



IDEALOGY

JOURNAL



IDEALOGY JOURNAL

Volume 7, Issue 1, 2022

Published: 1 April 2022

Published by:
©UiTM Press

e-ISSN 2550-214X

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PUBLICATION HISTORY

Published various field of arts and social sciences' studies since 2016 onwards.

PUBLICATION FREQUENCY

Biannual Frequency: Two (2) issues per year (April and September)

e-ISSN

2550-214X

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Muslimah Design Trends through the Role of Fashion Forecasting

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Received: 20 November 2021, Accepted: 25 March 2022, Published: 1 April 2022

ABSTRACT

Muslimah fashion design nowadays is a fashion trend that is the best alternative for Muslim women who want to cover their aurat with an attractive style. With a variety of options, Islamic clothing is not considered conservative or outdated. Therefore, the form of fashion design should be more contemporary and in accordance with Islamic characteristics and suitable for use by all nations. In this paper the researcher will look at the fashion forecasting process used in the production of Muslimah clothing. Fashion trends are an important element in determining the concept of clothing design. As a trend forecasting concept, several things have a significant impact on the fashion industry. The ability to forecast trends in fashion, technology, and culture is a critical area of the marketing industry dedicated to identifying patterns of consumer behavior while helping companies and brands connect with audiences. Fashion trends are styles of clothing and accessories that are popular at a particular time. It will affect the popularity and lifestyle for example through the use of colors and fabrics used. Fashion forecasters will do research somewhere to find out new trends and try to bring some new ideas about the brand. It requires scientific skills and creative concepts. Thus, fashion forecasting is a field in the fashion industry that is concerned with predicting upcoming fashion trends in terms of colors, design techniques, textile materials, and more that lead to consumer demand. Fashion forecasters produce trend reports that are used to develop a brand for the production of a product. In the process of making designs, designers need to pay attention to fashion predictions which in addition to having Islamic characteristics, the design can be comparable to international designs.

Keywords: Design, Fashion, Islamic, Muslimah, Trends.



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1. INTRODUCTION

There are many clothing designs for Muslim women available in the market today with various types of fabric, color and decoration, but if a design is produced through fashion forecasting, it will have more impact on a design that will be produced. However, before a design is produced, some Islamic characteristics as a Muslim woman must be applied. This paper aims to define the trends for the year 2020-2021 according to three main brands.

Covering aurat is compulsory for Muslim women to protect self-respect and to limit associations. Covering aurat is mainly focused on females as they are mostly associated with beauties which are allowed to be shown to their husbands or mahrams. Aurat is a principle in Islam especially to women

who have reached puberty. It is a demand from Allah that Muslims are guided in making choices for the greater good especially in covering aurat. As stated in the Qur'an:

"O children of Adam, We have bestowed upon you clothing to conceal your private parts and as adornment. But the clothing of righteousness - that is best. That is from the signs of Allah that perhaps they will remember."

(Al-A'raaf: 26)

While many designs and clothing intended to be worn by Muslimah are available widely in the market, it is still a rarity to find clothing that are aligned with the Islamic dress code in terms of materials, patterns and colours. "Every year fashion centres in Europe and America come up with the latest design. And what have they design? Another way of not covering the body". (Baig). Exposures on clothes that do not comply with Islamic rules will give negative impact on younger generations of Muslimahs. The use clothes do not cover aurat will result in forgetting the rules and guidelines of proper clothing.

1.1 Fashion Forecast

Fashion forecasting is a global career that focuses on upcoming clothing trends. Fashion forecasters usually predict the colors, fabrics, textures, materials, prints, graphics, beauty/grooming, accessories, shoes, street style and other styles that will be presented in the store for the coming season. To enhance the brand's image and maintain it as a pioneer, fashion needs to continue to innovate. Long-term forecasts (over 2 years ahead) are used by executives for corporate planning purposes. It is also used as a marketing strategy to ensure clothing brands remain competitive with each other. Fashion Forecast can help in the process of designing ideas for a brand based on the trends that have been made according to a particular season. Trend forecasters work in each industry, using data obtained from sales in the past to anticipate future opportunities as well. Fashion forecasting is a field in the fashion industry that is concerned with predicting upcoming fashion trends in terms of colors, styling techniques, fabric textures and more and will indirectly increase demand from consumers. According to Kathryn McKelvey in her book entitled Fashion Forecasting, fashion forecasting has emerged as an industry in line with mass production and retail development and became a serious industry after the end of the Second World War. Changes to the fashion industry over recent history have been reflected in the manner which prediction information is sourced, compiled and utilized. There has been a shift from the 1960s onwards in the dominance of single fashion trends to a more pluralistic approach, mirroring the expansion of mass communication and in turn the increasing sophistication of the consumer. This has created a gradually repositioning from a marketplace that was defined by both the designer levels influencing the middle and mass market, creating designs and trends that 'trickle down' to commercial high street and the converse effect of street styles and subcultures inspiring designers, to one which is focus on individual and fragmented into niche markets, where the consumer's aspiration is brand led and life style driven. During the post-war period, forecasting company compile stories and themes each season that were easier to predict, as the market moved at the slower pace. Prediction information was compiled into books that could deliver information was compiled into books that was both visual and tactile. Often there was an element of hand crafting in the production. Theme were also more predictable and often fell into evolving stories that reflected the slower moving trends of the time, for example, each season would see an update of classic stories, nautical, ethnic, purity, floral and geometric. Typical themes from this time reflected the simplistic of the market, for example 'Milkmaid', 'Poacher', 'Safari', 'Country Squire' and Folk Story'. Colors were more simply divided into neutrals, midtones and darks and bright and less market segmented than today. A random selection of modern theme titles reads 'Fresh Revelations', 'Allusions', 'Chameleon' and 'Filter'.

1.2 There are 5 Fashion Brand Prediction Trend Methods

The trend forecasting process is different for each brand. Women's clothing brands, for example, invest more in micro trend analysis than men's clothing brands because they release more collections

each year. Forecasts also depend on the size of the company and its target market, but there are several reliable ways to predict brand trends.

1.2.1 With internal trend forecaster:

Large fashion brands are often vertically integrated, meaning their trend predictions are done internally. This allows fashion forecasters to work directly with the product development team to create a new product.

1.2.2 With trend forecasting agencies:

Larger brands that are not vertically integrated often turn to the expertise of trend forecasting agencies, where they produce trend research reports for a fee.

1.2.3 By going to a fashion show:

Before the advent of the internet, trend forecasters did most of their research at fashion shows, where they recorded the most striking and compelling looks, and then brought that information from the catwalk to product developers of chain stores and fashion magazines like Vogue. This is called a “top-down” prediction, and it has to do with the way the fashion trend flows down from haute couture runways to street shops.

1.2.4 By looking at influencers:

Today, trend forecasters are also starting to look at influencers, street styles and blogs to get information on the latest trends. This is called “bottom-up” forecasting, and it involves close monitoring of the target market to predict demand for future trends.

1.2.5 By looking at other industries:

Fashion designers for small industries may stay away from trend forecasting altogether, instead creating mood boards based on art, film and nature to inspire their unique collections. Most trend forecasters rely on a combination of “top-down” and “bottom-up” predictions, as well as in-depth knowledge of the fashion process as well as their own intuition to make predictions about the future of fashion.

2. THEOREMS IN CONCEALING AURAT

According to Shofian Ahmad, in his book (*Aurat Kod Pakaian Islam*, 2004); Ulama’s agreed that concealing aurat is compulsory. These collective opinions are based on the Qur’an and Hadith. Among those foundations that are mentioned in Qur’an and hadiths are as follows:

“O children of Adam, take your adornment at every masjid, and eat and drink, but are not excessive. Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess.”
(Surah al-A’raf:7:31)

But Satan whispered evil thoughts to them, to manifest to them that was hidden from them of her body.
(Surah Al-A’raf:20)

O children of Adam, We have bestowed upon you clothing to conceal your private parts and as adornment. But the clothing of righteousness - that is best. That is from the signs of Allah that perhaps they will remember.
(Surah Al-A’raf:7:26)

And tell the believing women to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts and not expose their adornment except that which [necessarily] appears thereof and to wrap [a portion of] their headcovers over their chests and not expose their adornment except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, their women, that which their right hands possess, or those male attendants having no physical desire, or children who are not yet aware of the private aspects of women. And let them not stamp their feet to make known what they conceal of their adornment. And turn to Allah in repentance, all of you, O believers that you might succeed.

(Surah Al-Nuur: 24:31)

O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to bring down over themselves [part] of their outer garments. That is more suitable that they will be known and not be abused. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful.

(Surah Al-Ahzab 33:59)

All of the above hadith that mean the same thing Muslim women must cover their aurat and to dress according to the Islamic dress code. Attire that has excessive decorations is also discouraged for which the purpose of clothes is to conceal the aurat. Decorations are believed to be an attraction for the males. An excessive decoration also signifies excessive spending that is not encouraged in Islam. Nevertheless, clothes that are decorated with modesty are allowed as it is a female's nature to appreciate beauty. Islam allows us to beauty ourselves from sustenance that is given from Allah.

2.1 Factors That Should Be Include in Marketing of Islamic Clothes

2.1.1 Climate Friendly

Climate is a factor in designing clothes. Types of climates will affect the selection fabrics and other materials. In a country that is known for its tropical climate, fabrics made of cotton are appropriate to provide absorption.

2.1.2 Suitable with the Culture

Besides materials, the clothes must follow the culture of its surroundings. Therefore, it is important to synthesize the traditional Malay styles with the elements from the west.

2.1.3 Suitable Through Age

Age is considered another factor in designing clothes. The process of aging does affect the taste and fetishes, which in turn will affect their choosing on certain clothes or garments. Different age group are attracted to different styles of designs, motifs, patterns and colours.

2.1.4 Suitable With its Purpose

The designer must also consider the purpose of the clothing. Clothes serves various roles in our everyday life either it is intended to be casual or formal.

2.1.5 Cost

The clothes itself must be economical. Types of fabrics must be appropriate in terms of cost to enable it in becoming easier to purchase or obtained.

2.1.6 Design and Marketing

The aspects mentioned before is considered a mixture for beauty and morality. Beauty is a factor adored by the wearer, whereas morality is an element appreciated by Allah. As a result, the assimilation of beauty and morality in designs is considered ethical that increase its aesthetical values which is potential to attract various Muslim communities to appreciate and embrace the beauty of Islam. Previous research conducted among Muslim female students suggests that the perception towards the current trends in Islamic attire is high. While the perception towards clothes that follows the Islamic dress code is somewhat moderate. The perception towards the demands to follow the dress code is recorded high (Mohamad & M. Radzi).

3. THE USE OF FASHION PREDICTIONS IN CLOTHING DESIGN FOR THREE FASHION BRANDS IN MALAYSIA

The fashion forecast for the year 2020-2021 spring/summer is used as a guide in comparing the three brands for Muslim women's clothing design in Malaysia, namely Jovian Mandagie, Khoon Hooi and Fern Batik. The use of trend report from Anjoli Grover Vassi is used as a reference for fashion forecast spring summer 2020-2021.

3.1 Spring/summer 2020

It comes with a continuing appreciation for the craft and a new sense of minimalism that emerges through local design, which actually speaks to a purpose. Sustainability takes on new forms with plant-based fabrics, and an increase in ingredients from farm to table found in beauty and health. The vision of the virtual world becomes more ingrained in our daily lives and futuristic advances challenge our subconscious capacity, thus giving this season the nickname 'Futuristic'. Advances in technology give us a clearer picture of the beginning of time, as we continue to reveal the secrets and hidden treasures of the world. Designers like Axel Vervoordt reflect the aesthetics of our current trend elements combining ancient antiques and modern minimalism. Embracing the past, it can be seen that fun in the 1980s influenced the modern look which was all about amplified color, sensual movement and culture. Ancient elements and modern biotechnology, the most innovative materials balancing both the past and the present, also maintain sustainability as the end result. As a result, we see those raw fibers, plant-based dyes, are preferred. Vintage fabrication is enhanced with a simplified and innovative process, where customization takes a more luxurious approach. While cotton takes a sharper approach, snares take a more dynamic approach. This spring/summer 2020 vision is not only easily achievable but also rooted in reality. The strong contrast of this decade means luxury and opulence coexist in an exciting but also edgy place.

3.2 Spring/summer 2021

Switching from an offline physical format to a fully online digital format does not hinder the creativity of fashion designers. It gives them a much-needed impetus to rebel against new habits to emerge as winners and give an injection of hope that the world can stop, but the fashion world can't be stopped. Closing is a great time for high fashion designers and brands to stop and refocus on things that are actually needed in the future. In an effort to regain normalcy and welcome a new era full of possibilities, the runway is a direct testament to the current atmosphere surrounding our world. The old and come in with the new as we list the top fashion trends for silhouettes and details set to control the 2021 spring/summer season.

Table 3. Fashion Forecast for spring/summer 2020 (Source: Anjori Grover Vasesi, 2020)

Fashion Trends 2020	Colors	Details & Silhouette	Fabric
 <p>The visual content for 'Fashion Trends 2020' includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four models showcasing different fashion styles: a pink and yellow ensemble, a white and brown outfit, a colorful patterned dress, and a long-sleeved top with a colorful skirt. TREND STORY PALETTES: A vertical color palette with categories: KASBAH (blue, green, red), DEITY (black, white, blue), BAZAAR (orange, black, white), and EARTH INTRUDERS (purple, red, black). MATERIALS: Three fabric swatches: Faded Linen, Wrinkled Chiffon, and Cotton Openwork. PATTERN + GRAPHICS: Three pattern swatches: Antique Dyes, Woven Market, and Marbleized Camo. CORE MUST-HAVES: A collection of garment images including a Sweater Dress, a Crop Top, and a long-sleeved top. </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kasbah - Deity - Bazaar - Earth intruders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drapes - Utility pockets - Fringes - Cutouts - Embroidery - Patchwork - Tiered ruffles - Relaxed fixed silhouette 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Colour faded linen - Wrinkled chiffon - Cotton openwork - Gauze knit - Woven raffia - Softened canvas - Printed stretch jersey

Table 3.1 Fashion Forecast for spring/summer 2021 (Source: Anjori Grover Vasesi, 2021)

Fashion Trends 2021	Colors	Details & Silhouette	Fabric
 <p>Colour festival</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01-0475 TCX 02-7526 TCX 03-3419 TCX 04-8421 TCX 05-0210 TCX 06-8910 TCX 07-0746 TCX 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Red - Pink - Violet - Blue - Yellow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paper bag waists - Boyfriend jeans - Wide legs - Padded shoulders - Balloon sleeves - Buckles - Knots - Bows/ metallic hardware 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corduroy - Classic Tweeds - Lace - Organza - Shiny Leathers - Metallic shine - Colour merge tie & dye - Fleece - Herringbone pattern fabrics - Lusters
			
			
			
			

3.2 Collection of Three Fashion Brands in Malaysia for 2020 and 2021

Table 3.2 Fashion Collection for 2020 from Jovian Mandagie, Khoon Hooi and Fern Batik (Source: Natalie Khoo, 2020)

Brand	Collection	Details & Silhouette	Colour & Fabric
Jovian Mandagie		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Traditional Kurung and contemporary kurung modern with peplum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blue, skin tone, pink and purple - Lace, sateen silk, polyester, printed fabric
Khoon Hooi		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Traditional Kebaya cut and caftan with drape skirt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - White, gold, black, baby blue and yellow - Chiffon, cotton, sateen and printed fabric, lace applique, sequence fabric
Fern Batik		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modern dress, Traditional Kebaya and loose caftan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blue, brown, grey and white - Chiffon, sateen and Polyester and printed fabric

Table 3.3 Fashion Collection for 2021 from Jovian Mandagic, Mimpi Kita and Fern Batik (Source: Natalie Khoo, 2021)

Brand	Collection	Details & Silhouette	Colour & Fabric
Jovian Mandagic		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modern dress and kurung, embroidery, beadwork and embellishment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Royal shades of emerald green, magenta, terracotta red, navy blue and black - Lace, crepe
Khoon Hooi		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Traditional kebaya, embellishment of rhinestones, neckline and puff sleeves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Striking color - Printed fabric, brocade and lace
Fern Batik		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Caftan, baju kurung and kebaya - Jungle orchid design, soft ruffles, structured pleat, classic cut and exaggerated sleeves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - light yellow, peach, pink, purple, peach and orange - Batik, sateen silk and cotton

4. Analysis and Findings Related to the Use of Fashion Forecasting Elements in Three Clothing Brands in Malaysia

Based on the comparison made on three Muslim women's clothing brands in Malaysia, it is found that there is the use of fashion prediction for each design, for example, Jovian and Fern brands apply digitally printed elements in their designs and can also be seen Khoon Hooi using drape technique on his skirt design. Apart from that, the colors, silhouettes and details that are in the forecast for 2020 are also used in the design process of the three clothing brands. While for the design in 2021, it was found that Jovian, Khoon Hooi and Fern Batik used elements from fashion predictions, for example by applying design details such as silhouette and embellishment, ruffles, structure pleat, puff sleeve and exaggerated sleeves. Although the designers of these three clothing brands still maintain the traditional features of Malay women's clothing, they still apply the elements according to the latest trends found in the fashion forecast.

4.1 Selection of Clothing Design for Muslimah

According to Shofian Ahmad in his book entitled *Aurat Kod Pakaian Islam*, the wearing of covering the aurat can be realized through the art of fashion design and marketing. Islamic clothing fashion will be able to encourage the interest of all walks of life to wear it. This situation will indirectly change the minds of some individuals who say that clothes covering the genitals are outdated. However, every designer must really create the perfect dress according to the characteristics that have been outlined by Islam. Designers need to refrain from creating clothes that only cover the aurat with a headscarf but need to ensure that it has the characteristics of clothing that is suitable for Muslim women. Islamic clothing is a symbol of the identity of a Muslim and a Muslim woman. As a Muslim, one must be wise in choosing the appropriate clothes to wear as there are many clothing designs available in the market today.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

In the name of Allah, most gracious and merciful, with his permission, the paper has been completed. I would like to express my gratitude to my team work, for their corporation and for their patience to complete this research. I would also like to express appreciation to other friends for their views and guidance in this paper.

Finally, I would like to deliver my sincere gratitude especially to my beloved husband and family for their patience, encouragement and motivations during the period of my paper. Last but not least to all colleagues who have given their support and guidance in my paper process.

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