J. Kor. Soc. Cloth. Ind.
Vol. 3, No. 5, pp.444-454(2001)
<Transaction>

A Comparative Analysis of Grounded Design Theories of European and Japanese Fashion Designers

Joe S. Au, Gail Taylor and Edward W. Newton

Institute of Textiles and Clothing, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong

Abstract : The purpose of this paper was to identify and compare the underlying design theory of contemporary European and Japanese fashion designers by using the qualitative research method of grounded theory developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Glaser (1978). In this research, four fashion sites-Paris, Milan, London and Tokyo-were selected. The researcher stayed in each site for a period of two to three weeks for the purpose of data collection. A total of 60 fashion designers, educators, students and journalists were interviewed. 53 open-ended design questionnaires were returned by fashion designers and students. 19 on-site observations of fashion designers and educators were done. Grounded theories of fashion designers were synthesized from in-depth interviews, participant observations and questionnaire surveys of fashion designers, students and educators. The results of theory-building research suggested that there were significant differences between the grounded design theories of European and Japanese fashion designers due to their various cultural contexts.

Key words : design theory, fashion designer, grounded theory, qualitative research method

INTRODUCTION

The theory of fashion design includes all facets of the process undertaken in advance of perceiving, constructing and marketing apparel products. In order to understand and define fashion design theory in this setting, it is useful to gain insights into theories which have been formulated outside of the specialist field of fashion. A variety of factors have been found to influence designers during the creative process, and these must be understood in advance of proposing a design theory for the fashion industry. This study focused on four major objectives: 1) to examine literature on the subject of fashion theory and design theory across a range of disciplines; 2) to inductively identify the factors influencing European and Japanese fashion designers through the perceptions of fashion designers, educators and students; 3) to formulate frameworks of factors influencing European and Japanese fashion designers when creating new fashion and 4) to identify and compare the design theories of European and Japanese fashion designers by using the qualitative method of grounded theory developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Glaser (1978). A more thorough understanding of these topics has implications for fashion design education. Also, it provides insights into the process of creating apparel products of distinctive cultural background.

Corresponding author; Joe S. Au
Tel. 852-2766-6510, Fax. 852-2773-1432
E-mail: tcrschl@inet.polyu.edu.hk

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Fashion theories, the design process, and the design theory used in architecture and engineering design, as well as theories and practices relating to fashion design were reviewed before the commencement of field survey work.

It was found that most fashion theorists have concentrated on explaining how new fashions are introduced and promoted in the marketplace. Different fashion theories have been proposed which may be summarised in the form of four major fashion theories. They are the 'trickle-down theory' (Robinson, 1961; Simmel, 1957), 'the trickle-across theory' (Katz & Lazarfeld, 1955; King, 1963), 'the subcultural leadership theory' (Blumberg, 1974) and 'the collective selection theory' (Blumer, 1969). In other theories and studies that focus on how fashion designers are inspired during the design process, it seems possible to identify to five general influential factors. These are referred to as 'the historical factor' (Frings, 1991; Sproles, 1985; Tate, 1999), 'the aesthetic factor' (Frings, 1991; Sproles, 1985; Tate, 1999), 'the cultural factor' (Berlo, 1991; Hamilton, 1987; Roach, 1989), 'the psychological factor' (Amabile, 1983; Davis, 1975; Hirschman, 1983) and 'the marketing factor' (Diamond & Diamond, 1997; Kefgen & Touchie-Specht, 1976; Tate, 1999). The theories outlined above seem to lack a full appreciation

of the design process through which a solid design theory in fashion design may be formulated, or indeed how the influential factors come about in the first place.

Three major apparel design models (Lamb & Kallel, 1992; Regan, Kincade & Shelden, 1998; Watkins, 1988) based on the theory of architecture and engineering design are summarised in the following. Watkins' (1988) design process model and Lamb & Kallal's (1992) 'functional-expressive-aesthetic' model refer to architect Koberg and graphic designer Badnell (1973) for the elementary steps involved in the design process. Regan, Kincade & Shelden's (1998) design process model is based on Lewis & Samuel's (1989) engineering design process theory. In order to develop a specific design theory in fashion, it is advantageous to adopt the well-established design theory for architecture and engineering design.

A major theoretical position has been posited regarding the design theory for architecture and engineering design. Wertheimer (1959) viewed problem solving as reorganising the structural relationships of a problem. By understanding the problem in the first stage and by subsequently applying the method of synthesising or conceptualising, a successful solution can be found. Lloyd & Scott (1994) considered design as a process of generation-deduction-evaluation. Goel & Pirolli (1992) suggested that different design professions followed the same sequence of procedures to solve design problems.

Also, in this theory, it is assumed that design is generally defined as a process of problem solving (Archer, 1984; Darke, 1979; Jones, 1984; Thomas & Carroll, 1979). The theory is based on the concept of analysis-synthesis-evaluation. Logic and imagination need to be considered separately by external rather than internal means. The end result of evaluation was a statement of the problem instead of a final answer (Archer, 1984).

The model of design theory adopted from architecture and engineering contributed to the focus of this research project. Further investigation in the areas of definition of fashion, design constraints, definition of good design, major influential factor, gathering ideas, synthesizing ideas and design evaluation broadened the scope of the proposed design theory for fashion.

PROCEDURE

The qualitative research method was selected as the most suitable for investigating inside descriptions of design theory used by design creators. "Qualitative research is a way of observing, interpreting and analysing an everyday experience in an attempt at understanding participants ideas and beliefs about it. As a direct explanation, qualitative research is concerned with describing specific instances from many viewpoints and with discovering several variables in the process" (Stokrocki, 1991). Descriptive study using a qualitative approach facilitated the understanding of the phenomena of creating new fashion and developed constructs for grounded design theory of fashion designers. Using different data sources and data collection methods ensured the validity and reliability of the data, thereby increasing the probability of credible findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

This study employed the inductive approach in the development of grounded theory. Glaser and Strauss contended that "grounded theory, if it has truly been generated from the situation and is grounded in the data, gives the practitioner a conceptual tool with which to guide practice" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

The researcher compared and contrasted the findings from different sources of samples and sites. These processes assisted the researcher when looking for patterns, themes, relationships, similarities and differences that might be present in the data. Grounded theory methodology was used to generate a substantive theory (Glaser, 1992), explaining the factors influencing the European and Japanese fashion designers when creating new fashion.

Sample and data collection

In order to gain an in-depth understanding of the different influential factors that contribute different types of design theories, four sites were selected according to their nationalities. These comprised the French fashion site, the Italian site, the British fashion site and the Japanese fashion site. The researcher stayed in each site for two to three weeks for the purpose of data collection. The data collection method included in-depth interviews, questionnaire surveys and participant observations, and the design of the methodology was underpinned by the secondary data, inclusive of definitions of fashion, design constraints, design process, etc. Within each site, fashion designers, students and educators were selected.

Due to the fact that the selected fashion designers, students and educators had already established highly reputable profiles in the fashion industry, their design theories were considered to represent the general characteristics of the fashion theories of those sites.

Samplings of fashion designers and educators were purposive, according to their availability for an interview. Fashion students were randomly sampled within each institution. Preference was given to students who studied in the higher degree course in fashion design or studied in the final year of the undergraduate course. All the subjects who were interviewed and observed were contacted by mail or email, and agreed to participate voluntarily in this study.

In-depth interviews involved fashion designers, students and educators. The use of in-depth interviews helped the researcher to "gain an in-depth understanding of a person's opinions and experiences" (Morgan, 1997). Semi-structured interview guides for fashion designers, students and educators were developed. Questions focused on perception in fashion, definition of good design, design constraints, aesthetic preference and the design process. During the structured interviews, a tape recorder was used to record the conversations between interviewer and interviewee. A translator was present when there were difficulties in communications. Each interview typically lasted one to two hours. A total of 7 fashion designers (e.g. Agnes b in Paris), 13 educators (e.g. Professor Wendy Dagworthy from the Royal College of Art in London) and 40 students were interviewed (e.g. students from Bunka Fashion College in Tokyo).

The use of a questionnaire survey served as an alternative method of data collection. By sending two types of open-ended design questionnaires to selected fashion designers and students respectively, a broader picture about the topics could be gained. Fetterman & Pitman (1986) stated that: "questionnaires are an excellent way to tackle questions dealing with representatives" and the researcher "usually developed questionnaires to explore a specific concern after they have a grasp of how the larger pieces of the puzzle fit together".

The contents of these two questionnaires were similar to the interview guides used with the fashion designers and students. In order to minimise any misunderstanding of the questions that were posed in English, an additional questionnaire in the relevant language with the same content was supplied. 53 out of 120 open-ended design questionnaires were returned by 14 fashion designers and 39 students. The average retrieval ratio was 44.2%.

According to the researcher's experience and knowledge of the topic, the use of observation techniques in different sites allowed the researcher to describe events and gain a more in-depth understanding about the topics. Two observation checklists were developed for the purposes of on-site observation. The first checklist was used with the fashion designers and their design activities in their studios were recorded. The second checklist was used with the fashion educators during the normal lectures. The interactions between the educator and the students were investigated. The environment, facilities and learning method were observed. 19 on-site observations of fashion designers and educators were done.

Data analysis

A four-step procedure was used to analyse the data collected from interviews, observations and questionnaire surveys in each site. The four steps included data sorting, open coding, constant comparative analysis and theoretical coding.

Data collected from interviews, surveys and observations were transcribed into a word processing programme to provide a basis for data analysis. Data sorting included repeated readings of the transcribed data to better understand the context of each response and to record the uniformity of the responses. In order to achieve a better understanding of the words, the researcher also listened to the tone of the voices and reactions of the respondents on the original cassette tapes. Also, by considering the context and uniformity of the responses, the researcher interpreted the respondents' words by paying closer attention to the concrete responses.

Coding started with the identification of first level abstractions for the data collected from interviews, observations and surveys. The researcher used the word coding to describe what was happening in a particular fragment of data. Each discreet abstraction was given a code name. Based on this process, a coding guide was developed and was used for the rest of the collected data.

All resultant abstractions were constantly compared to previous codes, as some codes were refined to describe the data more precisely. Some codes were combined into larger categories. The comparative process was continued until all of the codes and categories were mutually exclusive and covered all variations. Developing abstract ideas from concrete data gradually reduced the data to higher order concepts. The result of constant comparative analysis was presented in a meta-matrix of fashion designers, educators and students. A sample of the meta-matrix of British fashion designers, educators and students is shown in Table 1.

The different categories were integrated into a framework through theoretical coding. The "causal-consequence model" (Glaser, 1978) was adopted to formulate the theoretical framework. The theoretical framework described the context and conditions under which it occurred, and explained the events and the experiences of those engaged in these events. The framework of factors influencing fashion designers when creating new fashion was formulated. A sample of the framework of factors influencing British fashion designers is presented in Fig. 1. Finally, constructs for a grounded theory of fashion designers were developed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The interpretations and comparisons of the French, Italian, British and Japanese fashion sites are presented in nine different sections. The nine sections were: 1) defi-

Table 1. Meta-matrix of British fashion designers, educators and students

First-order category	Evidence	Second-order category	Third-order category
Definition of design	"Something that changes and reflects people lifestyle."	Reflect social life	Social attitude
	"A designer has to understand what messages people want to say about our time and society."	Convey social message	
	"Fashion is much more dealing with material culture."	Culture	
	"Clothes for daily life."	Daily clothes	
	"To give people options to express their views."	People's opinions	Psychological satisfaction
	"Reflects what people like or dislike."	People's desires	
	"Designers should be honest about their designs."	Be faithful	
	"Stylish product with attractive appearance."	Aesthetic appearance	Aesthetic presence
	"A designer's job in fashion is to provide a visual manifestation for people."	People's appearance	
Design constraint	"Need to know who they are, as a person; who they are, as a designer, in relation to the fashion industry."	Personal belief	Psychological satisfaction
	"You are totally committed to what you design and it is part of you."	Be faithful	
	"Is a certain degree of individuality and originality?"	Aesthetic sense	Aesthetic presence
	"To create something that is new and fresh."	Be original	
Definition of good design	"It is about using the right fabric, right material, right sort of process and right cut."	Use of design principles	Aesthetic presence
	"I suppose it can solve the problem according to your own aesthetic way."	Own aesthetic standard	Aesthetic presence
	"A good design at the end is an innovation."	Innovative product	
Definition of good design	"It must show the aesthetic appearance of the wearer, but the fitting of the garment is also important."	Aesthetic appearance	
	"You should basically make somebody look better and it is more important that the wearer feels better when he or she puts the garment on."	People's satisfaction	Psychological satisfaction
	"It has to answer people's hopes and needs."	People's desires	
	"Again, it is the message. What is the message you want to get over about society?"	Message of society	Social attitude
Aesthetic preference	"It brings out the beauty of the wearer."	Aesthetic appearance	Aesthetic presence
	"If the wearer feels good and it makes them happy. Then, the design has done its job."	Psychological	Psychological satisfaction
	"It must reflect the feeling of the time, what is happening in the politics, society and everything."	Social events	Social attitude
	"It is about how people choose it and wear it. I may find Calvin Klein boring. As long as people buy it, that is fine. That is how aesthetic works. It is all about society."	Social standards	
Design process			
Major influential factor	"Fulfil peoples wants and needs."	People's satisfaction	Psychological satisfaction
	"They are my personal interests and mood at that moment."	Personal feelings	
	"My desire and exploration in fashion inspire me."	Personal desires	
	"Touch, sensation and personal indulgence inspire me a lot."	Emotional	
Gathering ideas	"See more and learn more from daily life."	Social life	Social attitude
	"Things that happened in our daily life inspire me."	Social events	
Gathering ideas	"According to my own feeling."	Emotional	Psychological satisfaction
	"To indulge myself in archives and old photographs."	Archives	Historical revival
	"Go to the museum for inspiration."	Museum	
	"Look at historical costumes from different time periods."	Costumes	
	"Inspired by different historical periods."	Historical references	

Table 1. Continued

First-order category	Evidence	Second-order category	Third-order category
Synthesizing ideas	"Get feeling and by being brave when analysing."	Emotional	Psychological satisfaction
	"I extract the essential ingredients from those formations and compare to my particular design idea."	Personal design style	
	"It is something that is very personal - almost chemical."	Personal feelings	
Design evaluation	"In terms of personal development, are they true to their beliefs?	Be faithful	Psychological satisfaction
	"Just make me feel good about it."	Personal satisfaction	
	"Mainly according to my particular character."	Personal belief	
	"Must be innovative with good quality."	Aesthetic sense	Aesthetic presence

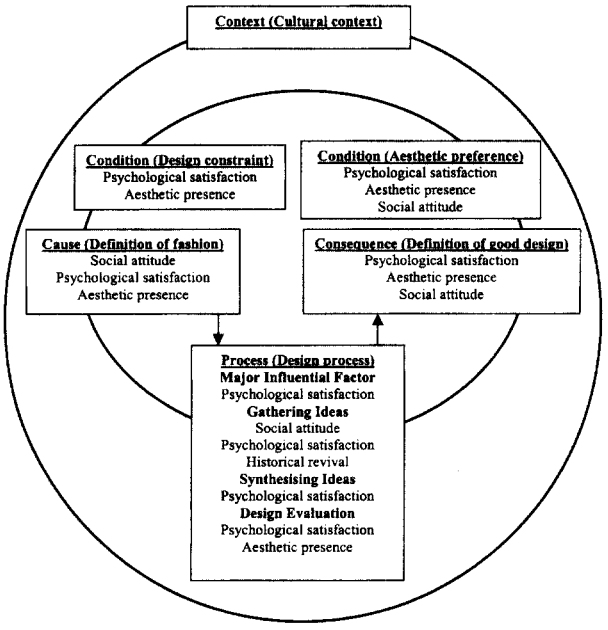

Fig. 1. Framework of factors influencing British fashion designers.

nition of fashion, 2) definition of good design, 3) design constraint, 4) aesthetic preference, 5) major influential factor, 6) gathering ideas, 7) synthesising ideas, 8) design evaluation, and 9) grounded design theory of fashion designers. The comparative meta-matrix, which identified the major constructs influencing French, Italian, British and Japanese fashion designers when creating new fashion, is presented in Table 2.

Definition of fashion

The constructs 'aesthetic appearance', 'social attitude' and 'psychological satisfaction' were all identified as fundamental to the definition of fashion by the French, Italian, British and Japanese fashion designers. They defined fashion as a medium to express the artistic ideas in the form of clothes and present the aesthetic beauty of the wearers. The design concept should exhibit people's attitude and thinking about society in a given period of time. People were able to reflect their lifestyles through fashion. The fashion designers expressed their personal beliefs in new creations and gave people options to select different styles of fashion to express their mood and personality. A fashion product was originated for the purpose

Table 2. The comparative meta-matrix identifying the major constructs influencing French, Italian, British and Japanese fashion designers

Construct/Fashion site	French				Italian				British				Japanese			
Definition of fashion	AP	PS	SA		AP	PS	SA		AP	PS	SA		AP	PS	SA	
Definition of good design																
Design constraint																
Aesthetic preference			SA				SA				SA				SA	
Major influential factor																
Gathering ideas				HR				HR			SA	HR				HR
Synthesising ideas		PS				PS										
Design evaluation	AP						SA		AP							HR

Note: AP (Aesthetic presence)
PS (Psychological satisfaction)
SA (Social attitude)
HR (Historical revival)
■ (No construct was found.)

of fulfilling the wants and needs of both designers and wearers.

Definition of good design

The constructs 'psychological satisfaction' and 'aesthetic presence' were identified as the definition of design by the French and Italian fashion designers. A good design in fashion should able to satisfy wearers' desires and fulfil their needs without contradicting the belief of the designer. It demonstrates and enhances the wearer's personality. At the same time it reflects the designers own personality and unique design style. The fashion designers should able to present the aesthetic beauty of the wearer's with an original concept. The practicability is as important as the originality of the garment. But, the British and Japanese fashion designers defined the nature of good design by one more construct over and above that of French and Italian fashion designers, namely, 'social attitude'. They suggested that the new creation should able to convey messages about society and fit people's lifestyles.

Design constraint

The French, Italian, British and Japanese fashion designers considered the constructs 'psychological satisfaction' and 'aesthetic presence' as the major design constraints that they had to face when creating new fashion. The fashion designers needed to remain faithful to their own design styles and personal beliefs. The designers belief must be presented through its creation and people's wants and needs must be fulfilled when creating new fashion. The newness and originality of the new design therefore needed thorough consideration. The aesthetic beauty of the garments should be displayed through the harmonious use of design elements. A perfect balance of creativity and practicability was notable.

Aesthetic preference

Three common constructs 'psychological satisfaction', 'social attitude' and 'aesthetic presence' were identified from the category 'aesthetic preference' for the French, Italian, British and Japanese fashion designers. An aesthetic creation was able to reflect the current social status of the era and match people's lifestyles. The designers needed to bring out the personalities of the wearers and touch their feelings. The essence of aesthetic appeal was suitability. The beliefs of the designers should be portrayed through the creations. Harmony of aesthetic elements and perfection in every detail should be presented and the visual effect and comfort should be pleasing.

Major influential factor

The major factors influencing French, Italian and Japanese fashion designers were 'social attitude', 'psychological satisfaction' and 'aesthetic presence'. There was only one major factor-'psychological satisfaction'-influencing the British designers. The British designers concentrated on their own desires and interests in fashion. But, at the same time, they also considered wearers' wants and needs.

Gathering ideas

The French, Italian, British and Japanese fashion designers were all guided by two common constructs social attitude and historical revival in the stage of gathering new ideas. They generally gathered ideas for inspiration by observing peoples lifestyle and historical materials from different periods. The construct aesthetic presence was another influential factor that the French, Italian and Japanese fashion designers considered. They frequently reviewed fine art materials from various art movements. The British and Japanese fashion designers deliberated upon another common construct, that being 'psychological satisfaction'. They collected information according to the pre-set theme of the collection and their own interests.

Synthesising ideas

The French, Italian, British and Japanese fashion designers synthesised the collected ideas according to one common construct, namely 'psychological satisfaction'. They synthesised the collected ideas according to their own beliefs and distinctive design styles. 'Aesthetic presence' was another construct that led the Italian and Japanese fashion designers to synthesise the collected ideas. The Italian and Japanese fashion designers were aware of the aesthetic harmony of every design element and the new creations must present the aesthetic beauty of the wearers. The Japanese fashion designers considered one more construct-'social attitude'-in the stage of synthesising ideas. They also considered the lifestyles of people wearing their designs.

Design evaluation

The French, Italian, British and Japanese fashion designers considered two common constructs-'psychological satisfaction' and 'aesthetic presence'-in the stage of conducting design evaluation. They evaluated the new creations in the light of their personal beliefs and distinctive design styles. The new designs needed be practical and innovative with good workmanship so as to present the aesthetic beauty of the wearers without losing the functionality. Another common construct, that being 'social attitude' guided the Italian and Japanese fashion designer's to evaluate new designs. The ability to match the peoples

lifestyle was also taken into account when judging their new designs. The Japanese fashion designers were influenced by one more construct, namely 'historical revival' while conducting design evaluation because they believed that it was important to reflect their tradition and history through their new creations.

Grounded design theory of fashion designers

By constantly comparing the eight fundamental categories, namely, 'definition of fashion', 'design constraint, aesthetic preference', 'definition of good design', 'major influential factor', 'gathering ideas', 'synthesising ideas' and 'design evaluation' influencing fashion designers when creating new designs, the models of design theory of French, Italian, British and Japanese fashion designers were formulated and discussed together with their diverse social structure which was "the means used to satisfy social needs" and ideology which was "the means used to satisfy psychic needs" (Hamilton, 1987). Social structure was defined as "the continuing arrangement of persons in relationships defined or controlled by institutions, i.e., socially established norms or patterns of behaviour" (Radcliffe-Brown, 1958). Ideology was described as including "values, norms, knowledge, themes, philosophies, and religious beliefs, sentiments, ethical principles, world views, ethos, and the like" (Kaplan & Manners, 1972).

Model of design theory of French fashion designers

No common construct was found to link the eight fundamental categories in the model of design theory of French fashion designers (Fig. 2). The construct 'aesthetic presence' and 'psychological satisfaction' was uncovered and joined the eight fundamental categories except 'synthesising ideas' and 'gathering ideas', respectively. 'Social attitude' was the construct linking the four categories-'definition of fashion', 'aesthetic preference', 'major influential factor' and 'gathering ideas'-together. The construct 'historical revival' was found alone in the category 'gathering ideas'.

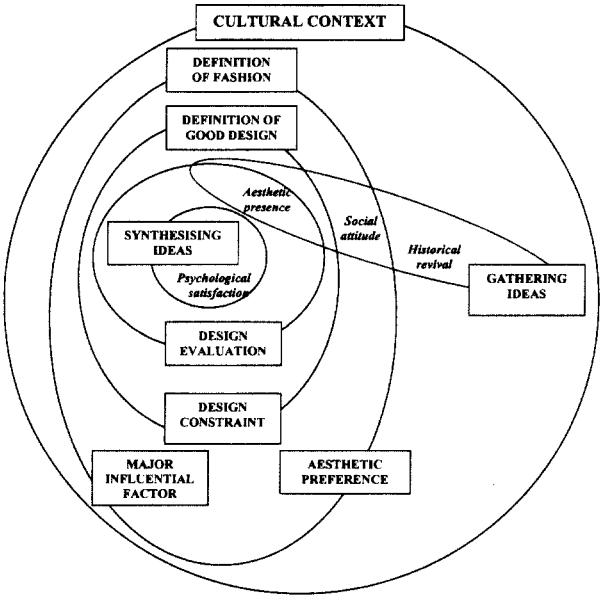

Fig. 2. Model of design theory of French fashion designers.

This may be explained by the distinct ideology of the French who are admired for their abstract knowledge and their skill in challenging existing beliefs. The French are proud of being logical in their thinking and rational in their behaviour. This kind of thinking is influenced by the French philosopher René Descarte's (1596-1650) who symbolised logic as the distinctive characteristic of French thought. Descartess fundamental reduction of evidence in his philosophy to *Je pense, donc je suis* (I think, therefore I am) began an analytical tradition known as Cartesian logic. This kind of rationalism has been preserved as a principal strain in French philosophy to the present time. One example of Cartesian reflection is "the general who devises a perfect battle plan with incomplete knowledge of the enemy's strength and capacity and suffers defeat-but with style and elegance" (Gannon, 1994).

The French belief in logic is described as "the certainty of clear and distinct ideas, of the exigency of method, the bringing of light of logical truths, founded on reason and its proper qualities rather than on authority and traditions" (Girling, 1998). Good sense is displayed in "the ability to judge well, to distinguish the true from the false; in a word, this is reason, which is shared among everybody. The diversity of our opinions is not due to the fact that some are more reasonable than others, but because we conduct our thoughts by different channels. It is not enough to have a good mind; it is important to apply it well" (Girling, 1998).

Model of design theory of Italian fashion designers

Only one common construct-'aesthetic presence'-was discovered and linked the eight fundamental categories together in the model of design theory of Italian fashion designers (Fig. 3). It was the core variable that recurred frequently in the data and was the most important construct that the Italian fashion designers considered when creating new fashion. The construct 'psychological satisfaction' connected the eight fundamental categories except the category 'gathering ideas'. 'Social attitude was' the construct relating the five categories-'definition of fashion', 'aesthetic preference', 'major influential factor', 'gathering ideas' and 'design evaluation'-together. The construct 'historical revival' was found alone in the

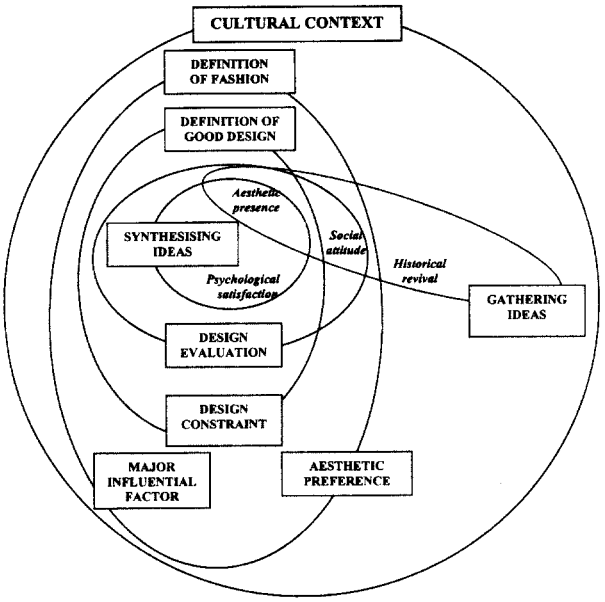

Fig. 3. Model of design theory of Italian fashion designers.

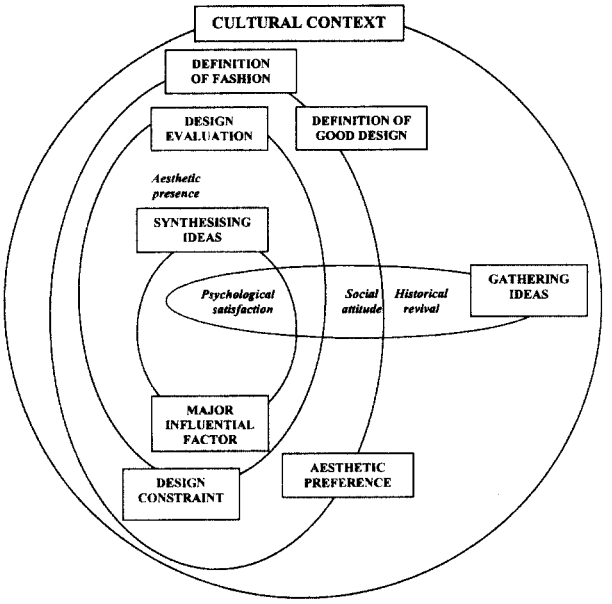

Fig. 4. Model of design theory of British fashion designers.

category gathering ideas.

This may be explained by the distinct ideology and social structure of the Italians. Italians are individual, aggressive and materialistic because of their tendency towards spectacle and exteriorisation. A person is judged by his or her occupation, education, ancestry and wealth. Social behaviour is also the main focus of judgement. Italians term this focus *civilta*, or the extent to which someone is acculturated to the norms including styles of dress and manners (Keefe, 1977).

Spectacle directs their lifestyle and guides people towards solutions for most of their problems. Most Italians attempt to achieve *la bella figura* through material possessions and it is important to give a good impression of material wealth. "Dressing is important to Italians because its represents pageantry and spectacle in the form of *la bella figura*" (Gannon, 1994). Italians must always project a talented face to other people and create an image of confidence and intelligence. When presenting ideas during bargaining, the aesthetics of the presentation should be distinct and the details of the subject matter should also be well organised. Italian personality is, in effective terms, reliant on elegance.

Exteriorisation explains the fact that feelings and emotions are so overpowering. People are supposed to express themselves to others rather than keeping themselves to themselves. Italians express their feelings and emotions not only through direct verbal communications but also through subtle ideas of their style of dressing, which projects an outward expression of the emotions that they want to communicate. "Italy is a grand and larger-than-life society whose citizens love pageantry and spectacle, emphasise a range of voices in everyday life, exteriorise emotions and feelings, and feel a commitment to the town and region of the country in which they were born" (Gannon, 1994).

Model of design theory of British fashion designers

'Psychological satisfaction' was the only common construct found which linked the eight fundamental categories together in the model of design theory of British fashion designers (Fig. 4). It was the core variable that recurred frequently in the data and was the most important construct that the British fashion designers considered when creating new fashion. The construct 'aesthetic presence' connected the categories-'definition of fashion', 'definition of good design', 'design constraint', 'aesthetic preference' and 'design evaluation'-together. 'Social attitude' was the construct relating the four categories-'definition of fashion', 'definition of good design', 'aesthetic preference' and 'gathering ideas'-together. The construct 'historical revival' was found alone in the category gathering ideas.

This may be explained by the distinct ideology of the British. Individuality, orderliness and self-control are the distinguishing characteristics of British behaviour. Their notion of order and tradition guides them to justify what they should do or should not to do. "All Britons have a few ideas firmly embedded in their heads that exactly and universally give them the answers about how to be per-

fectly British" (Gannon, 1994). The British are taught to control their emotional outbursts at an early age and need to behave properly in any situation. Glyn (1970) stated that: "we like to keep ourselves to ourselves".

The British are excited when the proposed work is beneficial to them and there is a common goal in their minds. They commonly prefer to work in a secure group with members that they can recognise in order to avoid any unnecessary disharmony between group members. They are comfortable when working in a hierarchical structure and know exactly who has authority over whom with well-defined job descriptions. Their tradition, precedent and own sense guide them to solve most of the problems which arise. If something goes wrong, the best thing they can do is to make the best of it and remain faithful to their beliefs. The result of success is considered to be less important. "The British preferred at all times to be victims of their own mistakes rather than to trust the judgment of other people" (Barzini, 1983).

Model of design theory of Japanese fashion designers

Two common constructs-'aesthetic presence' and 'psychological satisfaction'-were discovered and linked the eight fundamental categories together in the model of design theory of Japanese fashion designers (Fig. 5). They were the core variables that recurred frequently in the data and were the most important constructs that the Japanese fashion designers considered when creating new fashion. The construct 'social attitude' connected the eight fundamental categories except the category 'design constraint'. 'Historical revival' was the construct relating the two categories-'gathering ideas' and 'design evaluation'-together.

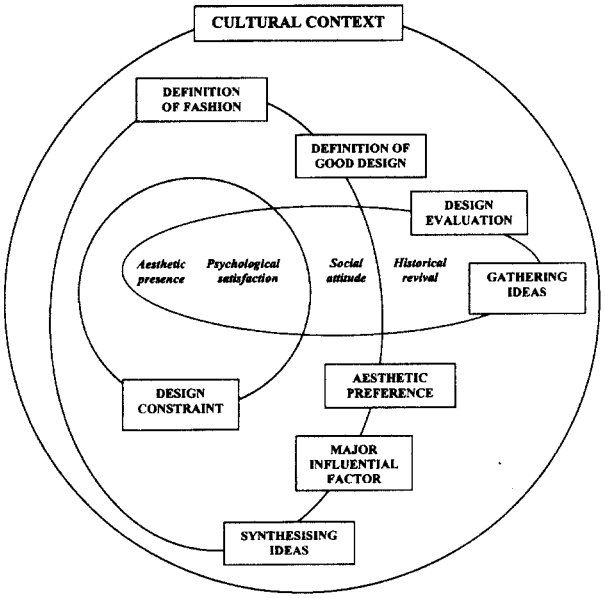

Fig. 5. Model of design theory of Japanese fashion designers.

This may be explained by the distinct ideology and social structure of the Japanese. The Japanese strongly believe that surface harmony must be preserved at all times. Respect, sensitivity, and harmony are sometimes more important than the truth because the Japanese always feel that logic and facts alone can only reflect a sense of coldness to other people. They frequently try to refrain from unnecessary confrontations that may create discomfort or even offend other people. Also, responsibility, obligation and loyalty are distinguishing characteristics of Japanese behaviour. They apparently commit to work with others towards a common goal in most circumstances. "The Japanese are said to attach great importance to the emotional realities of the particular human circumstances. They avoid absolutes, rely on subtlety and intuition, and consider sensitivity to human feelings all-important. They notice small signs of insult or disfavour and take them deeply to heart. They harbour feelings of loyalty for years, perhaps for life, and for that reason are believed to be more trustworthy" (Frost, 1987).

Shikata means the way of doing things focusing on the form and order of the process. It suggests that there are proper ways to work, entertain and interact with others. The consideration of form and process for accomplishing an activity is as significant as accomplishing it successfully. The emphasis on the group is perceptible in Japanese everyday life. The concept of grouping can easily be observed in the family, the educational system and the structures of business organisation. "The rules of the Japanese culture centre around the fostering of the collectivist values and behaviours; the Japanese culture fosters the importance of groups much more than it fosters the importance of individuals almost to the exclusion of individualistic needs or desires" (Matsumoto, 1996).

Seishin refers to the spirit of oneself and emphasises the importance of self-discipline and dedication to duty. It helps a person to overcome his or her personal difficulties in a group-oriented society. In order to serve the interests of the group, the Japanese often sacrifice their own interests. The endurance of such social conformity is achieved by the strong sense of self-control in his or her mind. The ultimate goal of *seishin* is to improve the state of their spiritual growth. The Japanese believe that any difficulty can be overcome providing that a person makes a tremendous effort. "Hardship draws on the inner reserves of energy, allowing one to tap their potential to the fullest" (Kondo, 1990).

CONCLUSIONS

The major constructs influencing fashion designers in the eight fundamental categories, these being, 'definition of fashion', 'design constraint', 'aesthetic preference', 'definition of good design', 'design process', 'major influential factor', 'gathering ideas', 'synthesising ideas' and 'design evaluation', were compared and contrasted. Similarities and differences were identified between the French, Italian, British and Japanese fashion sites. Having developed the grounded design theory of French, Italian, British and Japanese fashion designers, it was found that there were foremost differences between these models of grounded design theory due to their various cultural contexts. No common construct was found that linked the eight fundamental categories together in the model of design theory of French fashion designers. One common construct 'aesthetic presence' was discovered in the model of design theory of Italian fashion designers. 'Psychological satisfaction' was the only common construct established in the model of design theory of British fashion designers. Two major constructs-'aesthetic presence' and 'psychological satisfaction'-were prominent in the model of design theory of Japanese fashion designers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors wish to acknowledge a studentship received from The Hong Kong Polytechnic University Postgraduate Research Grant.

REFERENCES

Amabile T. (1983) "Social Psychology of Creativity". Spring Verlag, New York.

Archer L.B. (1984) "Systematic Methods for Designs". In N. Cross(Ed.), Developments in Design Methodology, John Wiley, New York, pp.57-82.

Barzini L. (1983) "The Europeans". Simon & Schuster, New York, p.61.

Berlo J.C. (1991) "Beyond Bricolage: Women and Aesthetic Strategies in Latin American Textiles". In M. B. Schevill, J. C. Berlo & A. B. Dwyer (Eds.), Textiles Traditions of Meso America and the Andes, Edward Dwyer Garland, New York, pp.437-479.

Blumberg P. (1974) The decline and fall of the status symbol: some thoughts on status in a post-industrial society. *Social problems*, **21**, 480-498.

Blumer H. (1969) Fashion: from class differentiation to collective selection. *Sociological Quarterly*, **10**, 275-291.

Darke J. (1979) The primary generator and the design process. *Design Studies*, **1**(1), 36-44.

Davis G.A. (1975) In frumious pursuit of the creative person. *Journal of Creative Behaviour*, **9**(2), 75-87.

Diamond J. and Diamond E. (1997) "The World of Fashion". 2nd Ed., Fairchild, New York.

Fetterman D.M. and Pitman M.A. (1986) "Educational Evaluation: Ethnography in Theory, Practice, and Politics". Sage, Beverly Hills. CA, p.65.

Frings G.S. (1991) "Fashion from Concept to Consumer". 3rd Ed., Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs: NJ.

Frost E. (1987) "For Richer, for Poorer". Council on Foreign Relations, New York, p.85.

Gannon M.J. (1994) "Understanding Global Cultures: Metaphorical Journeys through 17 Countries". Sage, Thousand Oaks: CA, pp. 26, 53, 64, 91.

Girling J. (1998) "France: Political and Social Change". Routledge, London, pp.137-138.

Glaser B.G. (1978) "Theoretical sEnsitivity: Advances in the Methodology of Grounded Theory". Sociology Press, Mill Valley: CA, p.74.

Glaser B.G. (1992) "Basics of Grounded tHeory Analysis: Emergence vs. Forcing". Sociology Press, Mill Valley: CA.

Glaser B.G. and Strauss A.L. (1967) "The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research". Aldine Publishing Co., Chicago, p.13.

Glyn A. (1970) "The British: Portrait of a People". G.P. Putnam, New York, p.176.

Goel V. and Pirolli P. (1992) The structure of design problem spaces. *Cognitive Science*, **16**, 395-429.

Hamilton J.A. (1987) Dress as a cultural sub-system: A unifying metatheory for clothing and textiles. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, **6**(l), 1-7.

Hirschman E.C. (1983) Aesthetics, ideologies and the limits of the marketing concept. *Journal of Marketing*, **46**, 92-101.

Jones J.C. (1984) "A Method of Systemic Design". In N. Cross(Ed.), Developments in Design Methodology, Wiley, New York, pp.9-31.

Kaplan D. and Manners R.A. (1972) "Culture Theory". Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs: NJ, p.112.

Katz E. and Lazarfeld P.F. (1955) "Personal Influence". The Free Press, Illinois.

Keefe E. (1977) "Area Handbook for Italy". American University, Washington DC.

Kefgen M. and Touchie-Specht, P. (1976) "Individuality in Clothing Selection and Personal Appearance". 2nd Ed., Macmillan, New York.

King C. (1963) "Fashion Adoption: A Rebuttal to the Trickle-down Theory". In S. A. Greyser(Ed.), Toward Scientific Marketing American Marketing Association, Chicago, pp.108-125.

Koberg D. and Badnell J. (1973) "The University Traveller: A Companion for those on Problem-solving Journeys". William Kaufmann, Los Altos: CA.

Kondo D.K. (1990) "Crafting Selves: Power, Gender and Discourses of Identity in a Japanese Workplace". University of

Chicago Press, Chicago, p.108.

Lamb W.P. and Kallel M.J. (1992) A conceptual framework for apparel design. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, **10**(2), 42-47.

Lewis W.P. and Samuel A.E. (1989) "Fundamentals of Engineering Design". Prentice Hall, New York.

Lincoln Y.S. and Guba E. (1985) "Naturalistic Inquiry". Sage, Newbury Parks: CA.

Lloyd P. and Scott P. (1994) Discovering the design problem. *Design Studies*, **15**(2), 125-140.

Matsumoto D. (1996) "Unmasking Japan: Myths and Realities about the Emotions of the Japanese". Stanford University Press, Stanford: CA, p.140.

Morgan D.L. (1997) "Focus Groups as Qualitative Research". 2nd Ed., Sage, Thousand Oaks: CA, p.11.

Radcliffe-Brown A.R. (1958) "Method in Social Anthropology: Selected Essays". University of Chicago Press, Chicago, p.177.

Regan C.L., Kincade D.H. and Shelden G. (1998) Applicability of the engineering design process theory in the apparel design process. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, **16**(1), 36-46.

Roach J.R. (1989) Theatre history and the ideology of the aesthetic. *Theatre Journal*, **41**, 155-168.

Robinson D.E. (1961) The economics of fashion demand. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, **75**, 376-398.

Simmel G. (1957) Fashion. *American Journal of Sociology*, **62**, 541-558 (Reprinted from International Quarterly, **10**(1904), 130-155.).

Sproles G.B. (1985) "Behavioural Science Theories of Fashion". In M.R. Solomon(Ed.), The Psychology of Fashion (pp.55-70), Lexington Books, Lexington.

Stokrocki M. (1991) A decade of qualitative research in art education: Methodological expansions and pedagogical explorations. *Studies in Art Education*, **17**(1), 42-51.

Tate S.L. (1999) "Inside Fashion Design". 4th Ed., Longman, New York.

Thomas J.C. and Carroll J.M. (1979) The psychological study of design. *Design Studies*, **1**(1), 5-11.

Watkins S.M. (1988) Using the design process to teach functional apparel design. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, **7**(1), 10-14.

Wertheimer M. (1959) "Productive Thinking". Harper and Row, New York.

(Received September 24, 2001)