Fashion Collection Design Guidelines for Elderly Women *in Bangkok Based on Thai Cultural Heritage*

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Abstract

Aging populations are increasing significantly worldwide, thereby generating aging societies. Certain product categories that interest elderly women in Bangkok include healthcare, lifestyle fashion, and culture. Cultural heritage are recognized as an important tool that can promote products and brand image. Fashion collection design based on cultural heritage concepts or storytelling have more opportunities to succeed in the fashion market. This research investigates two main points: (1) elderly women's needs and preferences for fashion products and (2) conceptual guidelines for designing a fashion collection based on Thai cultural heritage. The sample population of this study included 439 elderly women from Bangkok. Our findings proposed conceptual guidelines, with three possible approaches to designing a fashion collection for older women: modern-minimal, luxury-feminine and Boho-ethnic styles. This study includes an implementation of the guidelines with eight prototype outfits.

Keywords: *Fashion Design, Cultural Heritage, Elderly Women, Bangkok, Design Guidelines, Thailand*

Introduction

The aging population is currently a global issue, and a direct consequence of the decline in global fertility and mortality due to old age. It is one of the leading global demographic trends of the 21st century (Gavrilov, Leonid and Heuveline, 2003) and has significant effects on all sections of society, such as shifts in labor and financial markets, the changing demands for goods and services, transportation and social protection, and intergenerational ties (United Nations, 2015). The aging population is also increasing in Thailand and the National Elderly Council was instituted in 1982 to address the issues affecting the country's elderly. In addition, Thailand is ranked as the third most rapidly aging population in the world. There are approximately eight million people, aged 60 years and over, living in Thailand. By 2040, the aging population in Thailand is expected to reach 17 million, accounting for 25 percent of its total population. One in every four Thais will be a senior citizen at that predicted moment (Help Age global network, 2015).

Considering the aging population in Thailand, there is an increased demand for products that suit them such as cosmetics, fashion products, and healthcare (60+ Project, 2018). People over 55 are wealthier and healthier than in the past and also have more time to spend money before, and during retirement (Kay, 2017). It is important for the fashion market to be aware of their significant purchasing power.

Owing to the increase in the number of aging women in Thailand, there is an economic incentive for businesses to target these mature customers and build a fashion brand for them. In the current fashion landscape, very few brands are aimed at this emerging consumer. However, grouping all elderly consumers into only one category or style neglects the subsegments (Greco, 1986). Cultural heritage and design play an important role in Thailand. One indication of the growing market for cultural products is the significant support received from the Ministry of Culture Promotion in Thailand in this context, such as through funding for the development of cultural textile products and sales.

This study investigates two main points: (1) elderly women's needs for fashion products and their style preferences, and (2) conceptual guidelines for designing a fashion collection based on Thai cultural heritage. This study was conducted by using both qualitative and quantitative methods. In the Introduction section, the guideline components, such as cross-cultural and universal design concepts for designing a fashion collection are described to provide a clear understanding. The section emphasizes the rising of Asian fashion influences and the possibilities of developing a local cultural heritage into a global fashion scene.

Aging Population and Consumption in Thailand

Aging consumers have specific needs and considerable purchasing power. The Department of International Trade Promotion of the Ministry of Commerce has initiated the 60+ Project to meet the aging market's rising demands and to develop opportunities for Thai manufacturers and service providers in both foreign and local markets (Department of International Trade Promotion, 2019). The project promotes specific products and services for the elderly in Thailand, such as cosmetics

and spa products, innovative products, construction materials, fashion products, food and beverages, furniture and household, medical devices, and services for seniors. This concrete support from the Thai government highlights the significance of this emerging target market in Thailand.

The lifestyles of the aging population in Thailand have dramatically changed from generally staying at home to spending time on leisure activities such as shopping, attending social activities, and meeting with friends and family. Aging women in Thailand spend money on reasonably priced products and services (Anantachart, 2013). There is a significantly high expected consumption of garments for aesthetic elements, comfort, and quality, which meets the demands of the elderly women market in Bangkok, Thailand (Kasikorn Bank, 2018).

A Neilson report in 2016 on "The New Wave of Thais" indicates that the aging consumer is steadily growing in number, and there are marketing gaps for products and services tailored to their needs. In addition, a 2018 report from the Kasikorn Bank Research Center, Thailand, mentioned that the needs for aging consumers are fashion and lifestyle products, interior and furniture, as well as medical-related equipment. This concurs with the Department of Industrial Promotion's (Thailand) statement regarding major demands in the aging market for food, furniture, lifestyle fashion products, medical equipment, interior, and home decoration. Furthermore, Thailand's 20-year national strategy includes the development of local entrepreneurs using cultural capital in creative cultural products (Public Relations, Ministry of Culture Promotion, 2019). This issue indicates the importance of the emergence of culturally related product markets, both local and international.

The main characteristics of products for aging populations are usually not presented directly. They may be represented in terms of more convenient or more comfortable products. There are three main factors to carefully consider when designing a product for an aging population: (1) changes in social and cultural factors, (2) changes in emotions towards individual experiences, and (3) changes in physical competence.

Cultural Heritage and Fashion

As a result of growing Asian economies, there are more opportunities, especially for Asian brands to benefits more from their cultural heritage (Ko and Lee, 2011). It is important for a heritage brand to be relevant to consumers in modern fashion systems (Thomas, 2016). In Urde and Greyser (2015), a "heritage brand" portrays its significant and rich history using symbols, core values, and organizational beliefs. Heritage and storytelling add more value to a brand (Thomas, 2016).

A brand or product with a certain heritage or story will have a greater chance of becoming successful in the fashion market (Kendall, 2009). In addition, if the brand can communicate its heritage and history, it tends to become successful internationally (Kapferer and Bastien, 2012). Important designers who have successfully interpreted their cultural heritage in fashion design include Thea Porter, Vivienne Westwood, Missoni, and Kenzo (Cole and Deihl, 2015). Asian fashion

design grew significantly after the entry of Asian movies to the United States in the 1990s (Sproles and Burns, 1994). Ethnic influence was introduced to Europe by Yves Saint-Laurent in 1967 through their Africa collection (McDowell, 2013).

Fashion changes over time through the interpretation of current cultures and social movements transforming from basic human needs to lifestyles. Fashion movements (trends) are influenced by many factors that are difficult to predict, such as the social and psychological situation of a particular society (Barnard, 2002). There is no definite academic evidence or proof of style segmentation in fashion market research, since people's fashion styles usually change according to fashion trends (Wind, 2011). Therefore, it is crucial to identify each target fashion style at a certain moment by conducting research to discover consumer preferences before designing a collection or building a fashion brand.

In terms of apparel, fashion style is a distinguishing characteristic in a specific category (Sproles and Burns, 1994). A fashion brand usually portrays a specific fashion style. Clear and specific fashion styles will distinguish brand character in the market (Fashionary, 2017). The style of a fashion brand is usually described by its distinguishing characteristics which help to reflect a consumer's identity. There are various identifying styles and values for a brand to be signified, such as feminine, ethnic, minimal, modern, luxurious, punk, hippie, baroque, and rebellious. These style keywords refer to important historic fashion moments.

Methods to start designing a fashion collection include developing inspiration mood boards, material sourcing, detail development, color planning, and trend research. In addition, designers must be able to creatively implement heritage, history, current social situations, or conceptual ideas to complete new design concepts. Significant design elements, which are the result of the interpretation of seasonal concepts or inspiration, include silhouettes, details, color, and materials (Fashionary, 2017).

Cross-cultural Design Concept

Culture is the sum of people's beliefs and ways of life. As stated by Hofstede, culture is considered a way of life for a group of people, including their behaviors, beliefs, values, and symbols that they accept, naturally and generally without thinking about them. Communication and imitation are ways in which the compositions of each culture are passed from one generation to the next (Hofstede, 1997). It is becoming obvious that designing culture into various ranges of products will become a global design trend (Lin, 2007). As culture has become more involved in various fields of design, cross-cultural design concepts will become the focus of design evaluation and appropriation in the future.

Globalization has often been referred to as westernization specially in Asian regions during the last century (Ko and Lee, 2011). There are many accusations of cultural appropriation in fashion, especially in an age where fashion design usually borrows design elements from other cultures. Misinterpretation of, or disregard for certain cultural significances or traditions can easily lead to drastic

consequences, even unintentionally (Vézina, 2019). Since the rise in exoticism as a trend, and the rapid growth of Asian economies, Asian cultures have received significant global attention. Asian brands have more opportunities to benefit from cultural heritage branding strategies (Ko and Lee, 2011). Considering unique local cultural heritage to build a brand is an advantage as key propositions derive from certain aspects of cultural heritage, such as beliefs, history, and the use of symbols that will differentiate the brand from competitors in the market (Urde and Greyser, 2015).

Since Thailand has a rich cultural heritage, the country and its designers tend to rely on Western fashion styles as references for the designs to be able to communicate and sell in the era of globalization. Thailand has undergone cultural diffusion in different aspects, including its military, education, technology, and lifestyles, since the Ayutthaya Kingdom in 1350. As a country, it tends to receive and absorb different cultures more easily. Cultural heritage in Thailand can be divided into four regions: northern, northeastern, central, and southern (One World - Nations Online, 2019). Each region represents a different perspective on lifestyle and tradition. This cultural heritage has been widely used for product design and service in Thailand, since the One Tambon, One Product program in 2001, which was influenced by the One Village, One Product from Japan. In addition, products or services that include cultural capital are called cultural products (Ko and Lee, 2011).

This also results in the tendency to use a cross-cultural design approach that is suitable for developing fashion brands in Thailand, merging its cultural heritage with Western fashion styles. Cross-cultural design, in terms of fashion, examines cultural design elements, such as tangible and intangible cultural capital. In this study, the idea of a cross-cultural design concept is used to combine Western fashion style with Thailand's cultural heritage.

A cross-cultural design approach helps designers examine appropriate cultures cautiously and make use of the design strategy. This approach divides layers of cultural heritage, into outer, middle, and inner levels, for proper use in design. Each level is suitable for a different design approach. An outer-level design usually brings tangible cultural heritage directly to the designed product. The mid-level tends to apply a mixture of tangible and intangible cultural heritages in the product design. The inner level ties intangible cultural heritage to product design, by applying spiritual or belief systems (Ko and Lee, 2011). The aim of this research is to examine how to make proper use of the cross-cultural design approach in the fashion design process.

Universal Design Concept
Usually, fashion design concepts consist of specific design elements, such as silhouette, color, material, mood and tone, and finishing details (Utiswannakul, 2017). Nevertheless, there are currently no specific design guidelines for aging consumers. In terms of universal design concepts, there are commonly used elements in architectural design that are generally applied for the elderly—— proper slopes

for walkways, anti-slip bathroom floors, and automated lighting, for example. There are no such adaptations for the elderly in fashion. The elderly consumer requires consideration for the appropriateness of products that can include comfortable textiles and suitable closures.

In Martins and Martins (2012), the authors described the universal design concept in terms of fashion.

The universal design concept is the strategy that cooperates the most with the elderly, especially in architectural design, product design, and interior design (Martins and Martins, 2012)."

Their research recommended transferring seven significant elements of universal design concepts —equitable use, flexible use, simple and intuitive use, clear information, tolerance for error, minimum physical effort, and dimensions appropriate for use and comfort — into fashion design elements. The table below indicates recommendations for developing fashion products and clothing based on the seven principles of universal design, transferred to fashion design approaches.

Universal Design (General Design Approach)	Universal Design (Fashion Design Approach)
1. Equitable use	Easy for anyone to use, functionality, comfort
2. Flexible use	The fibers used should be the softest and most flexible ones, easily washable and capable of maintaining a comfortable body temperature
3. Simple and intuitive use	Magnetized fastening mechanisms that facilitate handling, zipper with an anthropomorphic tag for easy handling
4. Clear information	Readability of warning messages or care required to maintain clothing
5. Tolerance for error	The clothes should be made with soft fabrics such as worsted fabric, plain fabric with fibers of natural origin
6. Minimum physical effort	Trimmings and materials used should not hurt the skin or cause irritations or allergies
7. Dimensions appropriate for use and comfort	The forms should not be adjusted and tightened, thus respecting the need for movement.

Figure 1. Table of recommendations for developing fashion products and clothing, applying the seven principles of universal design (Martins and Martins, 2012).

Materials and Methods

This research was conducted in Bangkok, Thailand, as a case study to obtain models for designing fashion collections for aging women in the city. The target group was elderly women with different fashion styles, aged between 55 and 65. This study focused only on female consumers, since they are the main purchasers of fashion products. It employed a mixed method, including quantitative and qualitative research. The qualitative research method included the paper doll data set method (Yamaguchi, Kiapour, Ortiz, and Berg, 2012) and various expert interviews. The quantitative research method included a questionnaire with females, aged 55-65 years old, in Bangkok.

First, 500 pictures of local and international elderly women were randomly collected from social media, between February to April 2019, and processed through

the paper doll data set method, which includes style, length, color, and material comparison to derive elder women's style preferences (Yamaguchi, Kiapour, Ortiz, and Berg, 2012). According to Western fashion style, these 500 pictures can be divided into five main categories. However, three categories are distinctively high in number: Boho-ethnic (183), modern-minimal (195), and feminine-vintage (103). Those with a very small frequency, street-casual (16), and modern-feminine, (3) were not included.

Quantitative Research
(Elderly women's needs in fashion products, culture, and fashion styles)
A quantitative research approach was used to analyze the fashion styles and specific lifestyles of aging women in Bangkok, Thailand, using questionnaires. The ages of the elderly women targeted in this research ranged from 55 to 65 years old, since they are now the most elderly women in Thailand. This study investigated consumer behavior based on two key variables: age and gender in Thailand (female, aged 55-65 years old). The questionnaires were distributed via offline (shopping district in Bangkok), and online channels. Data were collected between May and November 2018.

The questionnaire developed for this study was qualified by three experts related to the research topic—including two fashion and textile design lecturers and one designer— using the index of item-objective congruence (IOC) method. The questionnaire was considered congruent-, with an index of 0.946.

The questionnaire incorporated three sections. The first part ascertained demographics: income, age, and marital status. The second part related to consumer behavior in fashion, culture, and preferred fashion styles. The third part obtained insights into the consumption of fashion products.

A total of 317 questionnaires were completed online, and 122 were completed offline. The total number of usable questionnaires was 439, with a variance deviation of 5% and a standard deviation of 95% from the Taro Yamane population sampling. The answers were analyzed using frequency, percentage, average, and deviation to obtain information on interest in products, preferred fashion styles, and cultural interests.

Qualitative Research
(Conceptual Model for Designing a Fashion Collection Based on Thai Cultural Heritage)
A qualitative approach was used to derive guidelines for the consideration of cultural heritage and fashion design concepts. This was done using comments from the selected experts. The researcher revised theories using two approaches: (1) design concepts, including cross-cultural design and universal design to reach fashion design guidelines for elderly women; (2) fashion design strategies to find a suitable solution for a design collection. These frameworks were intended to structure the guidelines from the conceptual aspect of specific design strategies.

Experts in different areas related to the scope of the research, were selected to derive and recommend suitable guidelines for building fashion and lifestyle brand

approaches based on Thai cultural heritage. Since this research focused on fashion brand building, cultural design, and fashion research, the panel of selected experts included fashion designers Mr. Parunrop Prueksophee and Mr. Chatchawan Puenpra, fashion history and research methodology lecturer Dr. Siwaree Arunyanart, cultural textile entrepreneur Mr. Korakot Pangjai, and fashion design lecturer Dr. Chanakarn Ruengnarong. This research process used the Delphi technique of interviewing each expert twice to develop the models.

Results and Discussion

Results from Quantitative Research

Each fashion style represents different characteristics of consumers and brands. The research questions included (1) preferred fashion styles, (2) interest in cultural heritage, and (3) buying habits.

The questionnaire included a character mood board with fashion style keywords, from which participants could choose their preferences. The results show that there are varied interests in fashion styles among elderly women in Bangkok: Boho-ethnic style shows 46.46%, modern-urban style 41.45%, and luxury-feminine style shows 12.07%.

Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Boho-Ethnic	204	46.46
Modern-Urban	182	41.45
Luxury-Feminine	53	12.07

Figure 2. Preferred fashion styles of elderly women.

Each fashion style can be described according to western fashion style as follows:

Modern-urban: A person with a minimalist lifestyle and stylish urban dressing style. This fashion refers to the minimalist aesthetics of the 1990s, which represent working women in urban areas. Minimalism aims to use simple clean lines with neutral and solid colors (Cole and Deihl, 2015). According to the results of the quantitative research, this group tends to spend most of their time within the city. They can keep abreast with changing technologies and trends. Those who selected the Modern-Urban fashion style also selected hanging out with friends and family (41%) and working (22%). This indicates that many of them are still working and socializing.

Boho-ethnic: A person who is obsessed with culturally related products with a bold and vibrant fashion approach. The style best refers to the 1970s' cultural and tribal influence on fashion, which is called ethnic or tribal fashion (the style derived from the adoption of such designs in Europe). According to the results of the quantitative research, this group prefers culturally related products. According to the questionnaire, their lifestyle indicated that 32% of them tended to travel, 22% participate in festivals, and 38% choose to hang out with friends and family.

Luxury-feminine: Delicate girly dressing with soft and feminine touches. This style can be related to the 1950s fashion style, which represents feminine and sweet-looking fashion with fluid silhouettes, luxury textiles, and delicate embellishments. According to the results of the questionnaires, 19% of this group of women were responsible for regular housework, 42% for culinary work, and 18% were interested in learning traditional crafts.

The results from the questionnaire indicate that Boho-ethnic interest in northeastern cultural heritage was 44.60%, northern cultural heritage was 35.78%, central cultural heritage was 18.36%, and southern cultural heritage was 8.16%. Modern-urban interest in northern cultural heritage was 46.64%, central cultural heritage was 32.33%, northeastern cultural heritage was 5.30%, and southern cultural heritage was 3.18%. Luxury-feminine interest in northeastern cultural heritage was 38.22%, northern cultural heritage was 11.53%, central cultural heritage was 5.46%, and southern cultural heritage was 1.82%. These results indicate suitable cultural heritage or storytelling that will be part of the design collection concept or inspiration. For example, the most suitable storytelling inspiration for a collection of modern-urban consumers should be from the central and northern cultural heritages of Thailand.

Fashion Style/ Cultural Heritage	Northern Cultural Heritage		Northeastern Cultural Heritage		Central Cultural Heritage		Southern Cultural Heritage	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Boho-ethnic	73	35.78	91	44.60	9	18.36	4	8.16
Modern-urban	88	46.64	10	5.30	61	32.33	6	3.18
Luxury-feminine	21	11.53	21	38.22	3	5.46	1	1.82
TOTAL	182		122		73		11	

Figure 3. Highest level (5) of interest in cultural heritage in elderly women according to fashion styles (Cross tabulation with fashion styles).

The results of the questionnaire indicated that elderly women in Bangkok most frequently purchased apparel (85.42 %), cosmetics (28.25 %), accessories (25.06 %), home decorations (3.42 %), and stationary (2.05 %). There is a strong interest in fashion apparel, cosmetics, and accessories. This indicates an opportunity to develop fashion collections or brands for elderly women in Bangkok. It is also important to note that the factors that aging women considered the most when purchasing culturally related products were quality, material, design concept, brand reputation, modern design, and store design and decoration.

Categories	X	S.D.	Level
Healthcare	3.54	1.58	Highest
Apparel	3.74	1.28	Highest
Cosmetics	2.35	1.15	High
Accessories	1.63	1.01	Low
Home Decoration	1.22	1.15	Low

Figure 4. Elderly women's buying habits.

Results from Qualitative Research

In the qualitative research method, examples of guidelines were developed to obtain reviews from experts. According to the literature review on cross-cultural design, universal design, and fashion design concepts, there is a first draft guideline that was discussed by experts. The model was then developed, and discussed with experts. As a result, all five experts agreed that the conceptual model for creating fashion design guidelines for aging women based on Thailand's cultural heritage is viable. The following are the comments and recommendations from each expert regarding the second set of proposed guidelines.

Experts	Recommendations
Fashion design lecturer (1)	Guidelines are proper, but there should be some implementation from the model. The universal design concept should be more involved in product development. In terms of cross-cultural aspect, it is important to be more concerned about the aspects of original Thai culture. However, the concept of dividing Thai cultural heritage in four parts is useable. Also, there might be differences in consumer's fashion style in the future, since fashion trends are usually changing. (sic)
Fashion design lecturer (2)	They are proper guidelines now. However, there might be differences in consumers' fashion styles in the future. I was curious if this model will be able to fit the upcoming aging women, in 10-15 years. The closure such as zips and buttons should make elderly women feel comfortable and effortless in using them. (sic)
Fashion design lecturer (3)	The universal design concept is important, and the designer must be more careful in fabric selection for elderly women such as organic textiles and natural color dying. (sic)
Fashion history and research methodology lecturer	Would it be possible for the researcher to explain more about the cultural design concept, in terms of usage? There are differences in the needs for cultural related products in different styles in fashion. Then, the model should divide fashion styles to properly use the cross-cultural design concept (sic)
Cultural textile entrepreneur in Nan province	The model is a good example of how to interlink cultural heritage with a fashion and lifestyle brand building approach. However, it might cause some conflict, and the designer should be the one who closely studies western culture. (sic)

Figure 5. Second reviews and comments from the experts, pertaining to the guidelines.

After discussing the first draft model and adopting suggestions, the model was redeveloped and discussed with experts. All experts agreed that the model was appropriate for developing lifestyle fashion and lifestyle brands for elderly women in Thailand, based on Thai cultural heritage.

The guidelines for designing a fashion collection for elderly women in Bangkok, based on cultural heritage, can be described as follows:

According to quantitative research, there are three major fashion styles among older women in Bangkok. Each style represents different fashion preferences, based on the history of Western fashion. In terms of cross-cultural design, elderly women prefer garments with different needs, ranging from bold and noticeable cultural aspects to applied and analyzed cultural elements in the design collection. The guidelines for designing a fashion collection based on Thai cultural heritage can be divided into three possibilities according to the interests shown in each of the cultural heritage areas. In every approach to designing a collection, experts recommend including universal design concepts, since it satisfies the aging women's needs in terms of details, finishing, and proper functions. The universal design concept will help designers to carefully examine their needs. It may not be necessary for a designer to use all aspects of the universal design concept. However, keeping some significant ideas relevant to the design collection will help better communicate the product to the consumer.
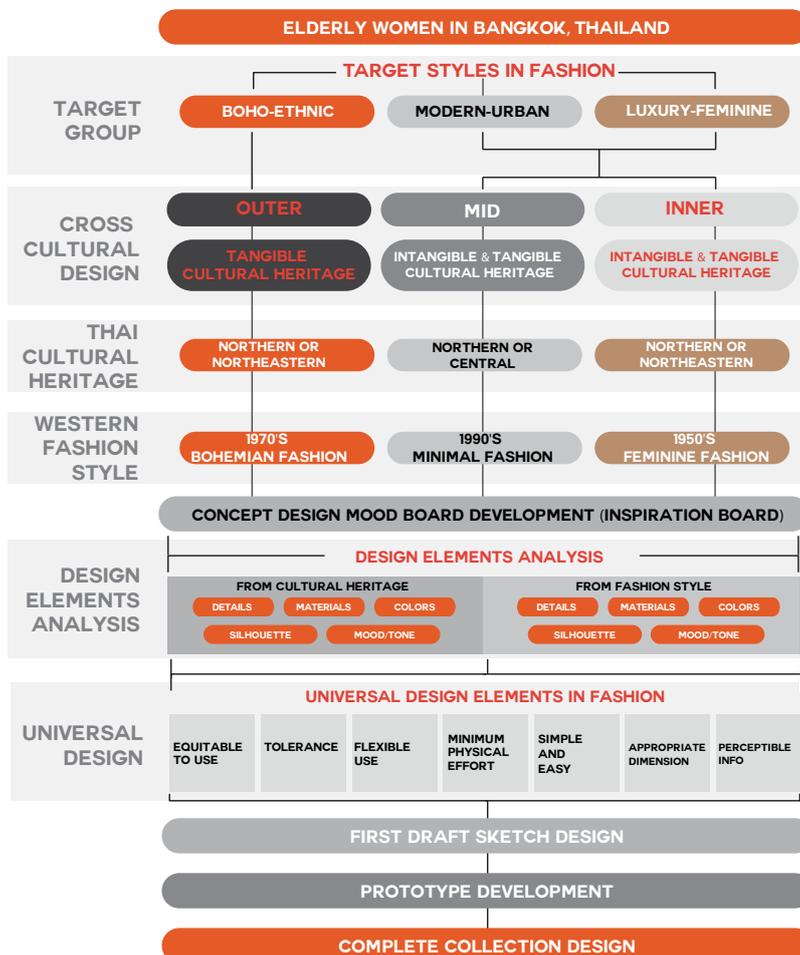

Figure 6. Guidelines in creating brand identity for aging women in Bangkok, Thailand based on cultural heritage.

There are three approaches to designing a fashion collection, as shown in the first figure. To design a collection for elderly women, it is advisable to start with a target style that is suitable for the cross-cultural design concept, with influences of Thai cultural heritage and Western fashion styles. The designer can then develop a conceptual mood board for the designs, based on two cultural aspects. Design elements from both cultures were analyzed together, based on the universal design concept. New techniques, colors, and textiles were developed for this new collection. Before delivering the complete prototype, the designer draws a first draft and uses the toile to develop the prototype structure. The design collection approaches are divided into the following styles:

1. *Modern-urban:* According to fashion history, this consumer group is related to the 1990s fashion style. In the 1990s, the idea of minimalism was embodied in fashion. The aesthetic changed from the excess in the 1980s to a more basic look with advanced technology in textiles such as nylon and stretchy fabrics. This resulted in a completely urban look, with unfussy volumes and simple lines (Olivia, 2017). They tended not to use culturally representative fashion products.

To design a collection for this target group, the 1990s fashion style should be combined with central and northern Thai cultural heritage as inspirations. In this case, the cross-cultural design concept should be applied to the middle or inner levels. Tangible or intangible cultural heritage should interpret social behavioral cultures and spiritual ideal cultures such as arts, beliefs, and religiosity, and used in concept designs or mood boards. This will later appear in product design, since consumers tend not to be interested in culturally related products.

2. *Boho-ethnic:* This style, according to fashion history, began in the 1970s, and was influenced by Bohemian, Hippie, ethnic Africa, South America, and Asia. It is also described as Orientalism, which suggests non-Western culture (Dirix and Fiell, 2014). The first half of the 70s was dominated by the fantasy, retro, pastiche, and ethnic styles, including traditional craft techniques from non-western countries. Fashion items included the Edwardian dressing style, Twenties flappers, and Boho fashion (Dirix and Fiell, 2014). According to their fashion style, they were proud to represent a specific cultural heritage through fashion, since they tended to incorporate many traditional textiles.

To design a fashion collection for this target group, the concept should represent the 1970s fashion style, with central or northern cultural heritage in Thailand as inspirations. In this case, the cross-cultural design concept should be in the outer-level— making use of tangible cultural heritage as sources of inspiration, such as architecture, textiles, and garments, as the target group prefers culturally related products.

3. *Luxury-feminine:* According to fashion history, their preferred fashion style is the 1950s feminine, which represents women dressing in full-length skirts, with influences of Christian Dior's new style (Fashionary, 2017). A full skirt is often made of felt emblazoned with poodles and over stiffened crinolines (Diamond and Diamond, 2002).

A fashion collection for this target group should represent the 1950s feminine fashion style, with southern cultural heritage in Thailand as an inspiration.

The cross-cultural design concept for this target group should use culture in the middle or inner levels— tangible or intangible cultural heritage— since the target group tends to prefer handcrafted products, with a delicate and feminine touch.

Design Collection Process

This research paper includes an implementation of the guidelines for fashion designing, with a Boho-ethnic style as a case study. According to our research, the cross-cultural design concept should be on the outer-level, making use of tangible cultural heritage aspects, such as architecture, textiles, and garments, as sources of inspiration in daily life, since the target group prefers culturally related products. The concept design and mood board should include northeastern or northern cultural heritage in Thailand, with 1970s Western fashion as inspiration. The concept design mood board was developed, along with the analysis of design elements, according to these two cultural perspectives: 1970s bohemian fashion and northern cultural heritage. Textile cultural heritage in the Nan Province, which is in the northern part of Thailand, was selected as a part of the inspiration. Universal design elements in fashion were used in the interpretation of fabric selection, detailed development, and garment structure. After the sketch design and prototype development, the design collection was completed.

Figure 7. Inspiration mood board - The Culture Collab.

The inspiration concept board is the "Culture Collab," the narrative of design that merges the 1970s fashion inspiration from the West into the cultural outfits and textile elements found in Nan province. Nan is a province in northern Thailand. Most of the inhabitants belong to the Tai Lue ethnic group. Nan costumes were influenced by the influx of other Tai Lue weavers to Xipsongpanna. A variety of techniques are used in weaving, such as tapestry weaving and supplementary weft. Textiles are typically woven using cotton. Silk was reserved for the royal family (Conway, 1992). The weavers of Nan Province usually draw inspiration from traditional patterns, religions, and the environment.

The collection aimed to present a combination of silhouette, color, details, and materials from both cultural sides – 1970s fashion and Nan culture-specific textiles. For the Boho-ethnic target group, the design collection must use a cross-cultural design concept on the outer layer, and directly use design elements from both cultures. The new textile patterns were designed and woven by local entrepreneurs in the Nan Province.

Judging from the fashion design elements in Nan cultural textiles, the silhouette of traditional clothing can be considered a vertical rectangle. The garments were then wrapped or draped. There are many color palettes used in Nan cultural textiles; however, the most noticeable are dull red, navy blue, and dark green. Cotton is a commonly used material. The cropped blouse can be noticed as a traditional costume, with a one-piece woven textile worn as a tube skirt with a traditional pattern. The most eye-catching textile design is the Namlai pattern, which is inspired by the Nan River. The traditional design is interpreted as zigzag lines, that are reconstructed through repetition. The new textile designs were first created on a computer using Illustrator, and then brought to the local weavers in Nan Province to make samples. Three new patterns were used for this collection.
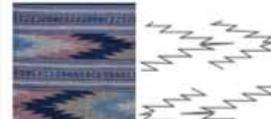

Figure 8. Design collection elements and analysis.

In terms of design elements in fashion, since the 1970s, ethnic, glamorous folkloric looks and peasant styles have been popular in Western fashion. Wrap constructions, such as wrap dresses and wrap skirts worn with contrasting tops, is the key message. Trousers are also fashionable. Bright and contrast colors played a major role in this era. In 1971, Thea Porter combined eclectic elements with traditional Asian textiles. There were many combinations of fabrics in an outfit from this period (Cole and Deihl, 2015).

Figure 9. Complete design collection and technical drawings.

The design elements for this collection aimed to combine the Nan province's traditional outfits, with 1970s details and silhouettes, that translates into a new garment design. As mentioned earlier, the outline of the traditional Nan textiles is a vertical rectangle. Layered and long silhouettes of the West in 1970s fashion were added to the vertical rectangular outline of Nan's traditional garments to achieve a combination of the two cultures. The techniques from Nan's cultural outfits, which are wraps and draping, were developed with the 1970s garments, such as long and loose wrap dresses. In addition, some highlighted colors are added, such as vivid orange and bright green. The universal design concept was used in this collection to simplify the use of garments, by adding zips, buttons, wrapping, and draping techniques, so that elderly female users will be able to comfortably wear the garments.

The design collection includes eight sets of clothing items. There is a mixture of cultural textiles from Nan province, such as ready-made traditional fabrics, and three new textile designs woven by local entrepreneurs. This design collection aimed to demonstrate the implementation of design guidelines for the Boho-ethnic target style, which represents a combination of cultural textiles and 1970s Western fashion, with cross-cultural and universal design concepts.

Conclusion

With the increase in the aging population, older Thai women will become important consumers of fashion products. To complete the guidelines for building a fashion collection for this target group, several components need to be explored: target group lifestyles, cross-cultural design approaches, universal design concepts in fashion, fashion styles, and fashion design elements.

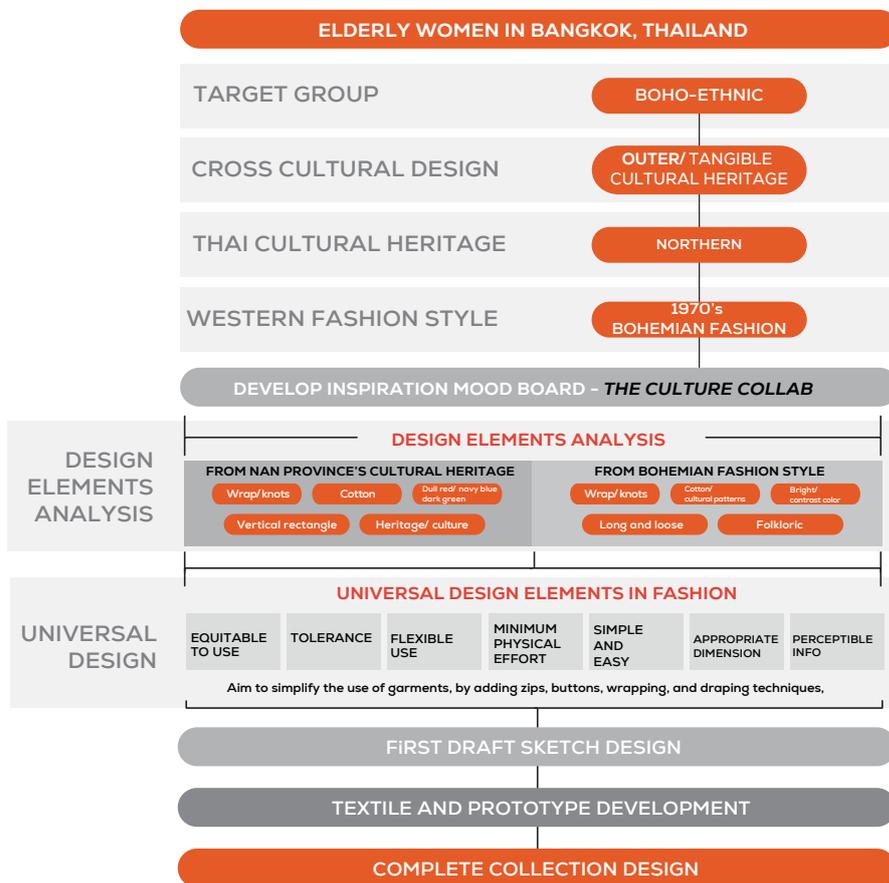Figure 10. Design collection prototypes (8 outfits).

Figure 11. The collection design guidelines.

According to the target fashion style, there are three possible styles to design a fashion collection, based on Thai cultural heritage. These three target styles require different methods considering cross-cultural design because different groups of older women tend to prefer culturally related products at different levels. The method of designing the collection is aimed at maximizing the presence and importance of elderly women in fashion consumption. Hence, this research suggests three main styles of design collection approaches, according to the different target groups derived from this study – modern-urban, Boho-ethnic, and feminine-luxury. However, there may be a hybrid of or new styles in the future.

The prototype of the Boho-ethnic Group's fashion collection was intended to represent the amalgamation of Thai cultural heritage and Western fashion styles, for the target consumers in a study in Bangkok, Thailand. It is important to define the target style before designing a collection or establishing a brand. However, it is a fact that the interpretation of cultural elements in fashion design depends on the designer's research and experience. These guidelines will help designers create accurate fashion collection designs to match the consumer's style at a specific moment.

Culture is an important reference in fashion design. Designers should conduct in-depth research before designing a collection to avoid misinterpretation of the culture. Working closely with local production sources of inspiration is important since they will be able to give designers further recommendations.

Recommendations
The following are recommendations for those interested in furthering this research.

1.The guidelines can be further developed, according to changes in fashion trends, which will have an impact on the emerging fashion styles. In addition, the same quantitative survey research methods from this study can be used to change the location of the cultural heritage.

2. It is important to maintain an equitable balance between fashion style and cultural heritage design elements to convey the concept of the design collection clearly. In addition, the analysis of design elements and development process of the inspiration mood board can be modified to make the concepts clear.

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