

## **STUDY ON FASHION DESIGN STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN THE 2018 EXHIBITION AND FASHION DESIGN AND DEMONSTRATION COURSES AT THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF MALANG**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Fashion has become a part of modern society. Fashion designers show today's fashion works through activities such as exhibitions. The Bachelor of Fashion Education and Diploma of Fashion Design, Faculty of Industrial Technology, State University of Malang, hosted a show as a part of the Exhibition and Fashion Design and Demonstration courses. Students who participated reported problems at certain stages of the exhibition process. This study aimed to analyze these difficulties using a quantitative approach descriptively. Questionnaires were used for the data collection process with 58 samples. The results suggested that the main problem lay in production design and inspiration. Students' design challenges were material choices, storyboard creation, design principles application, and ideas generation. During the fashion production phase, a difficulty occurred during the sewing process and creating an action plan. The main organizational problem for students was cooperation with internal committees at the organizational stage.

Keywords: exhibition, difficulty, fashion creation, demonstration.

### **INTRODUCTION**

To date, fashion has become a part of modern society's lifestyle affecting many people's lives, and it has developed into a big industry. The rapid growth of fashion styles creates trends tailored to people's tastes. Creativity is essential for creating fashion trends to form a trend incorporated into fashion work. Fashion works that have been realized are displayed in fashion exhibitions. Fashion exhibitions are a way to publicize various today's fashion trends. They are carried out by fashion designers to showcase their work, displayed or exhibited, and must involve many parties who support the event to run successfully.

One of the many institutions conducting fashion exhibition activities is the Industrial Technology Department (Study Program) of the Bachelor of Fashion Education and

Diploma of Fashion Design at the State University of Malang in Exhibition and Fashion Design and Demonstration courses. These courses aim to plan a fashion exhibition event (fashion display), determine the theme, select a collection of finished products from the practicum following the sub-theme, collaborate with sponsors, arrange exhibition locations, create original fashion design images and work on it, and organize the event. The Exhibition course and the Fashion Design and Demonstration course are a series of preparation and implementation processes for a fashion exhibition, starting with the idea of creating a concept and ending with an exhibition or a show. This course has three stages: fashion design, production, and organization (CITIZEN Trend Fashion 2020, 2019), and each step has a series of activities.

Students had faced difficulties in fashion design in the 2017 Exhibition course and the Fashion Design and Exhibition course (Azizah, 2018). This did not rule out the possibility of difficulties during the fashion and organizational production stage (Widuri, 2013). Thus, the researchers continued the research through the Bachelor of Fashion Design Education, class of 2015, and Diploma Fashion Design, class of 2016, who took the 2018 Exhibition course and the Fashion Design and Demonstration course.

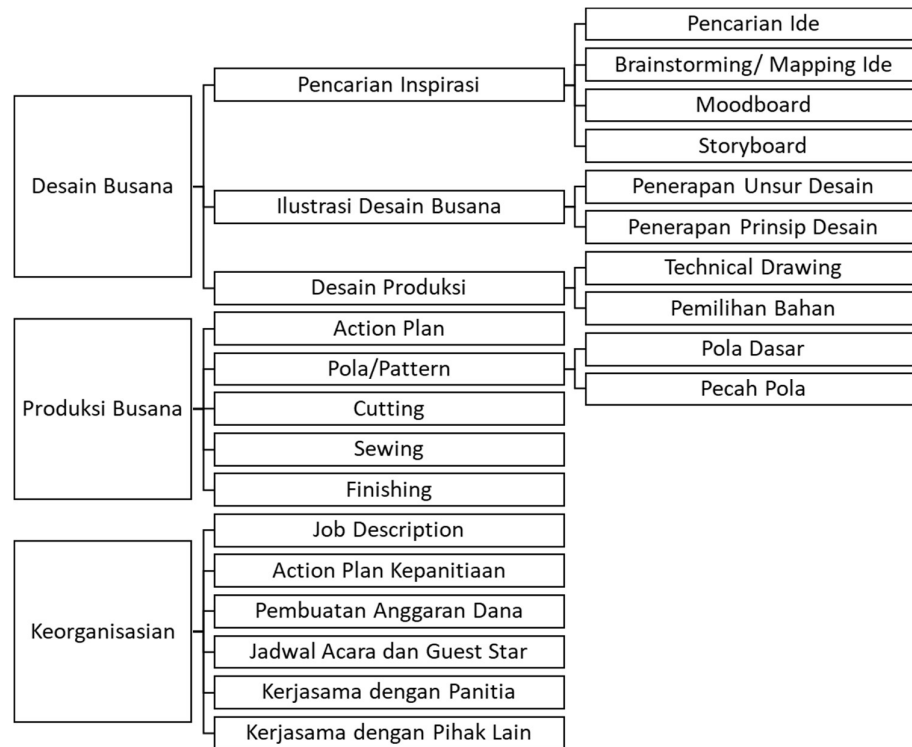
Based on the above background, the researchers analyzed students' difficulties in exhibition courses and titled the research "Study on Fashion Design Students' Difficulties in the 2018 Exhibition and Fashion and Demonstration courses at the State University of Malang".

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study was conducted using a quantitative descriptive research method on all Bachelor of Fashion Design Education, class of 2015, and Diploma Fashion Design, class of 2016, who took the 2018 Exhibition and Fashion Design and Demonstration courses. The total population were 58 people, consisting of 40 bachelor students 18 diploma students. Samples were taken using a non-probability sampling technique of saturated sampling (Sugiyono, 2017), in which all members of the population were sampled.

This study collected the data using a Likert scale of 1–4 (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, and 4=strongly agree) questionnaires set based on three stages in the Fashion Design and Demonstration course: fashion design, fashion production, and organization. The questionnaires were then tested using validity and reliability tests and obtained a validated questionnaire with 65 statements. Data analysis was done in percentage descriptive statistics for data interpretation.

The results were obtained based on the recapitulation of the obtained questionnaire results. The number of statement items in this questionnaire is 65 statement items. Figure 1 shows the details of each stage.



**Figure 1. Stages Detail in the 2018 Fashion and Demonstration Course**

### **Difficulty at the sub-variable of fashion design**

During the inspiration search, 58.6% of students found storyboard creation difficult, followed by 50% finding idea search difficult. Meanwhile, 48.25% of students stated that idea mapping was difficult, and 39.65% argued that mood boards were challenging to make. Overall, 58.6% of students struggled in the finding inspiration stage.

In the illustration section, 55.2% of students found it challenging to apply the design principles. However, only 39.6% of students had difficulties in using design elements. 48.25% of students still experienced difficulties in making design illustrations.

According to the students, the most challenging part during the production design was the material selection with 75.9%. Then, 46.6% of students found technical drawing difficult. Overall, 62% of students were troubled during the production designs. Therefore, 56.9% of students have difficulty in this stage.

### **Difficulty at the sub-variable fashion production**

A total of 53.4% of students stated that they had difficulty making an action plan. Based on the analysis, only 17.2% of students experienced problems making basic patterns, with 31% having problems with pattern drafting. Overall, only 24.2% of students experienced difficulties in pattern making. Based on the analysis, 19% of students found it challenging to do the cutting process. Furthermore, a total of 55.2% of students were troubled to do the sewing process. And 20.7% of students found the finishing process difficult. It can be concluded that 60.3% of students did not experience difficulties.

### **Difficulties at the sub-variable organizational**

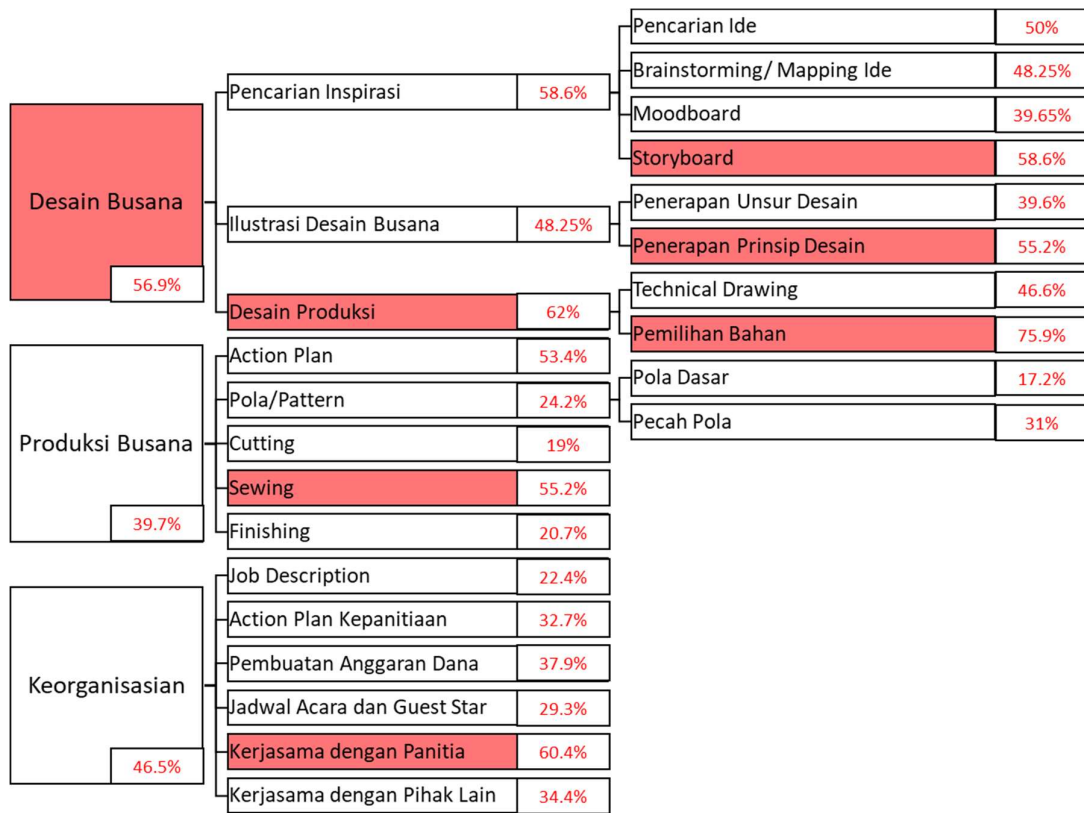
A total of 22.4% of students experienced problems understanding the job description due to the lack of ability of each individual. In the section of committee's action plan, only 32.7% experienced difficulties. Furthermore, 37.9% of students had difficulty budgeting, especially realizing the planned budget. Most students, or 70.7%, tended to determine the schedule of events and guest stars who would be invited easily, while 29.3% had because they were less confident. Overall, 60.4% of students found it difficult to cooperate with the committee. And last, 34.4% of students experienced problems in cooperating with other parties. It can be concluded that 46.5% of students experienced difficulties at the organizational stage.

### **Difficulties in general**

The fashion design stage had the most significant difficulty sub-variable with 56.9% experiencing challenges, followed by the organizational sub-variable with 43.1% students and fashion production sub-variable with 39.6% students. Overall, 53.4% of Fashion Design Students' State University of Malang have difficulty in the implementation of Exhibition and Fashion and Demonstration courses in 2018.

## **DISCUSSION**

The discussion was based on the difficulties at each stage: (1) fashion designing, (2) fashion production, and (3) organization. Figure 2 shows the most significant difficulty for students from each stage.



**Figure 2. Difficulties Faced by Students at Each Stage in the 2018 Fashion Design and Demonstration Course**

### Difficulty at the fashion design stage

Based on the results, It showed that students experienced difficulty finding ideas, especially tracing ideas directly to build the desired design concept, followed by students' problems in uniting ideas and design concepts in a sentence to be conveyed clearly, or storyboard making. According to Aini (2020), a storyboard is sketches illustrating a sequence of stories as a guide. However, some students were considered capable of brainstorming/mapping ideas and making mood boards. At the stage of finding inspiration, most of the students did not master the skills and exploration to be inspired based on the concept. According to Cinar (2017), inspiration is vital in the fashion design process because a search for it influences a designer's quality.

In the illustration section, the percentages show that students were still troubled to apply the principles of fashion design following the concept. Verdita's (2016) stated that the lack of knowledge and skills in applying design principles makes the results look less attractive. Overall, almost all students still experienced difficulties in making design illustrations. Thus, most students could not complete the stage while some mastered it.

An appropriate fashion design illustration must contain elements and principles to realize a design with the desired concept. Making fashion illustrations is a skill that fashion design students must master, but not all students can apply it. It can be concluded that almost some students still did not understand the theory of design elements and principles and use them.

Based on the data recapitulation at the production design, many students had more difficulty selecting materials than technical drawings. According to Astuti (2013), the cause of the obstacles in selecting primary or complementary materials is the lack of knowledge about textiles and fashion decoration. An overview of the design is separated into several sections in the production design, including accessories and material samples. Most students are still troubled during the production designs. This is contrary to Nurliana et al. (2021) that the production design must be described clearly and in detail to make it easier to explain the parts of the design. It is necessary to have a complete, precise, and complete production design drawing accompanied by supporting information to achieve perfection in the production process. This opinion shows that the problem was caused by a lack of knowledge and information about textile materials and supporting materials and describing the accessories that followed the concept and problems.

In fashion design stage, it was assumed that they still find it challenging to explore and develop creativity to realize fashion designs following the concepts. This is contrary to Yuliati (2007) statement that making fashion designs requires a source of inspiration and imagination to increase creativity in the manufacturing process.

### **Difficulty at the fashion production stage**

In the section on making an action plan, most of the students had difficulty making an action plan. Details of clothing production activities using an action plan act as a benchmark for designers in completing the process. Students found it more challenging to achieve the determined targets and realize the plans, even though they made action plans themselves as strategies and directions (Chalid, 2019). This relates to their ability to make reasonable action plans and measure their capabilities as designers.

Based on the results, a small percentage of students are having difficulties in making basic patterns and pattern drafting. It shows that most students mastered the stage in line with Ernawati et al. (2008), in which pattern making is critical because the clothes significantly affect the wearer's satisfaction. Overall, most students mastered the pattern formula and its application to the design model and pattern drafting analysis. The respondent's skills were also adequate in understanding the techniques related to the

pattern-making process. As Ruhidawati (2016) stated, making the correct fashion pattern will produce comfortable and suitable clothes for the body. However, some students still struggled in making basic patterns and pattern drafting because they did not understand the basic pattern construction and analysis.

Based on the analysis of the cutting process, Almost all students tended to have no difficulty understanding the fiber direction and placing the patterns, and students also did not find the cutting process difficult. The cutting process is a process that most students do not have difficulty with. According to Ernawati et al. (2008), cutting materials affect clothing manufacture; if something goes wrong, it will result in time and cost losses.

Most students were troubled to do the sewing process. Applying specific techniques such as couture sewing and tailoring methods, applying sewing techniques with aesthetic value, stitch resistance, and sewing comfort were some of the things with a high level of difficulty. According to Kodrat & Sutanti (2020), the sewing process takes quite a long time due to the high level of difficulty and accuracy. The problems respondents face in the sewing process depend on the individual ability to produce their clothing.

At the stage of the finishing process, the most obvious was ironing and finishing the decorations or accessories that complement the clothes. However, this process was one of the lowest levels of the other processes, proving that most students could complete it. According to Budgeti & Umami (2021), finishing is the final stage of clothing to optimize the results of excellent and neat clothes to wear. The finishing process includes cleaning threads and scraps, checking unconnected seams, and applying decorative accessories on the clothes to make them look perfect.

It can be concluded that most students could perform the stages of fashion production properly and follow the procedure. Prahastuti et al. (2020) addressed that a fashion product can be considered comfortable if the clothing is made proportionally to suit the user. The fashion production stage embodies the designs created by students, and every step must be done carefully with the proper techniques to produce perfect clothes.

### **Difficulties at the organizational stage**

Based on the analysis, respondents tended to have less difficulty understanding their duties and carrying out their responsibilities in their respective job descriptions. Most students showed a relatively clear understanding of organizational activities. They did not find it difficult to carry out their work and personal responsibilities, as Kamal & Widodo

(2018) stated that job descriptions are needed for the committee to carry out their duties following their respective job descriptions. Job descriptions are made so that the prepared plans run well and smoothly.

Respondents also tended to do well in building and understanding the committee's action plan. However, a small number still had a problem understanding and carrying out tasks. The respondent's knowledge of the committee's action plan was influenced by teamwork and a shared understanding of the planning by the committee as a whole. The opinion of Pratolo & Bintoro (2003) stated that an action plan must be made in detail both in setting goals and performance targets.

Some students had difficulty budgeting. This difficulty could be sourced from their ability to prepare budgets and personal financial capabilities. However, most students can plan budgets and manage budgets accordingly. Usman & Haryadi (2017) argued that good fund planning produces good fundflows for future activities and funds.

A small percentage of students had difficulty in planning event schedules and guest stars carefully and thoroughly. According to Rindengan et al. (2018), scheduling allocates time to carry out activities to get optimal results. The right decisions were needed to run smoothly to schedule the events and guest stars. In addition, inviting guest stars is to attract attention and entertain the guests who are present since, according to Soesatyo & Rumambi (2013), artists or celebrities play a role in attracting attention and awareness general public. Besides, inviting guest stars is also one marketing strategy to attract visitors to the event.

Based on the results, most of the students found it difficult to cooperate with the committee. Cooperation with the committee has greater difficulty than indicators in the organizational section. The difficulties were seen from the non-conductive process of committee meetings, communication problems between committees, low committee motivation, and internal committee problems. The situation is contrary to Hamiruddin et al. (2019), in which cooperation among committee members can generate performance of collaboration and communication between individuals and groups. Most students could not establish cooperation, especially in communication, because they were not open and afraid to express opinions. According to Setiyanti (2012), collaboration requires mutual trust, openness, motivation to work, and communication between members. In running an event, partnership with the committee is essential to run smoothly and successfully.

Some students have experienced problems in cooperating with other parties. Most found parties to collaborate in exhibition activities, establish collaborations, and ensure that the partnership ran smoothly. This is in line with Surminah (2013), with the opinion



that collaborating parties must contribute to or mutually benefit the other party. However, some students were troubled in cooperating with other parties, and some were hard to look for other parties or sponsors and establish good relationships with other parties in the exhibition. Evelina (2011) argued that in creating an excellent cooperative relationship, communication on both sides is expected to run smoothly to meet all needs. Cooperation with other parties in this activity establishes relationships with sponsors and parties who provide facilities and infrastructure to support this activity.

Overall, this proves that most had carried out administrative activities well and could make a successful exhibition as stated by Kuswarno (2001) that the relatively stable relationship between members of the organization makes the organization run effectively in achieving its goals. However, some students could not carry out overall organizational activities because they became committee and implementers who ran the grand show while also playing designers.

### **Difficulties in general**

The fashion design stage had the most significant difficulty, followed by organizational sub-variable, and fashion production sub-variable. The more substantial problem with the fashion design stage was that most students were not prepared and mastered the design concept that will be realized and displayed in the event's highlight or the Grand show. Students were required to prepare five designs/looks for ready-to-wear clothing that followed the predetermined theme. Students should also produce clothes that match the designs made to the details, such as complements or accessories. Students also carried out organizational activities of event organizers or committees that required time, energy, and costs.

### **CONCLUSION**

This research aimed to describe the difficulties experienced by students in implementing the 2018 Exhibition course and Fashion Design and Demonstration course. This research succeeded in answering the problem formulation at the beginning with the following details: (1) the main difficulties during the fashion design stage were finding inspiration with 58,6% and the production designs with 62%. In more detail, in the process of fashion design stage, the difficulties experienced by students are sorted according to the level of difficulty percentage, on the finding inspiration indicator in finding idea sub-indicator with a total of 50% and the storyboard creation sub-indicator with a total of 58.6%. Then, on the indicator of making design illustration in sub-indicator of the applying design principles with

a total of 55.2%. And finally, on the indicator production design in selecting material sub-indicator with a total of 75.9%, (2) the main difficulties during the fashion production stage were the making of an action plan indicator with 53,4% and sewing process indicator with 55,2%, (3) the main difficulty during the organizational stage were internal committee cooperation with 60,4%.

The results indicated that, in general, students had various difficulties in each stage of the implementation of the courses. This research has described the difficulties in whichever part students experience in the implementation process.

### **SUGGESTIONS**

This study was carried out using a quantitative descriptive research method on all Bachelor of Fashion Design Education, class of 2015, and Diploma Fashion Design, class of 2016, who took the 2018 Exhibition and Fashion Design and Demonstration courses and only sought the general problems and difficulties faced students in implementing the subject. However, this study did not explore the causes and factors that influence them in more detail. Based on the conclusions, several things are suggested: (1) during fashion design, students should further develop their skills in exploring and mastering the concept of design ideas and pay attention to techniques in applying design principles in making design illustrations. In addition, students must also increase their knowledge of various kinds of textile materials and adapt them to the design concept that will be realized. (2) During the fashion production stage, students are expected to improve their performance in pursuing the targets that have been made in the fashion production action plan. Students are also expected to enhance their ability to apply various sewing techniques to produce neat clothes without defects. (3) During the organizational stage, students should play a more significant role in building communication relationships, the creativity of each member, motivation in work and mutual trust to create a close cooperative relationship.

For students who would like to take the courses, this research can be used as a reference to understand the problems they may face. This research can be used as a benchmark and preparation before carrying out the course.

For lecturers and institutions, these difficulties can be solved to improve the lecturers and institutions' performances as the people in charge of the event. This research can reference what factors can be improved in future exhibitions.

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