



The Competencies of Fashion Design Teachers in Public Institutions of Higher Learning in Nairobi County, Kenya

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Abstract

‘Real’ fabric draping involves the use of sample textile, fabric or cloth to make patterns or garments on a model or dress form stands manually. The technique is suitable for ready-to-wear and couture garment designs and has numerous advantages, including satisfaction with garment fit, accurate proportions of fabric division and reduced time waste. Numerous studies in Kenya have been carried out on the subject of Home Science. However, little documentation exists on ‘real’ fabric draping for design in Kenya. This paper anchors its discussion on the findings of a study that sought to assess the usage of ‘real’ fabric in draping by teachers in public institutions of higher learning and fashion designers in Nairobi County, Kenya, and assesses the competencies of fashion design teachers in Nairobi County, Kenya. It also examines the relationship between the use of ‘real’ fabric draping for design, on the one hand, and the teachers’ area of training on the other hand. The study was guided by the activity theory and pedagogic activity system structure. Employing a cross-sectional survey research design, five public institutions of higher learning were purposively selected.

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The sample size comprised five heads of department, 32 teachers and 266 students. The data was collected using questionnaires and interview schedules. Both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques were used. The results revealed that very few public institutions of higher learning use 'real' fabric draping for design. Majority of the teachers were not trained in the area of fashion design. Chi-square analysis results yielded a fairly strong relationship between use of 'real' fabric draping for design and pattern development technique taught ($V=0.646$; $p < 0.0001^*$) and sources of curriculum ($V=0.623$; $p < 0.0001^*$). Use of 'real' fabric draping for design had a weak association with teachers' area of training ($V=0.018$; $p < 0.006$). It was concluded that the teachers area of training was not highly associated with the use of 'real' fabric draping. This may be due to the fact that most fashion design teachers were trained in clothing / garment design and are able to understand the technique. Pattern development technique taught and sources of curriculum and teachers' area of training are the key issues associated with the use of 'real' fabric draping for design in public institutions of higher learning. This paper recommends that public institutions of higher learning should ensure that teachers engaged have the adequate skills to teach 'real' fabric draping for design as a practical unit. This would ensure that the students acquire pertinent skills imparted as prescribed in the curriculum.

Keywords: Competencies; Fashion Design Teachers; Public Institutions; Higher Learning; Nairobi County; Kenya.

1. Introduction

Today, many of the internationally acclaimed fashion designers create original products using inspiration from various historical and contemporary sources. Majority of the apparel designers develop new products of various types in accordance with the trends set by the leading international designers [1]. Style is one of the most important aspects in garment design. Fashion design involves the designer thinking of a garment, sketching it and then sewing it together. There are three techniques that are core to the realization of the design concept and finally construction of the garment design. These are: the flat pattern making, draping design and CAD technique [2]. According to Stanley [3], the one fervent wish of modern students of dress design and pattern making is to translate their designs into finished garments as speedily as possible. This desire is further fuelled by the fashion design industry with large turnover of styles every year. The prospective fashion designer must be artistically creative and understand technical aspects of design. Fashion design is highly competitive and the more prepared the aspiring designers are, the more easily they will broaden their opportunities.

Friggs [1] posits that draping is done by cutting and shaping the muslin or garment fabric on a dress form to create a pattern. The designer sees the proportions and lines of the design exactly as they will look on a human-like figure (body form). Draping is ideal for soft flowing designs. The method is mainly used for producing couture dresses and evening wear. In flat pattern design, however, basic patterns of bodices, sleeves, pants or skirts are draped or drafted. The flat pattern method uses angles, rulers and curves to change existing board patterns. Computer-aided design systems have small graphic patterns that are manipulated on the computer screen by the pattern maker. The use of geometry drivers makes infinite number of changes to the shapes and sizes of the patterns. The large quantity of styles produced in the fashion industry demands from today's designer and pattern cutter a great degree of versatility and knowledge of pattern making [3]. Kamau [4]

observes that fashion design students feel that the training they receive in apparel CAD does not adequately prepare them to undertake CAD-related jobs in the apparel industry.

Pierce [2] notes that pattern making, draping design and CAD techniques are critical to the fashion designer's concept that is being made into a garment. Each of these techniques serves the purpose of creating a style pattern that can be used to construct the designer's concept. It is important to remember that without using one of these techniques, it is almost impossible for a new fashion design concept to be made into a wearable garment. Friggs [1] notes that a good pattern maker must learn how to drape a pattern on a dress form, draft perfect flat patterns and create patterns by computer. This is because their first job placement maybe as a sample cutter or pattern grader. Rissanen [5] documents eight fashion design practices, three of which utilize 'real' fabric draping for design as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Fashion Design Practices that Utilize 'Real' Fabric Draping

Sketch – Draping – Pattern – Toile – (Design alteration) – Pattern alteration – Sample garment
Draping – Pattern – Toile – (Design alteration) – Pattern alteration – Sample garment
Textile print on paper – Draping Textile/paper on body form – (Sketch) – Pattern – Toile – (Design alteration) – Pattern alteration – Sample

Dumridhammaporn, Jatuphatwarodom, Punyopat and Chonsakorn [6] identify several advantages in using 'real' fabric draping. The first is that pattern making by draping technique reduces time wasted as pattern making technique. Secondly, draping is more accurate in getting the right proportion to the cloth design than flat pattern making technique. Thirdly, patterns made on the mannequin while working on the task (3 dimensions) can be clearly seen by the pattern makers and corrected immediately within one time. Lastly, results collected by surveying the models' satisfaction indicate that they prefer the samples made from draping pattern making to flat pattern making techniques.

1.1. Learning Constraints in Practical Clothing Courses in Kenya

In Kenya, new educational policies began to emerge in the mid-sixties leading to the launch of the 8-4-4 system in 1985 with the objective of increasing the scope of vocational subjects in the school system at all levels [7]. The 8-4-4 education system has, however, been found to be somewhat inefficient in providing relevant skills needed for national development [8]. Home Science as a practical subject that is useful in laying the foundation for further learning and vocational training cannot be overlooked [9]. However, a study carried out in Uasin Gishu County in North Rift Kenya between 2005 and 2006 has found that the number of schools that presented candidates for Home Science in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination dropped from 23 to 18 schools. Moreover, half of them had enrolled 1-10 candidates each [10].

Nyangi [11] observes that the student enrolment in Home Science subject in Kenya is inconsistent while the trend is on the decline. The Government of Kenya [12] further notes that under enrolment in key post secondary

courses maybe a predicament to practical courses. Mumbi [13] states that the technical subjects that students study at secondary school before taking up fashion design as a practical subject are very vital. Mumbi [13] further notes that students who enrol in colleges lack sound Home Science background, which hinders their effective training as primary Home Science teachers.

Kang'a [14] notes that with the rush and eagerness to get white collar jobs, Home Science and other technical subjects have lost the emphasis they had during the colonial times. Therefore, by 1970 unemployment was becoming a great problem in Kenya. There was a rallying call for educationists to include industrial skills in the curriculum so that learners could become self-reliant upon leaving school. However, it has been reported that students generally dislike the Clothing and Textile unit [15]. According to Nyangi [11], majority (85.7%) of students taking Home Science in Nairobi find the Clothing and Textiles unit difficult to learn. Kang'a [14] further avers that clothing and textile is the least liked subject in the 8-4-4 education system. The attitude of students towards 'real' fabric draping for design as practical aspect in fashion design can either boost or jeopardize learning.

According to Karimi [9], Home Science is mainly taught using demonstrations and discussions, both methods of which ignore the other crucial methods of teaching. This observation justifies Sang's [15] view that not all Home Science teachers are confident in handling the Clothing and Textiles unit, a fact that may adversely influence the attitudes of students towards the subject. Mumbi [13] concurs that the teaching methods frequently used are teacher-centred, such as lecture, assignment and demonstrations. Student-centred methods like the use of professional guest-speakers, seminars and exposure visits are rarely used. Moreover, tutors are not given induction courses upon joining colleges and are not in-serviced on Home Science teaching methods after college.

According to Kang'a [14], Home Science teachers also lack relevant training in the teaching and assessment of practical sessions. Home Science students also face major constraints such as: inadequate teaching resources, overcrowded classes, limited time and facilities. Telewa [16] argues that the major constraints faced by Home Science teachers include: inadequate teaching resources, limited time allocated for teaching Home Science, lack of induction courses, wide curriculum (scope) and large classes. Kobia [17] observes that boys are largely unaware of the future careers in Home Science. This literature brings to light the lack of adequate research in fashion design learning as a course. This gap was addressed by this study.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

A study by Skill Fast UK [18] on skills needs assessment for apparel sector has identified in Northern Ireland a gap in core technical skills and knowledge amongst designers and garment technologists due to changes in technology and lack of investment in staff training. In Kenya, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST) [19], noted there is a low morale among the technical teachers and curriculum developers. There is also no staff development opportunity for curriculum implementers or proper training and motivation of teachers enhances learning. Davide [20] believes that a teacher's job is to provide students with information, examples and guidance they need to build understanding on their own. Such knowledge should be

part of the students beyond college. Hussain [21] posits that teachers have a duty to prepare students so that they are familiar with the technologies they will encounter at their work place. Teachers' beliefs and assumptions about the nature of knowledge, disciplinary norms, and how students learn affect the choice and use of technology for teaching [22].

The clothing and textile industry is a field that is both hugely under-researched and under-represented academically [23]. However, until recently, little of practical use has been published on the art of draping beyond introductions of the basics, leaving the craft to a skill passed on from master to apprentice, just like tailoring [24]. There is inadequate documentation, literature and research done on the competencies of fashion design teacher's in the area of 'real' fabric draping in public institutions of higher learning. The study therefore, sought to draw attention to this phenomenon.

1.3. Study Limitations

The study was confined to assessing issues related to the use 'real' fabric draping for design in public institutions of higher learning and among fashion designers within Nairobi County. The study experienced methodological limitations since fashion apparel trends change very rapidly and students have a fixed period within which they must complete the learning process. Furthermore, the findings of the study were confined to investigating those respondents who were involved in the practice or training in apparel design as information sought was unique to the apparel, garment or clothing design development.

2. Materials and Methods

The study was carried out in Nairobi County in Kenya. The 2009 Kenya National Bureau of Statistics [25] National Census showed that Nairobi had the largest urban population of 3,138,369 persons with 1,605,230 being male and 1,533,139 females. There are at least eight (8) institutions of higher learning in Nairobi County that offer fashion design and clothing design related courses. These are: the Kenya Technical Teachers College (offers Diploma in technical education); the National Youth Service Engineering Institute (offers Diploma in Clothing Technology); Technology Development Centre (offers Diploma in Fashion Design); the Kenya Textile Training Institute (offers Diploma in Clothing Technology); the Technical University of Kenya (offers training in Garment Making and Fashion Technology); Kenyatta University (offers Bachelor of Science in Fashion Design and Marketing and Bachelor of Education in Home Economics); Thika College for the Blind (offers Certificate in Garment Making) and Karen Technical Training Institute for the Deaf (offers Certificate in Garment Making). The County was therefore, chosen as it had the highest variation in types of institutions that offer fashion design related courses.

The use of 'real' fabric draping for design was the dependent variable of the study. It was dichotomous and measured by dummy-coding for membership in the category by asking the respondent to tick Yes (if they used 'real' fabric draping for design) = 1 or No = 0 (if otherwise). The independent variables of the study were: the demographic characteristics of the students and teachers, fashion design practises, learning resources, learning conditions and student's attitude. The independent variables were categorical in nature and were measured by

closed-ended and open-ended items and Likert scales. The demographic characteristics were: gender, education level, area of training and technical subject studied at secondary school.

The target population was all heads of departments, teachers and students taking fashion design related courses in public institutions of higher learning in Nairobi County. According to a preliminary survey census carried out in July, 2011 by the researcher, there were 44 institutions of higher learning offering fashion design courses in Kenya. Five public institutions of higher learning were purposively included in the study. They were: one Public University, one University of Technology, one National Technical Teachers College, one Technical Training Institute and one Textile Training Institute in Nairobi County. Stratified simple random sampling was used to proportionately stratify the students according to the type of institution, course and year of study to qualify them into the strata. However, First Years were not included in the study as they were deemed not to have had sufficient exposure and training to contribute to the study objectives.

The accessible population was, therefore, five heads of department, 32 fashion design teachers and 244 fashion design students. The fashion designers, teachers and students undertaking their master's, bachelor's and diploma courses were sampled as they were deemed able to give information that would assist in determining the use of 'real' fabric draping for design in public institutions of higher learning and fashion designers in Nairobi County. The final sample size excluded 22 students, two teachers, one head of department and four fashion designers who had participated in the pretesting of the questionnaire and interview schedule.

The instruments used for data collection were self-administered questionnaires for the fashion design teachers and students. The data collected was summarized and analyzed statistically in line with the objectives and hypotheses of the study. The research used the Statistical Software Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 17) to analyse the data. Quantitative data was analyzed to yield both descriptive and inferential statistics. The Chi-square test for independence (χ^2) was used to determine if two categorical variables with less than 5 rankings were related. Chi-square test of independence statistics was conducted at an alpha of 0.05. Hypotheses were tested to determine the relationship between the independent variables.

The Nominal measure of correlation used was Phi ϕ and Cramer's V (V) to measure degree measure association between variables. The nature of the data from the Chi-square statistics dictated the method used. Results for possible values with exact possible values (2x2) Phi ϕ was used, whereas those that were unequal (2x3) Cramer's V (V) was deployed. The obtained values ranged from zero (representing lack of association) to one (representing strong association). Qualitative data from the questionnaire was compared and grouped according to similarities in order to develop thematic categories. These data were later used to supplement, explain and interpret quantitative data. The summary and presentation of the data collected was done in form of tables, bar graphs and pie charts. Qualitative data was used to discuss the emerging themes and help elaborate various findings of the data.

3. Results

3.1. Competencies of Fashion Design Teachers

The teachers' competencies in fashion design were considered important in the study as they define their disposition towards the subject. Additionally, competencies influence the use of 'real' fabric draping for design in public institutions of higher learning. The data obtained in gender, education level, other occupational activity, number of years teaching and institution teachers received training in fashion design were important but was not used in hypothesis testing. The teachers' area of training was also explored for possible relationships with the usage of 'real' fabric draping for design.

3.2. Fashion Design Teachers' Gender and Educational Level

From the study, ninety-three percent (93.0%) of the fashion design teachers were female while seven percent (7.0%) were male. This implies that, customarily, fashion design is still viewed as a female-oriented career as reflected by the high number of female than male teachers.

Fifty-six percent (55.6%) of the fashion design teachers had attained either a Bachelor's degree, Master's or PhD (Table 2). This shows that fashion design teachers had advanced academic qualifications.

Table 2: Fashion Design Teachers' Education Level

Education level	Frequency (n)	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Ph.D	2	7.4	7.4
Master's degree	7	25.9	33.3
Bachelor's degree	6	22.3	55.6
Higher Diploma	7	25.9	81.4
Diploma	5	18.5	100.0
Total	27	100.0	100.0

3.3. Teachers' Area of Training

The study sought to find out the areas in which teachers had been trained to qualify them to teach fashion design in the various public institution of higher learning. Eighty-five percent (85.2%) of them were trained in the areas of Clothing/Garment Design or Textile Design with the rest about fifteen percent (14.8%) having been trained in Art and Design (Table 3). Notably, however, none of the teachers had been trained in Fashion Design as a course. This implies that the government has employed qualified personnel to teach Fashion Design in public institutions of higher learning.

3.4. Type of Institution and Region in which Teachers Received Training

The study findings revealed that nearly forty-eight percent (48.1%) of the fashion design teachers were trained in public universities in Kenya. These institutions are known to heavily rely on theory rather than practical work in teaching and learning. However, twenty-two percent (22.2%) of the respondents indicated they had attained

diploma or higher diploma before advancing to study for a degree at the University. Needless to say, some teachers could have lacked hands on skills that can only come from the practical aspects and exposure to actual fashion design.

Seventy-one percent (71.4%) of the fashion design teachers who teach in Kenyan public institutions of higher learning were formally trained locally (within Kenya). The rest 28.6% were formally trained outside Kenya. This may imply that despite teachers being trained in different institutions locally, inbreeding was predominant.

Table 3: Teachers’ Area of Training in Fashion Design

Areas of Training	Frequency (n)	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Garment design	13	48.2	48.2
Clothing and textile design	10	37.0	85.2
Art and design	4	14.8	100.0
Total	27	100.0	100.0

3.5. Number of Years Teaching Fashion Design Related Courses

The results in Table 4 indicate that eighty-five percent (85.2%) of the teachers had taught fashion design related courses for a period of between 6 to over 16 years. This meant that fashion design teachers were highly experienced in their teaching subjects as they had been instructing students for a relatively long period of time.

Table 4: Number of Years Teaching Fashion Design Courses

Number of years	Frequency (n)	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
>16yrs	5	18.6	18.6
11-15yrs	8	29.6	48.2
6-10yrs	10	37.0	85.2
1-5 yrs	4	14.8	100.0
Total	27	100	100.0

3.6. Teachers’ Other Occupational Activities

The highest number of fashion design teachers fifty nine percent (59.3%) did not engage in any other occupational activity other than teaching. They indicated administrative duties such as coordinating teaching of curriculum and handling various duties administrative was very involving. This finding might imply that the remaining percentages of teachers were involved in either generating knowledge or generating income. They may have been exposed to new knowledge as they were involved in garment making, soft furnishing businesses

or research and consultancy in their fields of expertise.

3.7. Test of Hypotheses

The hypothesis (H_{01}) that teachers' area of training is independent of the use of 'real' fabric draping for design was tested at 0.05 at significance level (Table 5). The Chi-Square test results ($\chi^2 (2, N = 27) = 10.146, p < 0.006$) show that the test was significant ($p < 0.006$). The null hypothesis, that the teachers' area of training is independent of the use of 'real' fabric draping for design, was thus rejected.

Table 5: Chi-Square test Results for Hypothesis 1 (H01)

Teachers' Areas of Training (n=27)	Do Not Use	Use	Total
Garment Design	10(76.9%)	3(21.4%)	13(48.1%)
Art and Design	2(15.4%)	2(14.3%)	4(14.8%)
Clothing and Textile Design	1(7.7%)	9(64.3%)	10(37.0%)
Total	13(48.1%)	14(51.8%)	27(100.0%)

$V = 0.018; \chi^2 (2, N = 27) = 10.146, p < 0.006^*$

* Significant at < 0.05

The implication of the above results could be that there is a significant relationship between teachers' area of training and use of 'real' fabric draping for design in public institutions of higher learning. This means that the 51.8% of the teachers who used 'real' fabric draping for design were those trained in clothing and textile design. This is because their area of training involved pattern making, giving them a better chance at being familiar with the 'real' fabric draping design as a technique in the course of their training. The statistical value yielding from Cramer's V (V) measure of correlation was 0.02, implying a weak association between teachers' area of training being independent of the use of 'real' fabric draping for design.

The second hypothesis (H_{02}) tested whether pattern development techniques taught were independent of the use of 'real' fabric draping at 0.05 significance level (Table 6). The Chi-square results ($\chi^2 (2, N = 217) = 67.837, p < 0.0001$) showed that the test was significant at $p < 0.0001$. The null hypothesis, that pattern development techniques taught were independent of the use of 'real' fabric draping, was, therefore, rejected. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between pattern development techniques taught and use of 'real' fabric draping for design.

The observed trend might perhaps be due to 60.4% who used 'real' fabric being more likely to also utilize pattern drafting, flat pattern design and free hand cutting pattern development techniques. Further analysis using Cramer's V (V) measure of correlation yielded a value of 0.65. This may indicate the presence of a strong association between pattern development techniques and use of 'real' fabric draping for design.

Table 6: Chi-Square Test Results for Hypothesis 2 (H₀₂)

Pattern development techniques taught (n=217)	Do Not Use	Use	Total
Flat pattern and pattern drafting	86(100.0%)	61(46.6%)	147(67.7%)
Flat pattern and freehand cutting	0(0.0%)	67(51.1%)	67(30.9%)
Flat pattern and draping	0(0.0%)	3(2.3%)	3(1.4%)
Total	86(39.6%)	131(60.4%)	217(100.0%)

$$V = 0.646; \chi^2 (2, n = 217) = 67.837, p < 0.000^*$$

* Significant at < 0.05

4. Discussion

4.1. Competencies and Characteristics of Fashion Design Teachers

Prior studies have underscored the importance of teachers' competency and character [4; 15; 26]. From the results of the study, almost all fashion design teachers were female and about half the number sampled had attained a bachelor's degree. Moreover, the number of females studying fashion design courses was higher than that of males. These females are the ones who later advance in training to become teachers of fashion design. These findings support the view that male learners are to a large extent not aware of the future careers in Home Science [17]. Consequently, most of them never aspire to become Home Science teachers.

The highest number of fashion design teachers was trained in clothing/garment design or textile design. What is surprising is that a good number of the fashion design teachers had been trained in public universities. As for work experience, most of them had taught aspects of fashion design for a period ranging from 11 to 16 years. However, the research results were rather disappointing as none of the teachers had had specialized training to teach in the area fashion design. It is difficult to explain this result, but it might be attributed to the fact that for a long time Home Science was pursued at the university only if one wanted to be a Home Science teacher and most of them only singled out Clothing and Textile units [26].

Three-quarters of the respondents reported that they had received their training in Kenya. This implies that inbreeding was predominant, which may jeopardize the teaching of fashion design as a practical course. These results corroborate the findings of Kang'a [14] that Home Science teachers lack the relevant training in the teaching and assessment of practical sessions of the course. Moreover, not all Home Science teachers are confident in handling the Clothing and Textiles and this may influence the attitude of the students [15].

On whether teachers were involved in other occupational activities, the study found that most of them were not engaged in any other occupational activities. The observed increase in those not engaging in any other activities could be attributed to teachers who were mostly busy with other administrative duties (members of subcommittees, coordinators of programmes, timetabling and co-ordination of examination).

4.2. Pattern Development Techniques Taught and 'Real' Fabric Draping Use

The most interesting finding of the study was that there is a significant relationship between pattern development techniques taught and use of 'real' fabric draping for design. The observed trend may be attributed to those who used 'real fabric who might have likely utilized flat pattern design and free hand cutting as pattern development techniques. The results concur with the observations of Pierce [2] that pattern drafting, draping design and CAD technique are critical to a fashion designer's concept being made into a garment. Pierce [2] further notes that each of these techniques serves the purpose of creating a style pattern that can be used to construct the designer's concept. It is important to bear in mind that without the use of these techniques, it is almost impossible for a new fashion design concept to be made into a wearable garment.

The strong association means that pattern making methods can be combined when designing garments. Therefore, the fairly high use of pattern making techniques other than the 'real' fabric draping for design may limit the fashion designers in one way or another. Dumridhammaporn *et al.* Reference [6] consider the 'real' fabric draping for design as pattern making method that reduces time wastage and increases accuracy in getting the right proportion to the cloth design and the models' satisfaction compared to flat pattern making techniques.

4.3. Teachers' Area of Training and 'Real' Fabric Draping Usage

From the results of the study, there is a relationship between teachers' area of training and use of 'real' fabric draping for design in public institutions of higher learning. The hypothesis test indicated that there is a weak association between teachers' area of training being dependent on the use of 'real' fabric draping for design. The results show that those trained in clothing and textile design had a higher probability of using 'real' fabric draping for design. Clothing and textile design as a unit of training involves pattern making which may involve draping as a pattern making method. This would translate into teachers' trained 'real' fabric draping for design as a technique.

The study findings further confirm that teachers' area of training is associated with the use of 'real' fabric draping for design. This finding seems consistent with those of MOEST [19] which observes a lack of staff development opportunities for curriculum implementers in Kenya. The report indicates that if teachers are well trained and highly motivated, learning will be enhanced. The results are consistent with the findings of Kang'a's [14] study that Home Science teachers also lack relevant training in the teaching and assessment of practical sessions.

The research findings on the use of 'real' fabric draping for design clearly indicate that a cohort of issues and concerns determines the use of 'real' fabric draping for design. These results are significant as they give insight into some dynamics in the fashion design learning system that work in association with others to influence the use of 'real' fabric draping for design.

Until recently, little practical knowledge on the art of draping has been documented beyond the introduction of the basics, leaving the craft to become a skill passed on from master to apprentice, just like tailoring [24].

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that majority of the teachers of fashion design in public institutions of higher learning are not trained in fashion design as an area of specialization. Moreover, very few public institutions of higher learning use 'real' fabric draping for design alleging that it is not prescribed in the curricula. It is also clear that the lack of skilled teachers in 'real' fabric draping for design can jeopardize the learning of the technique in public institutions of higher learning that offer fashion design training.

The study contributes to the field of knowledge on pattern development techniques taught, source of curriculum and teachers' area of training as indicators that have a strong association with the use of 'real' fabric draping for design. This area has not been sufficiently documented within Africa including Kenya. Fashion design researches should focus more on practices or artistic techniques in the field of fashion design. This is because only one institution out of the five involved in the study used 'real' fabric draping for design. This is in spite of the fact that a reasonable number of fashion designers use it and all fashion designers believe it should be taught to fashion design students.

6. Recommendations

From the findings and conclusions of the study, it is recommended that curriculum developers (universities and other stakeholders) should ensure that the curricula developed for fashion design courses include 'real' fabric draping technique for design. This will reduce the inconsistency in skills acquisition in fashion design courses. Moreover, public institutions of higher learning should offer short courses in 'real' fabric draping for interested learners to increase the number of skilled manpower with advanced and practical knowledge of the technique in fashion design industry.

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