, Denzin and Lincoln (2008) argue that redundancy and variety are crucial in multiple instances.

### **3.4 Description of research site**

This research is conducted in the Kumasi Metropolitan area in the Ashanti region of Ghana. The city covers 254 square kilometers and ten sub-metropolitan areas:

Manhyia, Tafo, Suame, Asokwa, Oforikrom, Asawase, Bantama, Kwadaso, Nhyiaeso, and Subin.

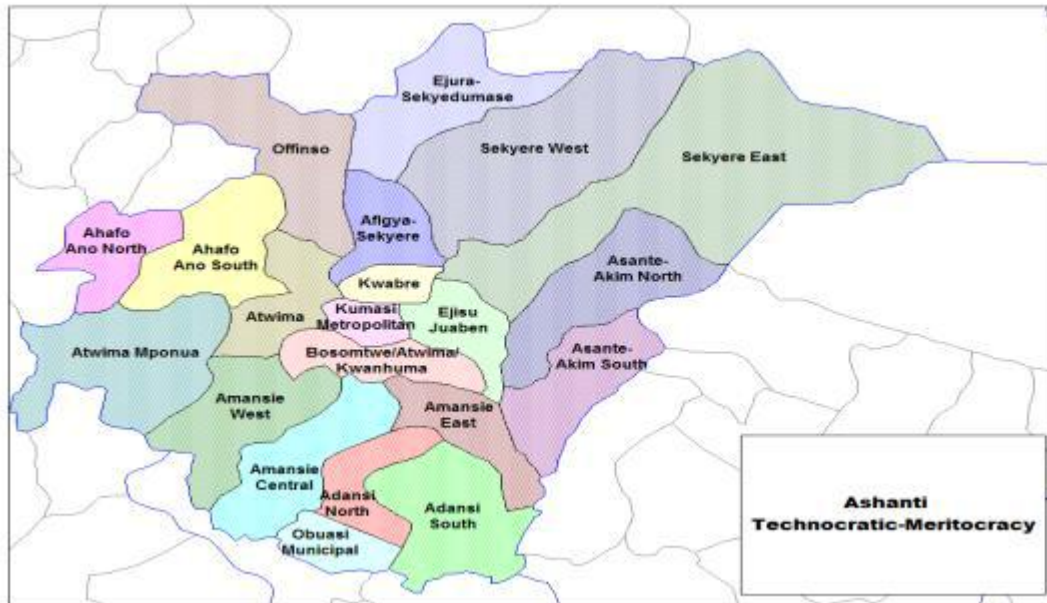


Figure 3. 1 Map of districts of Ashanti Region

Source:[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kumasi\\_Metropolitan\\_Assembly#/media/File:shanti\\_Districts.png](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kumasi_Metropolitan_Assembly#/media/File:shanti_Districts.png) (2023)

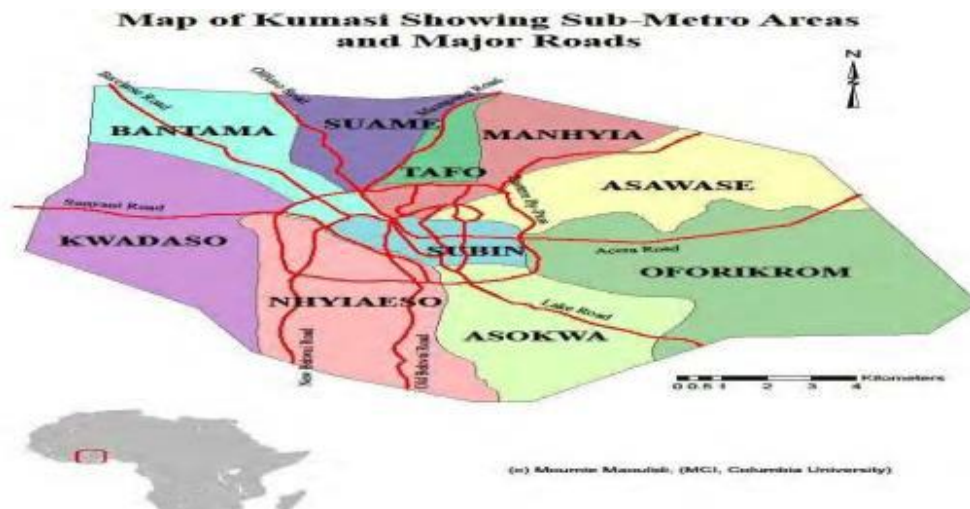


Figure 3. 2: Map of Kumasi Metropolis

Source:<http://mci.ei.columbia.edu/millennium-cities/kumasi-ghana/kumasi-maps-and-population-data/> Retrieved-12-March,2023

According to the 2021 Population and Housing Census, the population of the Metropolis is 443,981, with 213,662 males and 230,319 females. The majority of the region's urban population is due to the fact that the Kumasi metropolitan area is not only wholly urban, but also accounts for one-third of the region's population. The relatively high urban population may be partially attributable to the expansion of industries and the volume of commercial activity in and around Kumasi, in addition to the large number of migrants.

Independent fashion designers with offices in Adum, Amakom, Asafo, Asawase, Asokwa, Bantema, Krofrom, Oforikrom, Old Tafo, Santase, Kwadaso, and Suame are included in the study's population. As the majority of independent fashion designers are concentrated in these areas, they will be selected as a representative sample of the Kumasi metropolitan area's population.

hypotheses and measurement of the frequency of particular behaviors and attitudes. Qualitative research can facilitate a greater understanding of participants' complex interpretations of social situations and contexts. The interpretation of "less is more" suggests that it may be advantageous "to work longer with fewer people as opposed to more superficially with a larger number" (Creswell, 2018).

The objective of qualitative investigation is not generalizability. It is possible that the sample group selected does not represent the entire population.

Rather, qualitative research "provides a glimpse of the complex nature, organization, and logic of culture" (Creswell, 2018).

The crucial issue in selecting the sampling method for qualitative research is determined by the information sought. Simple random sampling was used to select three out of the ten districts which makes up the Kumasi Metropolitan area. In each of selected district, the snowball sampling was used to select respondents, beginning with contacts formed during the researchers' initial visit to the study areas.

Fashion designers were contacted and were requested to recommend others for the study. The inclusion criteria for the sample consists of fashion designers with at least three years of professional experience in apparel companies or, alternatively, who owned their own businesses. A time frame of at least three years work experience as a designer was chosen to guarantee sufficient design experience; it typically takes a number of years to become a professional and become capable of producing exceptional work (Feldman, 1999). The research selected responders up until adding more study participants produced no new information.

### 3.5.2 Sample size determination

There are no hard and fast principles for determining the sample size from a population for a study. There are two ways to solve the issue of sample size. The researcher can begin with assumptions and then determine the sample size using other statistical techniques. In addition, the researcher may utilize the "rule of thumb" technique (Neuman, 2007; Nwana, 1981). According to Kothari (2005), the sample size alone is insufficient to ensure the precision of an estimate. He urged researchers to evaluate the research population's characteristics and homogeneity factor. According to Sandelowski (1995), sample sizes for qualitative research should be both large enough to permit the development of "new and richly textured knowledge" about the topic being investigated and small enough to permit an in-depth, case-oriented investigation of the qualitative data. According to Green and Thorogood (2013), the vast majority of qualitative researchers who conduct an interview-based study on a fairly specific topic find that little new information is produced after interrogating 20 or so participants. This supports Morse's (2015) prior position, in

which she urges qualitative researchers to select fewer participants while considering homogeneity and representation (see Creswell, 2018).

This study's sample population, comprised of fashion designers, has comparable occupational characteristics. When a larger sample size is utilized in an investigation, it is impossible to understate the probability of receiving the same information multiple times. Typically, this leads to data inundation. Nwana (1981) states, however, that "if the population is a few hundred, a sample size of 40% or more will suffice; if the population is many hundreds, a sample size of 20% will suffice; if the population is a few thousand, a sample size of 10% will suffice; and if the population is several thousand, a sample size of 5% or less will suffice." Using the rule outlined in Nwana's (1981) argument, the researcher selects thirty-three individuals to function as study respondents in light of the preceding information.

### **3.6 Data Collection Methods**

Over the course of five (5) weeks, interviews and observations were conducted to collect data. Interviews have both advantages and disadvantages as a research method (Adler and Clark, 2014). To provide context for the designers' work and accomplishments, therefore, observations and information gathered from the designers' runway collections or brochures, magazines, videos, and reviews of interviews published in Ghanaian newspapers or magazines over the past decade were examined.

In-depth, lengthy interviews with designers revealed their thoughts and emotions, as well as their experiences and work patterns. The lengthy interview method also assisted in comprehending the "broader social and cultural context" (McCracken,

1988) of professional apparel designers and the factors that influence their creative design processes.

### **3.7 Data Collection**

The researcher will meet with a designer at his or her studio and workplace when the designer demonstrated a propensity to share information at his or her workstation. The interviews will last between one and two hours, depending on the respondent's speaking speed. Each interview will be digitally documented using an iPad and iPhone equipped with a voice recorder. At the outset of each interview, participants will be asked to verbally consent to participation. In addition, respondents will be requested to provide demographic and background information. The researcher will inquire about the designers' education and significant life experiences that led to their entry into the fashion industry. To establish rapport between the researcher and each participant is a motivation underlying the use of background inquiries. Once a level of trust has been established, participants might be more willing to disclose intimate or sensitive information (Adler and Clark, 2014).

Throughout the interview, the researcher will inquire about the design processes, creative processes, inspirations, and personal experiences of the participants. The researcher will request that each participant share their creative output, such as sketchbooks, fashion illustrations, in-progress designs, and their most successful designs. Because "creativity consists of mentally transforming their presentation by combining and synthesizing it into a new design," it is essential to examine sketches or photographs of designers' work in detail (Khoza and Workman, 2009).

### **3.8 Data Analysis**

Each interview will be manually transcribed after the recorded material is listened to multiple times. This means that the researcher will record all verbal interviews he conducted. The researcher will then organize the transcription in order to identify several themes pertinent to the research topic. Information unrelated to the research objective will be omitted.

On the basis of shared characteristics, the data will be organized into groups and sequences. The data will be entered into a computer and formatted in an understandable manner. Tables, plain text, frequency distributions, percentage distributions, and tables will be utilized throughout the data output and interpretation.

### **3.9 Validity and dependability of research instruments**

Validity refers to whether you are measuring what you claim to be measuring (Robert and Priest, 2006). Due to the research methodology, the significance of this emphasis on measurement is minimal. Similarly, reliability, which is concerned with whether a study can be replicated, is a difficult condition to satisfy in qualitative research because it is impossible to "freeze" the social context in which a study is conducted. (Becker and Bryman 2012). Denzin and Lincoln (2008) contend that the trustworthiness of a source is a significant factor in qualitative research evaluation. Credibility involves four criteria: transferability, dependability, conformity, and credibility.

First, credibility ensures that the research was conducted in accordance with the principles of sound research methods. This will be addressed in this research by

decisions, participant decisions, etc. The research procedure is described in detail throughout the various sections.

Conformity is concerned with ensuring that the researcher is as objective as feasible throughout the research procedure. Even though the epistemological and ontological positions of this research are predicated on the researcher's and participants' interpretations of reality, the conformability issue has been addressed.

### **3.10 Ethical Considerations**

This study appropriately highlighted a variety of ethical considerations, such as:

**Assuring Confidentiality:** The researcher will take precautions to preserve the anonymity and confidentiality of collected data.

**Academic honesty:** The researcher is aware of the protocols involved in obtaining information from an author, which requires citing the source, and that failure to do so constitutes academic dishonesty punishable by law.

**False information disclosure:** The study will refrain from disclosing false or unverifiable information.

## **CHAPTER FOUR RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the outcomes and analysis of the data obtained during the administration of the interview guide to the respondents. It details what occurred at each stage of the data collection procedure, as well as the data collected. In the study, graphs and tables were used to provide a quick visual impression and understanding of the qualitative data.

### **4.2 Background Characteristics of Respondents**

In this section, the demographic characteristics of the study's respondents are provided and examined. The section also provides helpful data that complements the findings and enables a more thorough study of policy.

#### **4.2.1 Respondents' Gender**

The study was structured to elicit information on the gender of the respondents. Figure 4.1 show the details.

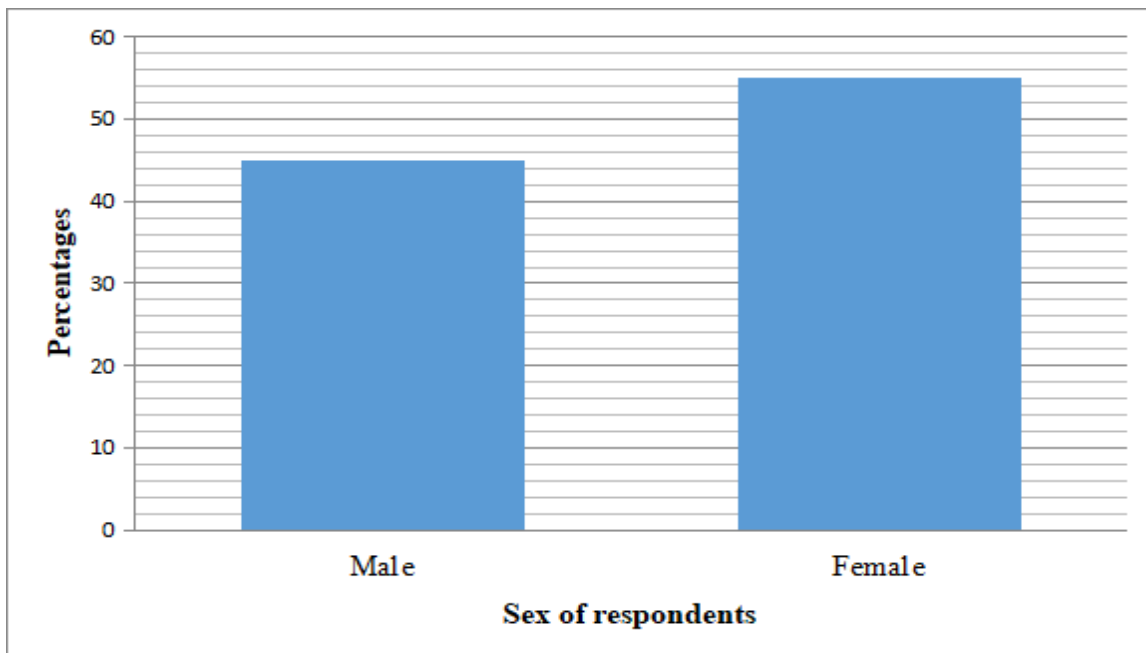


Figure 4. 1: Sex of Respondents

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

As depicted in figure 4.1, male respondents make up 45% of the overall research respondents, while female respondents make up 55%. It is apparent from figure 4.1 that the female respondents outweighs the male respondents by 10%. This is also an indication that, in the study area, more female respondents are into fashion design than the male respondents.

#### 4.2.2 Age of respondents

The research proceeded to identify the age status of the respondents. Figure 4.2 shows the results.

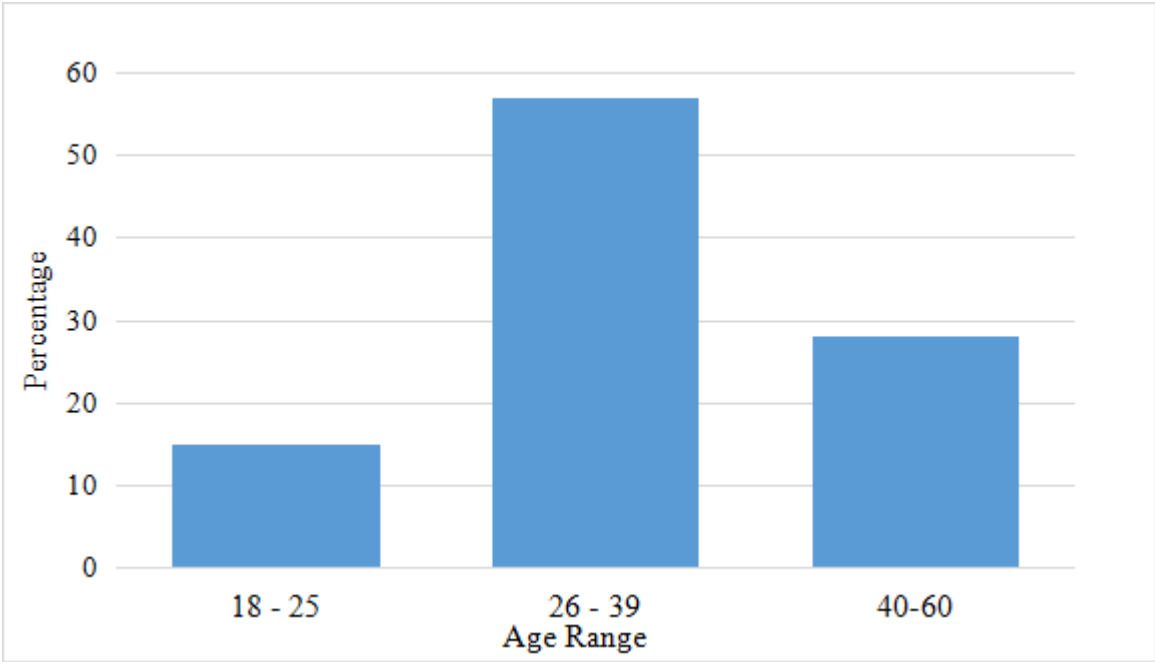


Figure 4. 2: Age of Respondents

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

The survey revealed that 15% of respondents were between the ages of 18 and 25, 57% were between the ages of 26 and 39, and 28% were between the ages of 40 and 60. It may be observed that 72 percent of responders are between the ages of 18 and 39. This could be due to the fact that individuals within this age range are fashion

conscious. It could also be due to the fact that fashion designers within this age group have very good working relationship with people in same age group and so they recommended them for the study instead of others they are not very familiar with.

#### **4.2.3 Educational Status of Respondents**

The study further sought to know the educational status of the respondents. Table 4.1 shows the detail.

Table 4. 1: Educational Level of Respondents

Highest Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
No Formal Education	2	6
Basic School	6	18
SHS, O' Level, Diploma	13	40
First Degree	9	27
Masters	3	9
<b>Total</b>	33	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

According to table 4.1, 6% of all respondents had no formal education, 18% had completed elementary school, 40% had attended secondary school, and 27% held a bachelor's degree. 9% of respondents also held a master's degree. It is evident from the statistics in table 4.1 that the vast majority of respondents have at least some formal education, which provides as a basis for learning basic arithmetic, reading about fashion trends, and interpreting fashion.

### 4.3: Objective one: Dimensions of fashion in the Kumasi Metropolis

#### 4.3.1 Perspectives on fashion

The study was interested in identifying the perspectives of the respondents on what constitute fashion. The respondents gave different perspectives to the concept of

fashion according to factors such as cultural background, personal taste, economic status, and social norms.

A section of respondents gave a cultural perspective to fashion. According to these respondents, fashion can be seen as a reflection of cultural identity and traditions. According to them, clothing styles, colors, and fabrics are often influenced by a particular culture, and fashion can be used to express one's cultural identity. Kumasi Metropolis is known for its use of vibrant colors, bold prints, and unique designs that celebrate the community's diverse cultural heritage. The respondents note that, fashion incorporate traditional fabrics and textiles into designs, such as kente, and fugu. These fabrics often have deep cultural and historical significance and can be used to create modern designs that celebrate cultural heritage. They further note that fashion designers have also incorporate traditional symbols and motifs into their designs, such as Adinkra symbols or Maasai beading patterns. These designs serve as a visual representation of cultural identity and heritage.

Again, another x% view fashion from the personal perspective. According to them, fashion can be viewed as a form of self-expression and personal style. They note that people often choose clothes that reflect their personality, interests, and values, and fashion can be a way to communicate these traits to others.

In addition, as per the responses, fashion can be conceptualized in economic terms. Thus fashion can be seen as a form of consumption and a marker of social status. To them people may choose clothes based on their economic status and the social class they want to project. Luxury brands and designer labels are often associated with wealth and status.

Again, fashion was viewed from historical point of view. To the respondents, fashion can be viewed as a reflection of historical trends and societal changes. Fashion has evolved over time, reflecting changes in technology, social norms, and cultural influences.

It became apparent from the responses that, the fashion design entrepreneurs in the Kumasi Metropolis knows the dynamics of the field of fashion and fashion design entrepreneurship.

#### 4.3.2 Classification of respondents according to the key dimensions of fashion?

The study was interested in categorizing the respondents according to the key dimensions of fashion. Figure 4.3 show the details.

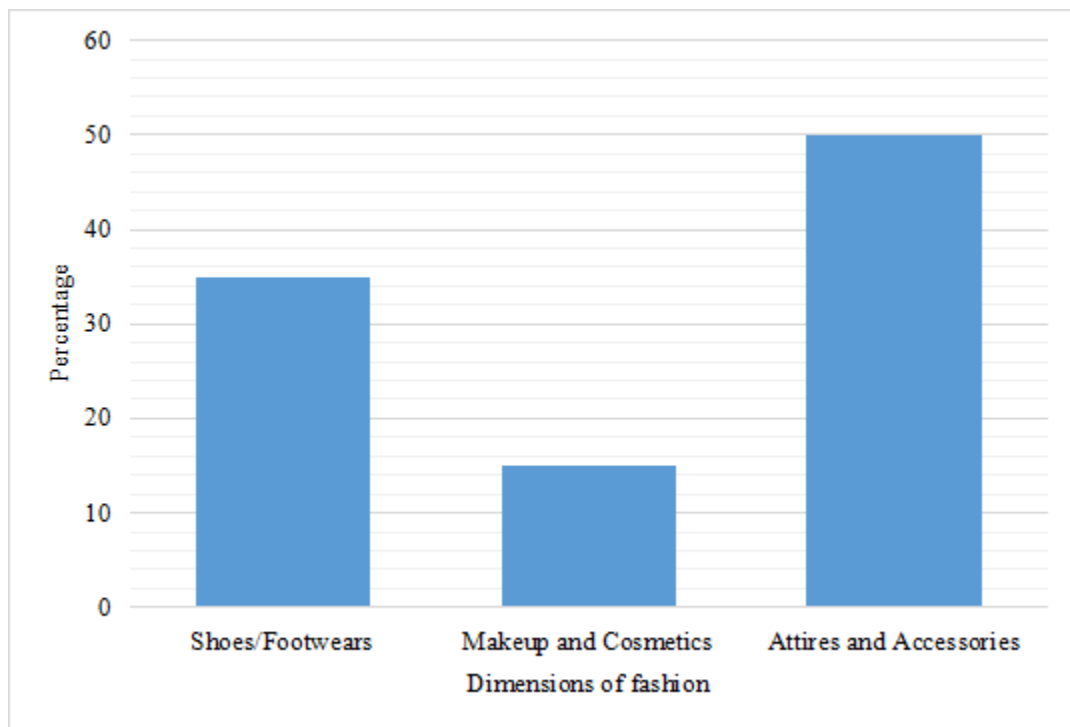


Figure 4. 3: Categorization of respondents in dimensions of fashion

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

The data in figure 4.3 shows that half of the respondents (50%) are into the design of attires and accessories. This means that, aside the design and production of attires, the respondents also produces other accessories including hosiery, mittens, headscarves, sunglasses, hats, belts, and jewelry. The respondents note that accessories plays important role in enhancing the beauty of the individual.

Again, 35% of the respondents produces shoes and footwear. The respondents note that shoes, also known as footwear, are fascinating articles of clothing that enable people to express themselves and reveal who they are and what they are capable of. It is further an indication of ones social status as well as the psychological pleasure of creating a good first impression.

Respondents who are into makeup and cosmetics constitute 15% of the total respondents. The respondents note that cosmetics are mostly purchase by women to complement their attire in order to achieve a flawless, alluring appearance and facial symmetry. The respondents further notes that when individuals most especially women wear makeup, they are more confident and have a greater propensity for positive expression. It was evidence from the responses that all the respondents have specialized in one of the dimensions of fashion.

#### 4.3.3 Respondents impression about their specialized dimension of fashion

The study was interested in finding out the impression of the respondents concerning the dimension of fashion which formed the basis of their specialization. The respondents were made to represent their impression with a single word. The results have been shown in figure 4.4.



Figure 4. 4: Word cloud showing the design impression of respondents

The data in figure 4.4 shows that all the respondents have impressions that shows that they are happy about what they do. It can be realized that respondents who are interested about their designs seems to be the majority followed by those who mentioned ‘amazing. This was followed by respondents who mentioned ‘okay’, followed by ‘great’. Overall, the result is evidence that, the people love their creative design process and none has regretted venturing into fashion design.

#### **4.4. Objective two: Design methods fashion designers use to make creative fashion design decisions**

##### **4.4.1 Origin of the knowledge for fashion design and entrepreneurship**

The study sought to find out the origin of the knowledge of fashion design and entrepreneurship. Figure 4.5 show the details.

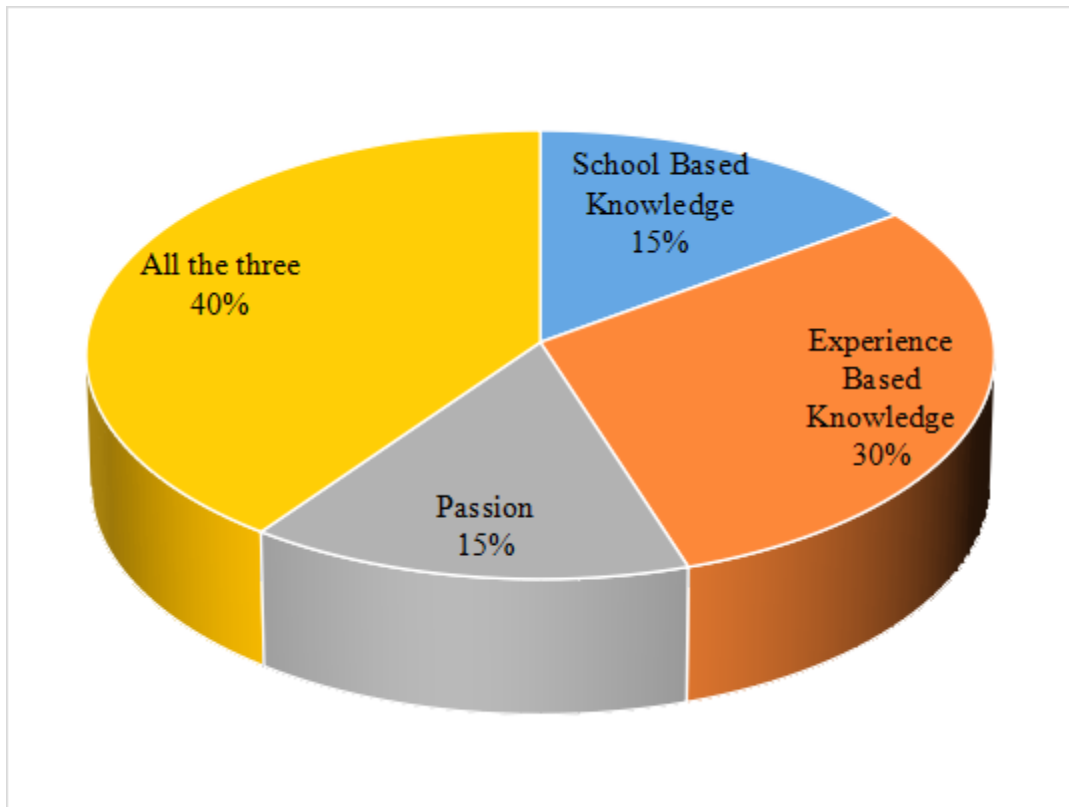


Figure 4. 5: Origin of the knowledge of fashion design and entrepreneurship

Source: Field Survey, 2023.4.

According to the data in figure 4.5, 30% of the respondents got the knowledge of fashion design and entrepreneurship from experience. Another 15% obtained their knowledge of fashion design from schools, while 15% got the knowledge from the passion they had for the industry. 40% of the respondents notes that they obtained the knowledge of fashion design and entrepreneurship from both school, passion and experience. The data in figure 4.5 there shows that, a significant majority of the respondents have taken time to cultivate the knowledge to become fashion design entrepreneurs.

#### 4.4.2 Fashion designers decision making process

The study sought to investigate how fashion designers become creative in fashion designs. The responses indicate that, fashion designers in the Kumasi Metropolis become creative in their designs through a combination of inspiration, skill, and knowledge of the industry.

65% of the respondents note that they become creative through the application of research. They note that they spend a lot of time researching trends, materials, colors, and techniques. They stay up-to-date on current and future trends in fashion, which helps them to create new designs that are fresh and relevant. One of the respondents note that:

*Now times are changing very fast, likewise fashion. So what we do is to always conduct research on the internet, read books, magazines and follow fashion bloggers. So if you are a fashion designer and so lazy to research, you will always lack behind the others...*

Again, 15% of the respondents become creative through collaboration. The respondents note that they (the designers) often collaborate with other artists, such as photographers, models, and stylists. They note that when they work with other creative professionals, it helps them generate new ideas and approaches to their work.

Again, 15% of the respondents become creative through experimentation. They note that they are not afraid to try new things. They experiment with fabrics, shapes, and colors to create unique designs. They may also incorporate unusual materials, such as recycled materials or unexpected fabrics, to add an interesting twist to their creations. In the words of one of the respondents;

*As for us, we just try things. Somethings things that are considered irrelevant. Sometimes colors, sachet rubbers and other recycled materials. Once we find that it is capable of filling a fashion gap or becoming fashionable, we adopt it and use it.*

Another respondent notes that:

*For me I experiment a lot. Through experimentation, I get my designs. I try several times; fixing a piece of material or color or something else several times until I become convinced that it is fine and okay to use.*

Other respondents note that they become creative through personal styles and inspirations. According to them, every designer has their own personal style, which they infuse into their designs. They draw on their own experiences and tastes to create designs that are unique to them. Also, the inspiration to create can come from anywhere, whether it's a piece of art, nature, or a cultural tradition. One of the respondents note that:

*We the fashion designers are always on the lookout for new sources of inspiration, which we can incorporate into our designs. Sometimes we make mistakes and these mistakes become new styles.*

It became apparent from the responses that, fashion designers entrepreneurs in the Kumasi Metropolis become creative in their designs through a combination of research, collaboration, experimentation, personal style, and inspiration.

#### **4.5 Factors that influences the creative fashion design decisions of fashion designers.**

##### **4.5.1 Aesthetic factors and design decisions of fashion designers**

The study sought to investigate how aesthetic factors influences design decisions of fashion designers. According to the respondents, aesthetic factors influences design decisions through myriad of ways including design inspiration and color selection. According to them, designers look for inspiration from various sources, such as nature, art, and architecture, which help them create unique and aesthetically pleasing designs. Again, color is one of the most critical aesthetic factors in fashion design. Designers use colors to evoke emotions, create moods, and enhance the overall aesthetic appeal of their designs. By emotions, colors can evoke specific emotions in people. For example, according to the respondents red is often

associated with passion and energy, while blue is associated with calmness, pure and tranquility, and green which signifies renewal or rebirth. Fashion designers use this knowledge to create designs that elicit specific emotions in the people who view or wear them. One of the attire/apparel designers notes that:

*As for me, I join colors for specific reasons. Colors has the power to create moods or atmospheres. For example, warm colors like red, orange, and yellow can create a sense of warmth and energy, while cool colors like blue and green can create a sense of calmness and relaxation. And so I look at the occasion and use the colors that will best fit the occasion.*

Another apparel designer stated that:

*Certain colors can have cultural significance in different parts of the world. For example, in some regions and tribes in Ghana, red is associated with blood, death, violence and mourning, while in other cultures, it is associated with passion. Fashion designers who are aware of these cultural associations can incorporate them into their designs to create designs that are culturally appropriate.*

Again, some of the respondents note that fabric selection is one of the aesthetic factors that influences creative decision making. According to them, the texture, weight, and drape of the fabric can greatly influence the overall aesthetic of a design. Designers carefully consider the aesthetic properties of different fabrics when choosing the right material for their designs. Designers experiment with different shapes and silhouettes to create unique and visually striking designs.

Furthermore, the respondents note that detailing and embellishments are essential aesthetic elements that can enhance the overall design of a garment. Designers use techniques like embroidery, beading, and applique to add depth and dimension to their designs.

#### 4.5.2 Historical factors and design decisions of fashion designers

The study sought to investigate how historical factors have influenced the decision-making process of fashion designers in the Kumasi Metropolis. Here are some ways historical factors can impact their design choices:

The respondents note that historical fashion styles and traditions are often deeply rooted in a particular cultural heritage or region. Fashion designers may draw inspiration from these traditions and incorporate them into their designs. For example, a designer may incorporate traditional colors of the Kente and Adinkra of the Akans into fashion design styling and collection. The respondents further note that they take inspiration from retro fashion styles which have made a comeback in recent years, from past decades such as the 1920s, 1950s, and 1970s. These historical styles often appeal to consumers looking for nostalgia or a connection to the past.

Again, the respondents note that historical and social events such as the civil rights movement or feminist movement have had a significant impact on fashion. Fashion designers may choose to incorporate symbols or messages related to these movements into their designs as a form of social commentary. The most notable are the party colors of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP). Other respondents also mentioned colors and symbols of religious movements.

It was apparent from the responses that historical factors can influence the decision-making process of fashion designers by providing a source of inspiration, informing cultural heritage, and impacting social and political movements.

#### 4.5.3 Cultural factors and design decisions of fashion designers

The study sought to investigate how socio-cultural factors can have a significant influence on the decision-making process of fashion designers. The study found that fashion designers in the study area are influenced by cultural traditions, such as the use of certain colors or fabrics in certain regions. They may incorporate these elements into their designs to appeal to the local market. For example, the study area falls within the Ashanti region whose favourite ethnic clothing is the kente cloth. According to the respondents, Kente is a communicative garment because every aspect of its aesthetic design is intended to communicate. Gold = status/calmness, yellow = fertility, green = rebirth/renewal, blue = pure spirit/harmony, red =

ardor/passion, and black = union with ancestors/spiritual consciousness. The designers often consider the modesty of a particular community or region to create designs that are more covered up.

Again, the respondents note that economic factors, such as income levels, can also influence the design process. For example, a designer may create affordable clothing for people on a lower income, or luxury clothing for those with a higher income.

furthermore, others note that environmental factors such as climate and geography, can also influence fashion design. For example, a designer may create clothing that is appropriate for a particular climate or region. One of the shoe/footwear designer respondents note that:

*Let us take for example, Kumasi is not as humid as the northern part of the country. Our climate is different and so it comes with different design. I will not design and send many white shoes to the north most especially during the dry season. Within the shortest time you will see that the color will change and it will spoil. Likewise in Kumasi, the people want high rising footwears compared to the north... and so we consider a lot of things before we design.*

Other respondents also mentioned the role of religious ideologies in influencing the decision-making process of fashion designers, as their beliefs and values may impact the designs they create and the choices they make regarding their work. They note that some religious ideologies emphasize modesty and require individuals to cover certain parts of their body. Fashion designers who follow these beliefs may choose to design clothing that covers the body more fully, such as long sleeves or skirts, and may avoid designs that are too revealing. These religious ideologies (according to the respondents) are often intertwined with cultural traditions, and fashion designers who follow these beliefs may be more sensitive to cultural appropriation issues. They may

choose to avoid designs that are inspired by cultural traditions that they do not belong to, or work closely with members of those communities to ensure that their designs are respectful and appropriate. One of the apparel designers noted that:

*Religious belief systems influences what we create and design. Most of the time it shapes our personal values and beliefs. These beliefs can impact everything from the type of designs we create to the people we choose to work with.*

Lastly, other designers says that gender norms influences their creative design. They note that in fashion designers may create gender-specific clothing or create designs that appeal to a particular gender.

#### 4.5.4 Size of community and its influence on design decisions of fashion designers

The study was interested in exploring the extent to which the size of a community can have a significant influence on the decision-making process of fashion designers. The responses indicate that in smaller communities, fashion designers may take into consideration the local culture, climate, and lifestyle when creating their designs. For example, a designer creating clothing for a small beach community may focus on creating pieces that are lightweight, breathable, and suitable for warm weather. In other larger communities, designers may have a broader target market and need to consider a wider range of styles and preferences. They may also need to stay on top of trends and constantly innovate to stand out in a crowded market.

The respondents further note that the size of a community can impact the resources available to a fashion designer. In smaller communities, designers may have limited access to fabrics, materials, and other resources, which can limit their creativity and

options. In contrast, designers in larger communities may have access to more resources, but also face greater competition and need to constantly innovate to stay ahead.

Overall, it became apparent from the responses that the size of a community can influence the decision-making process of fashion designers in a variety of ways, from the target market to available resources.

#### 4.5.5 Influence of Self-oriented, peer-oriented and commercialised creativity.

Tied to the above is the role of self-oriented creativity, peer-oriented creativity and commercialised creativity in influencing a designer's personal creative expression. The respondents note that in many cases, the designers may design for their own satisfaction and artistic expression. This type of creativity is often seen in high fashion designs. One of the apparel designers note that designers who prioritize self-oriented creativity may be less concerned with commercial viability and more focused on creating unique and innovative designs that push boundaries and make a statement.

Another aspect of creativity mentioned by the respondents was the peer-oriented creativity which was used to refer to a designer's desire to be recognized and accepted by their peers, the fashion industry, and consumers. They note that this type of creativity may be more focused on following trends and creating designs that will appeal to a wider audience. Designers who prioritize peer-oriented creativity may be more likely to focus on commercial viability and profitability.

The respondents note that many of them are commercially oriented. This means that they focus on creating designs that are not only innovative and appealing to consumers but also profitable for the fashion brand. This type of creativity is often seen in fast fashion or commercial fashion brands, where designs need to be mass-produced and sold quickly.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to contribute to the corpus of knowledge on creative decision making by examining the factors that influence the decision making strategies and processes of fashion designers in the Kumasi Metropolitan Area. There were three objectives. Objective one was to explore the dimension of fashion in the Kumasi Metropolis in the Ashanti region of Ghana. The second objective was to identify the design methods fashion designers use to make creative fashion design decisions. The third objective was to determine the factors that influence the creative fashion design decisions of fashion designers. Using both primary and secondary data, the research that led to the findings provided in the previous chapter was conducted. This chapter aims to summarize the research's findings, conclusion, and recommendations.

#### **5.2 Summary of the research findings**

The first objective was to explore the dimension of fashion in the Kumasi Metropolis in the Ashanti region of Ghana. The study found that fashion designs in the Kumasi Metropolis falls into three dimensions namely shoes/Footwear, makeup and cosmetics and apparels and accessories. The association of fashion designers in this study area to each of the three dimensions is influenced by their cultural background, personal taste and preference, and economic returns status. Fashion designers create shoes, or footwear as part of their overall design aesthetic and to provide consumers with a

complete fashion look. Shoes are an important component of fashion, as they not only serve a functional purpose but also contribute to the overall style and appearance of an outfit. Footwear design allows designers to experiment with a wide range of materials, colors, textures, and patterns, and to explore innovative design concepts. Shoes can be designed to complement or contrast with an outfit, to add a pop of color or texture, or to make a bold fashion statement. Furthermore, footwear is a highly competitive and lucrative market, with consumers willing to pay a premium for high-quality and stylish shoes. Therefore, fashion designers create footwear to cater to the demands of fashion-conscious consumers and to expand their brand's offerings.

Again, fashion designers in the study area create makeup and cosmetics to complement their clothing lines and enhance and emphasize certain features of a model or wearer, in order to create a specific aesthetic or mood. In addition, makeup and cosmetics are conceived as a profitable business for fashion designers. By creating their own makeup and cosmetics lines, they can expand their brand and reach a wider audience. It also allows them to offer a complete range of products to their customers, from clothing to accessories to beauty products.

Furthermore, fashion designers create apparels and accessories to express their creativity and vision while meeting the needs and desires of their clients and consumers. They aim to create pieces that are not only aesthetically pleasing but also functional and comfortable to wear. Additionally, fashion designers understand that clothing and accessories can be used as a means of self-expression, and they aim to create pieces that will resonate with their clients' personalities and lifestyles. In this way, fashion designers can have a significant impact on how people present themselves to the world and how they feel about themselves.

The second objective sought to investigate how fashion designers become creative in fashion designs. The study found that fashion designers in the Kumasi Metropolis become creative in their designs through a combination of inspiration, skill, and knowledge of the industry, which are acquired through research, collaboration, experimentation and personal styles and inspirations. It became apparent that a lot of efforts are exerted into the fashion design decision making process by spending time in researching trends, materials, colors, and techniques. Fashion designers also experiment with fabric, shapes, colors and incorporation of unusual materials such as recycled materials. The aim has been to stay up-to-date on current and future trends in fashion, and create designs that are fresh and relevant.

The third objective sought to investigate the factors that influence the creative fashion design decisions of fashion designers. The study found that creative fashion design decisions in the Kumasi Metropolis are influenced by a mix of aesthetic, historical, and socio-cultural factors. Fashion designers look for design decisions through myriad of sources such as nature, art, cultural heritage, belief systems, religious ideologies, color and architecture, which help them create unique and aesthetically pleasing designs. It was also found that the size of a community as well as the self-oriented creativity, peer-oriented creativity and commercialised creativity of fashion designers influences the decision making of fashion designers about their design.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

This study revealed that the fashion designer's creative design process is comparable to that of other creatives in many respects; however, certain aspects distinguish it

from other design disciplines and make it more complicated. Customer identity and market demands are the most crucial elements that fashion designers must consider throughout the design process. Literature demonstrates unequivocally that a better understanding of the intricate creative process is a potent and useful tool. This qualitative study sought to understand the factors that influence the creative fashion design decisions of fashion designers in order to obtain a deeper understanding of the creative design process and how designers in the fashion industry approach sustainability. There was evidence that, whether consciously or unconsciously, these creatives are cognizant of process and its relationship to enhancing the efficacy and success of their work, despite varying degrees of reflection among the designers interviewed for this case study. Each creative individual approaches design in a manner that differs from that of others; consequently, their approaches to ruminating on and modifying their own processes vary. The majority of fashion designers work as part of a team, and incorporating the practices of other designers into a shared solution can enhance the overall process. This process of inspection, reflection, comprehension, and change recommendations is a central objective of design researchers and an agent of positive change in the fashion industry.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the study makes the following recommendations:

Fashion designers in the Kumasi Metropolis should seek inspiration from a wide range of sources. Drawing inspiration from wide range of sources, including art, nature, architecture, cultures, and history can help them to create unique and innovative designs that stand out in a crowded market. When designers limit their

inspiration to just one source, they risk creating designs that are repetitive or too similar to what is already out there. By seeking inspiration from a wide range of sources, designers can bring in new ideas and perspectives that help to keep their designs fresh and original. In addition, seeking inspiration from various sources can also help designers to stay ahead of trends.

Again, fashion designers in the study area should collaborate with other creatives. Collaborating with other creatives such as photographers, artists, or musicians can help fashion designers to gain new perspectives and ideas. It can also help them to create a more cohesive and multidimensional brand. These can further help them to explore new fabrics, prints, and patterns to create designs that stand out.

Also, fashion designers should stay up-to-date with technology. Fashion designers can use technology to enhance their creative designs, for example, by using 3D printing, virtual reality, and augmented reality. These tools can help designers to visualize their designs and bring them to life in new and exciting ways. It can also push the boundaries of fashion design and create innovative, futuristic designs.

Furthermore, fashion designers need to take risks to stand out in a crowded market. They can experiment with unconventional designs, bold colors, and unique silhouettes. While not every design will be a hit, taking risks can lead to some of the most innovative and memorable designs.

## REFERENCES

- Acharya, A., Singh, S. K., Pereira, V., & Singh, P. (2018). Big data, knowledge co-creation and decision making in fashion industry. *International Journal of Information Management*, 42, 90-101.
- Adler, E. S., & Clark, R. (2014). *An invitation to social research: How it's done*. Cengage Learning.
- AlbogachievaIa, M. S. (2020). Hijab of modern Muslims: tradition or fashion?. *Minbar. Islamic Studies*, 13(3), 578-602.'
- Ambrose, L., & Machek, G. R. (2015). Identifying creatively gifted students: Necessity of a multi-method approach. *Contemporary School Psychology*, 19, 121-127.
- Asare, I. T. (2012). Critical success factors for the revival of the textile sector in Ghana. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 3(2).
- Asojo, A. (2007, October). Motivation and Design: Nurturing Creativity in Design Students. In *Southwest Regional Conference* (p. 29).
- Barnard, M. (2002). *Fashion as communication*. Psychology Press.
- Becker, S., and Bryman, A (Eds.). (2012). *Understanding research for social policy and social work: themes, methods and approaches*. policy press.
- Bush, G., & London, P. (1960). On the disappearance of knickers: Hypotheses for the functional analysis of the psychology of clothing. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 51(2), 359-366.
- Carter, M. (2003). JC Flügel and the nude future. *Fashion Theory*, 7(1), 79-101.
- Carter, Zoe (2012): "the duality of fashion: How industry norms impact market returns in the fashion industry".(Doctoral dissertation), Chancellor's Honors program projects. University of Tennessee Knoxville, [https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk\\_chanhonoproj/2412](https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_chanhonoproj/2412)
- Coffey, A., & Atkinson, P. (1996). *Making sense of qualitative data: Complementary research strategies*. Sage Publications, Inc.

- Creswell, J. W. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1997). *Creativity: Flow and the psychology of discovery and invention*. New York: Harper Perennial.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2009). Flow theory and research. *Handbook of positive psychology*, 195, 206.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2008). *Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research*.
- Drew, L., & Sinclair, R. (2015). Fashion and the fashion industry. In *Textiles and fashion* (pp. 635-647). Woodhead Publishing.
- Easey, M. (Ed.). (2009). *Fashion marketing*. John Wiley & Sons.
- England, L., Mosomi, O., Comunian, R., & Hracs, B. J. (2020). Fashion designers and education in Nairobi: Challenges and opportunities. *Higher Education and Policy for Creative Economies in Africa*, 44-59.
- Feldman, A. (1999). The role of conversation in collaborative action research. *Educational action research*, 7(1), 125-147.
- Fiore, A. M., Kimle, P. A., & Moreno, J. M. (1996). Aesthetics: A comparison of the state of the art outside and inside the field of textiles and clothing part one: Creator and creative process. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 14(1), 30-40.
- Fiore, A. M., Kimle, P.A., & Moreno, J. M. (1996). Aesthetics: A comparison of the state of the art outside and inside the field of textiles and clothing. Part One: Creator and creative process. *Clothing and Textile Research Journal*, 14(1), 30-40
- Florida, R. (2002). Bohemia and economic geography. *Journal of economic geography*, 2(1), 55-71.

Frings, G. S. (1991). *Instructor's Manual: Fashion, from Concept to Consumer*. Prentice Hall.

Gaimster, J. (2011) *Visual Research Methods in Fashion*. Berg, NY.

Goodman, L. A. (2017). Comment: On respondent-driven sampling and snowball sampling in hard-to-reach populations and snowball sampling not in hard-to-reach populations. *Sociological methodology*, 41(1), 347-353.

Han, S. L., Chan, P. Y., Venkatraman, P., Apeagyei, P., Cassidy, T., & Tyler, D. J. (2017). Standard vs. upcycled fashion design and production. *Fashion Practice*, 9(1), 69-94.

Hodges, N., & Karpova, E. (2010). Majoring in fashion: A theoretical framework for understanding the decision-making process. *International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology and Education*, 3(2), 67-76.

Hwang, J. (2013) "Fashion designers' decision-making process: The influence of cultural values and personal experience in the creative design process". *Graduate Theses and Dissertations*. 13638.<http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/etd/13638>.

Jan, M. T., & Abdullah, K. (2015). Fashion: Malaysian muslim women perspective. *European Scientific Journal*.

Jin B (2004) Apparel industry in East Asian newly industrialized countries: Competitive advantage, challenge and implications. *Journal Fashion Marketing and Management: An Inter J* 8: 230-244.

Joelle, R. M. (2016). Brand Loyalty in Cosmetic Products Among Women Perception: Brand "Wardah". In 2016 International Conference on Education.

Jones, S. J. (2005) *Fashion Design*. Laurence King Publishing. London.UK

Kawamura, Yuniya. "The Japanese revolution in Paris fashion." *Fashion theory* 8.2 (2004): 195-223.

- Khoza, L. S., & Workman, J. E. (2009). Effects of culture and training on perceptual learning style and spatial task performance in apparel design. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 27(1), 62-79.
- Kim, H. Y., & Ha, J. S. (2010). Korean fashion crossovers. *International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology and Education*, 3(1), 33-41.
- Knowles, L. A. (2014) *Practical Guide to Patternmaking for fashion Designers: Juniors, Misses and Women*. PDF eBook. Fairchild Books.
- Koda, H. (2017). *100 Shoes/the Costume Institute, The Metropolitan Museum of Art*. Yale University Press.
- Kozar, J. M., & Damhorst, M. L. (2018). Older women's responses to current fashion models. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*.
- Lam, Y. W., & Yee, R. W. (2014). Antecedents and consequences of fashion consciousness: An empirical study in Hong Kong. *Research Journal of Textile and Apparel*.
- Parker, C. J., & Wang, H. (2016). Examining hedonic and utilitarian motivations for m-commerce fashion retail app engagement. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*.
- Lamb, J. M., & Kallal, M. J. (1992). A conceptual framework for apparel design. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 10(2), 42-47.
- Lawson, T. (1997). *Economics and reality (Vol. 9)*. Psychology Press.
- Lewis, T. (2005). Creativity: A framework for the design/problem solving discourse in technology education. *Journal of Technology Education*, 17(1), 1-15

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (2004). The roots of fourth generation evaluation. *Evaluation roots: Tracing theorists' views and influences*, 1(1), 225-241.

Linda Melrose. (1989). *The creative personality and the creative process: A phenomenological perspective*. Rowman & Littlefield Pub Incorporated.

Lindquist, R. (2013) *On the Logic of Pattern Cutting – Foundational Cuts and Approximations of the Body*. University of Borås. Sweden.

Liu, Y. T. (2000). Creativity or novelty?. *Design Studies*, 21, 261-276.

McCracken, G. (1988). *The long interview* (Vol. 13). Sage.

Miller, K., (2001), *Standing Out from the Crowd*, In M. Damhorst, K. Miller & S. Michelman (eds), *The Meaning of Dress*, 3rd ed., New York: Fairchild Publications.

Minney, Safia. *Slow fashion: Aesthetics meets ethics*. *New internationalist*, 2016.

Norris-Reeves, S. R., Raeside-Elliott, F. J., & Hilton, K. H. (2012). Towards a collective understanding of fashion (design) practice: How the academic community can support practitioner discourse through reflection. *Work Based Learning e-Journal International*, 2(2).

Nurfadila, S., & Riyanto, S. (2020). Impact of Influencers in Consumer Decision-Making: The Fashion Industry. *Interdisciplinary journal on law, social sciences and humanities*, 1(2), 1-13.

Nwana, O. C. (1981). *Introduction to Educational Research*; Heineman Educational Books (Nig. Ltd.). Ibadan.

Parsons, J. L., & Campbell, J. R. (2004). Digital apparel design process: Placing a new technology into a framework for the creative design process. *Clothing and*

- Petersen, T. B., & Riisberg, V. (2017). Cultivating user-ship? Developing a circular system for the acquisition and use of baby clothing. *Fashion Practice*, 9(2), 214-234.
- Polit, D. F., & Beck, C. T. (2012). *Nursing research: Generating and assessing evidence for nursing practice*. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.
- Ponelis, S. R. (2015). Using interpretive qualitative case studies for exploratory research in doctoral studies: A case of information systems research in small and medium enterprises. *International Journal of Doctoral Studies*, 10, 535.
- Prempeh, C. (2022). "Hijab Is My Identity": Beyond the Politics of the Veil: The Appropriations of the Veil in an Inner-City Muslim Area of Accra (Ghana) since the 1980s. *Journal of Africana Religions*, 10(1), 20-46.
- Razzaghi M, Ramirez JrM, Zehner R (2009) Cultural patterns in product design ideas: Comparisons between Australian and Iranian student concepts. *Design Studies* 30: 438-461.
- Regan, C. L., Kincade, D. H., & Sheldon, G. (1997). Applicability of the engineering design process theory in the apparel design process. *Clothing and Textile Research Journal*, 16(1), 36-46.
- Rissanen, T. (2007). Types of fashion design and pattern making practices. Paper presented at the Design Inquiries/ Nordes Stockholm. Retrieved from <http://www.nordes.org/data/uploads/papers/122.pdf>
- Rissanen, T. (2007). Types of fashion design and patternmaking practice. *Nordes*, (2).
- Rissanen, T., & McQuillan, H. (2016). *Zero waste fashion design* (Vol. 57). Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Rissanen, T., McQuillan, H. (2015) *Zero Waste Fashion Design*. Fairchild Books.

- Roberts, P., & Priest, H. (2006). Reliability and validity in research. *Nursing standard*, 20(44), 41-46.
- Robinson, R. K., Franklin, G. M., & Hamilton, R. H. (2012). The hijab and the kufi: Employer rights to convey their business image versus employee rights to religious expression. *Southern Law Journal*, 22(1), 79.
- Rosihan, M., & Aris, A. (2022). The Influence of Cultural Values Towards Creativity Enhancement: The Case of Malaysian Fashion Designers. *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ART & DESIGN*, 6(1), 93-107.
- Sajja, S., Aggarwal, N., Mukherjee, S., Manglik, K., Dwivedi, S., & Raykar, V. (2021, January). Explainable ai based interventions for pre-season decision making in fashion retail. In *Proceedings of the 3rd ACM India Joint International Conference on Data Science & Management of Data (8th ACM IKDD CODS & 26th COMAD)* (pp. 281-289).
- Sarpong, G. D., Howard, E. K., & Osei-Ntiri, K. (2011). Globalization of the fashion industry and its effects on Ghanaian independent fashion designers. *Journal of science and technology (Ghana)*, 31(3), 97-106.
- Sartre, J. P. (1940). *L'imaginaire Psychologie Phénoménologique de L'Imagination*.
- Segal, E. (2019). *Designing Sustainable Designers* (Doctoral dissertation, Royal Roads University (Canada)).
- Shirazi, F. (2020). Hijab, Islamic fashion, and modest clothing: Hybrids of modernity and religious commodity. In *The Routledge Handbook of Islam and Gender* (pp. 407-422). Routledge.
- Sinha, P. (2002). Creativity in fashion. *Journal of Textiles and Apparel, Technology and Management*, 2(5), 1-16.

Skov, L., & Melchior, M. R. (2008). Research approaches to the study of dress and fashion. *Berg Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion*, 10.

Smith, S. S. (2013) *CAD for Fashion Design and Merchandising*. Fairchild Books.

Solomon, M. & Rabolt, N., (2009), *Consumer Behaviour in Fashion*, 2 nd edition,

Sternberg, R. J., & Lubart, T. I. (1999). The concept of creativity: Prospects and paradigms. In R. J. Sternberg (Ed.), *Handbook of creativity* (pp. 3-15). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Tarlo, E., & Moors, A. (Eds.). (2013). *Islamic fashion and anti-fashion: New perspectives from Europe and North America*. A&C Black.

Tarlo, E., & Moors, A. (Eds.). (2013). *Islamic fashion and anti-fashion: New perspectives from Europe and North America*. A&C Black.

Tate, L. S. (1999). *Inside Fashion Design Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication*.

*Textile Research Journal*, 22(1/2), 88-98. Zaman, Z. (2012) *New Fashion Designers' Sketchbooks*. A&C Black Visual.

Torrance, E. P. (1965). Scientific view of creativity and factors affecting its growth. *Creativity and Learning*, 94(3), 663-681.

Workman, J. E., & Lee, S. H. (2011). Materialism, fashion consumers and gender: A cross- cultural study. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 35(1), 50-57.

Yee, J. S. R. (2007). Connecting practice to research (and back to practice): Making the leap from design practice to design research. *Design Principles and Practice: An International Journal*, 1(1), 1-15.

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (Vol. 5). sage.



## Appendix A: Interview Guide

### AKENTEN APPIAH-MINKA UNIVERSITY OF SKILLS TRAINING ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT GRADUATE SCHOOL

#### Interview Guide

(Respondents to provide few socio-demographic information)

Section	A:	Background	Information
---------	----	------------	-------------

1. Gender: a. Male [ ] b. Female [ ]
2. Age [years]: .....
3. What is your highest educational qualification achieved?
  - a. Basic [ ] b. Secondary/Technical [ ] c. Diploma [ ] d. Bachelors [ ] e. Master's Degree [ ] f. None [ ] g. Other(s) [ ]

#### Section B: Dimensions of fashion in the Kumasi Metropolis

1. Would you share with me what you think constitute fashion?
2. What do you think are the key dimensions of fashion as far as fashion designing in the Kumasi Metropolis is concerned?
3. Which of the dimensions of fashion do you design, and what informs your choice of that dimension?

#### Section C: Design methods fashion designers use to make creative fashion design decisions

4. Does your knowledge for fashion design originate from your experience in fashion design or it is theory based?

5. How would you describe the theories you learnt in school and their correlation to your creative fashion decision making and fashion design in general?
6. Would you share with me the process that you used to come to your decisions?

**Factors that influences the creative fashion design decisions of fashion designers.**

7. In normal speaking, a person sometimes says, “my decision was triggered by...”  
Can you explain to me if there were any specific triggers that informed your decision process?
8. Would you describe how aesthetic factors such as color, patterns, shapes and visual weight influence your creative design process?
9. Would you share with me how the past (historical fashion) influences your creative decision about current fashion designs? In other words, how has the design works of the 1960s, 70s and 80s influence your decisions to create fashion?
10. Would you share with me how cultural realities, such as political and religious ideologies, as well as scientific, technological, and other innovations, influenced the manner and techniques of your design work?
11. How has gender influence your creative decision making?
12. How has the size of the community, your locality or your environment influences your creative abilities?
13. Would you share with me how self-oriented creativity, peer-oriented creativity and commercialised creativity influences your decision making about fashion design?
14. Would you share with me how your target market influences your decisions to create fashion?
15. Is there any question you will want to ask, or any contribution you will want to make?

Thank you !!!

