

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**WOMEN WITH BREAST CANCER:
AN EXPLORATION ON INTRINSIC
ELEMENTS OF CLOTHING TO
ENHANCE QUALITY OF LIFE**

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Thesis submitted in fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Art & Design)

Faculty of Art and Design

February 2021

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the results of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This thesis has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any degree or qualification.

I, hereby, acknowledge that I have been supplied with the Academic Rules and Regulations for Postgraduate, Universiti Teknologi MARA, regulating the conduct of my study and research.

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ABSTRACT

In contrast to disabled people, academic research has neglected breast cancer patient's needs for suitable intrinsic elements in garment selection. It is argued that this type of consumer deserves specific research attention. Most of the breast cancer patients face several issues after or during receiving a treatment; including physical changes, psychology concern, clothing concern and social concern.) These changes lead to stigma and negative quality of life. This research presents the results of an exploratory study designed to comprehensively explore the intrinsic elements reference in garment among breast cancer patients that can enhance the quality of life. FEA model and The Principle of Universal Design were used as guidance at various phase of the process. The qualitative case study employed multiple data collections and data analysis strategies. Self-administration survey was done as a preliminary study to get primary data (n=20). Spontaneous speech of ten informants (n=10) was audio/visual-recorded, and their body measurement, technical drawing and sketches were used as probes during the interview. The data was gathered to develop a robust and tangible clothing prototype and clothing guideline in brochure form. Wear-test Results revealed that breast cancer patients need clothing with specific intrinsic elements and indicated there were lacked of information on what to wear and how to choose the right clothing after or during receiving treatment. In conclusion, these breast cancer women had a hate-love relationship with clothes' fit and sizing especially with ready-made clothing. Generally, due to most females' breast structure, wider sleeve armhole is required on the women's clothing to reduce the tightness and pain sensation at the treatment area. The well-fitting clothes are needed to uplift self-confidence, camouflage the flaws and try to be as normal as they can. Thus, the ideas for future instructions for research in these areas are deliberated. Design recommendation was made to assist women with breast cancer. Although the prototypes and clothing guidelines in this study were successful, more initiatives could be done with intrinsic elements of clothing to make remarkable adaptive clothing for people with special needs

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Firstly, I wish to thank God for giving me the opportunity to embark on my PhD and for completing this long and challenging journey. My gratitude and thanks go to my beloved supervisor Assoc, Prof. Ts. Dr. Rosita Mohd Tajuddin and Dr Nur'Ain Yusof. Dear Assoc. Prof. Ts. Dr. Rosita, thank you for believing in me, thank you for your patience, guidance and your advice. Dr Nur'Ain Yusof thank you for helping me to explore this journey from a different perspective.

I owe a huge thank you to the strong women with extraordinary soul, those whose lives have been affected by breast cancer, thanks for letting me be part of this journey. To NCSM Melaka who provided the facilities and assistance during sampling. Special thanks to all my angle and colleague especially (ladies at the d future, you know who you are) thank you for always there for me, encouraging me and never left me behind.

Finally, this thesis is dedicated to my beloved and amazing husband, to all my huggable princess (Aleesha, Adynas, Amani, Ammara and Ayra) the vision and determination to educate me and always there for me also without fail cherish my journey. This piece of victory is dedicated to my wonderful parent and parent in law. Thank you for your pray and love.

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