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Emanuele Isidori [a*] [iD], **Irina Leonova** [b], **Roberta Alonzi** [c], **Maristella Trombetta** [d], **Elsa M. Bruni** [e], **Angela Magnanini** [a] [iD]

[a] *University of Rome Foro Italico, Rome, Italy*
[b] *Lobachevsky State University of Nizhni Novgorod, Nizhny Novgorod, Russia*
[c] *RUDN University, Moscow, Russia*
[d] *University of Bari "Aldo Moro", Bari, Italy*
[e] *University of Chieti-Pescara "G. d'Annunzio", Chieti, Italy*

Corresponding author: emanuele.isidori@uniroma4.it

Abstract

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Fashion pedagogy, an emerging field within fashion studies, plays a critical role in contemporary culture by integrating elements of body education, expression, and socio-economic values. This paper explores the epistemological foundations of fashion pedagogy through a comprehensive review of the current scientific literature. We address the multifaceted relationship between fashion pedagogy and body education, highlighting how this discipline influences and reshapes people's perceptions of body image and self-expression within informal education. The interplay between fashion pedagogy and capitalist values is also examined, revealing how fashion education reflects and critiques prevailing economic ideologies, promoting a more conscious engagement with fashion as a form of cultural production. Furthermore, this study delves into the interdisciplinary nature of fashion pedagogy, which draws upon diverse fields such as art, aesthetics, psychology, anthropology, sociology, and business to enrich learning experiences and outcomes. The paper also reviews how fashion pedagogy can be implemented within the curricula of higher education institutions, emphasizing innovative teaching methods that foster critical thinking and creativity. Through an analysis of various educational models and practices, we identify key trends and challenges that influence the effectiveness and relevance of fashion pedagogy in today's educational landscape. This paper argues that fashion pedagogy is significant in educating about fashion and fostering critical awareness among students about its broader social, cultural, aesthetic, and economic implications. It is a pivotal tool for empowering students to navigate and influence the evolving dynamics of contemporary culture through informed and thoughtful fashion practice.

1. Introduction: placing fashion pedagogy within fashion studies

Fashion, a ubiquitous and dynamic aspect of contemporary society, defies simple definition. Its complexity arises from its dual nature as both a concept and a phenomenon, continuously evolving over time and across cultures. This paper aims to provide a comprehensive overview of fashion from an interdisciplinary perspective. It focuses on fashion pedagogy as a science, exploring its definitions, significance, historical and academic approaches, cultural and economic impacts, and the prejudices it faces. This exploration will establish a foundation for understanding fashion pedagogy within contemporary society (Kawamura, 2018).

The term "fashion" carries multiple meanings, reflecting its multifaceted nature. At its core, fashion is derived from the Latin word "modus." This term, "modus," translates to "measure," "manner," "way," or "mode," underscoring several critical aspects of fashion.

1) *Measurement* and *proportion*. Fashion often involves careful consideration of proportions, sizes, and measurements to create aesthetically pleasing and well-fitting garments. The concept of "modus" as "measure" underscores the attention and precision to detail in fashion design and tailoring. This ideal is expressed by the Greek word *prepon*, meaning "the fitting and appropriate."

2) *Manner* and *style*. "Modus", as "manner" or "way," emphasizes fashion's stylistic and expressive aspects. It reflects how individuals present themselves and their style and how fashion serves as a medium for self-expression and identity.

3) *Mode* and *trends*. Fashion is inherently about trends and modes of dressing that change over time. The idea of "modus" as "mode" aligns with fashion's dynamic and ever-evolving nature, where new styles and trends emerge and gain popularity.

The connection of fashion to the Latin word "modus" sums up the very essence of fashion as a blend of precise measurement, personal style, and evolving trends. It highlights how fashion is both a technical craft and an artistic and cultural expression. Historically, fashion has been linked to prevailing customs and practices, particularly in dress and lifestyle. Today, it is understood as a transient yet systematic production, consumption, and institutionalization of novelty. Fashion involves a continuous search for change, characterized by an ever-present desire for diversity and transformation. This relentless pursuit of the new makes fashion a cultural phenomenon and a means of social control, influencing speech, opinion, belief, recreation, dress, music, art, education, and literature (Blumer, 1969; Lipovetsky, 1994).

Studying fashion from an interdisciplinary point of view means examining it as a social and cultural phenomenon that shapes and reflects societal norms and behaviours. Fashion operates as a social and educational system, producing and consuming new aesthetic and cultural forms. It is a powerful social and educational control tool, guiding and regulating societal behaviour through trends and norms. This perspective shifts the focus from merely the garments and accessories to the broader cultural practices, identities, and social dynamics that fashion encapsulates (Barnard, 2014).

Fashion also compromises the desire for novelty and the need for conformity, embodying the tension between individual expression and collective identity. It is a cultural phenomenon integrating various aspects of society, including the economy, individual identities, and collective cultural expressions. This integration highlights fashion's role as both an idea and an ideal, serving as a means of differentiation and a vehicle for social mobility (Simmel, 1957; Wilson, 2003).

Fashion's significance extends beyond aesthetics, playing crucial roles culturally, socially, and politically. It is an emblematic postmodern phenomenon marked by continuous and accelerated change, differentiation processes, subjectivism, and the autonomous construction of identity. Fashion democratizes lifestyles, allowing for the hybridization of cultures and providing a powerful non-verbal form of communication. Fashion also functions as a barometer of democracy and a fundamental driver of the economy, generating significant economic activity and employment, particularly in countries with established fashion sectors, such as Italy, where the fashion industry holds substantial economic weight. It plays with the delicate boundaries of contemporary society, such as gender, culture, and class, making it a potent form of expression and an indicator of social dynamics (Baudrillard, 1993; Polhemus, 1994). Fashion's cultural impact is profound, as it functions as a non-verbal language and a means of negotiating and expressing identity. It reflects and influences societal trends and cultural shifts, playing a crucial role in the construction and communication of personal and collective identities (Craik, 1994; Breward, 2003).

Despite its significance, fashion faces numerous prejudices, both academic and popular. Fashion has long been marginalized academically, perceived as a superficial or trivial subject unworthy of serious study. This perception is rooted in various biases, including gendered notions that associate fashion with femininity and, thus, irrationality or frivolity. Popular prejudices against fashion often depict it as superficial, focused solely on appearance and consumption. These misconceptions overlook fashion's deeper cultural, social, and economic dimensions, reducing it to a mere pursuit of luxury and extravagance. Feminist critiques have historically viewed fashion as a distraction for women from more substantial societal roles, though contemporary perspectives recognize the complex interplay between fashion, identity, and empowerment (Wilson, 2003; McRobbie, 1997; Steele, 1998).

Understanding fashion requires a multifaceted approach. By exploring its complexities and significance, we can appreciate its role as a powerful form of expression and a critical component of contemporary culture (Barthes, 1983). This comprehensive understanding provides a robust foundation for studying and teaching fashion pedagogy, emphasizing the need for a nuanced and interdisciplinary approach to this ever-evolving field (Entwistle & Wilson, 2001; Crane, 2012).

Within the broader context of fashion studies, pedagogy has yet to be extensively developed as a theoretical research field. Despite the emphasis on practical application, more theoretical research in fashion pedagogy must be done. Theoretical exploration of how fashion is taught, the

methodologies employed, and the pedagogical frameworks that underpin fashion education still need to be developed. This gap allows scholars to delve deeper into understanding the educational processes and philosophies that shape fashion education (Reed et al., 2022).

Moreover, integrating social justice pedagogy into fashion education can help address issues of inequality and promote a more inclusive and equitable learning environment. This approach encourages students to engage with social and cultural issues, fostering a deeper understanding of the role of fashion in society (Reed et al., 2022). Additionally, incorporating concepts of fat fashion pedagogy can challenge traditional norms and biases in the fashion industry, promoting diversity and inclusivity (Christel, 2018).

Developing pedagogy as a science within fashion studies is essential for advancing the field. By integrating theoretical research with practical applications, fashion education can better prepare students to be innovative and critical thinkers in the industry.

2. Body, communication, and fashion

Fashion is intrinsically linked to humans' physical being and is a powerful communication medium, embodying the intersection of identity and cultural expression. Individuals convey personal and societal messages through fashion, consciously and unconsciously. That makes the study of body and fashion a multifaceted domain that bridges art, sociology, and communication studies.

The body is central to fashion as it serves as the canvas upon which clothing and accessories are displayed. The physical form influences fashion design and pattern making, highlighting the need for a deep understanding of human anatomy from both a physical and cultural point of view to achieve aesthetic appeal and functionality in garments (Cai, 2014). This dynamic relationship between body shape and fashion underscores the importance of ergonomics and body positivity in contemporary fashion design.

The "dressed body" concept transitions into "dressed embodiment," where the practice and experience of wearing clothes interact deeply with bodily techniques and social identity formation. Fashion models, for example, negotiate their bodies to perform the high-heeled catwalk, showcasing how dress, technique, and sociality interplay in the embodied practice of Fashion (Hesselbein, 2019).

Fashion is a nonverbal communication that conveys messages about the wearer's identity, status, and social norms. The communicative power of fashion is evident in how individuals use clothing to express their personalities, beliefs, and cultural affiliations. People project an image to the outside world through style and dress, making fashion a critical component of personal and social identity (Choi et al., 2018).

Fashion's role as a symbolic form of communication extends to digital media, where fashion films and online videos create new languages and narratives. These digital fashion narratives use the body as a communicative channel, reflecting individuality and the desire for social connection (Buffo, 2018). New technologies have profoundly influenced the intersection of fashion and the body. Technological advancements have conducted innovative designs that enhance the aesthetic and functional aspects of clothing. For instance, innovative fabrics and wearable technology have introduced new dimensions to fashion, allowing garments to interact with the body in unimaginable ways (Fortunati et al., 2003).

The aesthetics of fashion significantly contribute to how individuals negotiate their identities. Fashion is often seen as wearable art, influencing bodily appearance and self-identity. This relationship between fashion and identity highlights the importance of aesthetic labour, where individuals continuously try to align their appearance with societal standards and personal ideals.

Also, the performative aspect of fashion reveals how clothing and body movements interact to create a visual and communicative spectacle. Fashion shows, for example, are not just about the clothes but how they are worn and presented. This performative nature of fashion highlights the relationship between body, clothing, and movement and how they collectively contribute to the overall aesthetic experience.

Fashion as a performance also extends to everyday contexts, where individuals engage in "dress acts" that express their identities and social roles. This perspective emphasizes the active role of the body in negotiating and communicating fashion, moving beyond static representations to dynamic embodiments of style (Eckersley & Duff, 2020).

3. The interdisciplinary field of fashion studies

The concept of fashion gained prominence with the rise of the bourgeoisie and capitalism during the

European Renaissance. However, fashion predates this period, a significant cultural element in various ancient civilizations such as medieval Japan and ancient Rome. Initially, fashionable clothes were accessible only to the upper classes, but with advancements in production techniques and the rise of mass markets, fashion became increasingly democratized (Crane, 2000; Entwistle, 2000; Lipovetsky, 1994).

Sociologists view fashion as intrinsically linked to social structures and identity dynamics. Fashion serves as a mechanism for both inclusion and distinction within society. Classic theories, such as those proposed by Georg Simmel and Thorstein Veblen, emphasize fashion's role in maintaining social hierarchies through mechanisms of imitation and distinction. Modern sociologists have expanded these ideas, exploring fashion as a performative and collective phenomenon that shapes and reflects societal changes (Simmel, 1957; Veblen, 1899; Blumer, 1969)

Philosophers have long debated the moral and aesthetic dimensions of fashion. Figures like Adam Smith, Immanuel Kant, and Friedrich Nietzsche have explored fashion's role in social imitation, modernity, and the temporal nature of taste. Despite often viewing fashion as irrational or superficial, philosophical discussions provide valuable insights into fashion's more profound societal implications and role in shaping human behaviour and interactions (Smith, 1759; Kant, 1790; Nietzsche, 1887).

Economists have analyzed fashion primarily through consumption patterns and market dynamics. Veblen introduced the concept of conspicuous consumption, highlighting fashion as a display of wealth and status. Economic models have also explored fashion's diffusion and cascade mechanisms, shedding light on how individual choices aggregate to create broader fashion trends. While some economists criticize fashion as irrational, these models offer a framework for understanding fashion as a significant economic and social phenomenon.

Cultural studies approach to fashion through the lenses of gender, ethnicity, class, and globalization. This field examines how cultural identities and social practices shape fashion. Key themes include the role of subcultures, the ambivalence of fashion in feminist theory, and the impact of globalization on local and national dress practices (Ahmed, 2022). Cultural studies highlight fashion as artistic and political expression (Hebdige, 1979; McRobbie, 1998).

One of the first to industrialize, the garment sector continues to evolve with new production techniques like modular systems that support fast fashion. These advancements bridge market uncertainties and respond to consumer demands for ever-changing designs. The production process often involves long-term relationships between buyers and suppliers, highlighting the collaborative nature of fashion manufacturing (Breward, 2003).

Fashion is deeply connected to the body, gender norms, and ethnic identities (Breward, 1999). It shapes and reflects gender differences, with distinct fashion practices for men and women. Historical shifts, such as the move from extravagant men's fashion in the eighteenth century to more sober dress in the nineteenth century, illustrate fashion's role in expressing and reinforcing gender roles. Ethnicity influences fashion through traditional dress practices, which adapt and evolve within global fashion trends.

Fashion consumption has shifted from class to lifestyle-oriented, reflecting broader societal changes. Class fashion was characterized by limited variation and adherence to established codes, while modern fashion is more diverse and individualized (Featherstone, 1991). Fashion serves as a mechanism for social inclusion and exclusion, with implications for identity formation and social mobility. Consumption patterns and lifestyle choices increasingly define social classes and identities (Craik, 1994).

As an interdisciplinary field, fashion studies provide a comprehensive understanding of fashion's societal role. By integrating insights from sociology, philosophy, education, economics, anthropology, geography, and cultural studies, fashion studies address the complex interplay of cultural, social, economic, and aesthetic factors that shape fashion as a central social phenomenon (Tokatli, 2008). While practical applications in fashion education are well-developed, there is a significant need for more theoretical research in fashion (Kawamura, 2018; Rocamora & Smelik, 2015), particularly regarding the placement of fashion within the epistemology of informal education.

4. Fashion within informal education

Fashion is linked to a specific dimension of education: the informal one. Therefore, we can affirm that fashion is a form of education that is (not) seen. Informal education contexts are those in which learning occurs without the subject actively seeking it.

Informal education is thus a process that happens incidentally and casually in unorganized and non-formal settings. These contexts can arise during everyday activities, where the learner is involved unintentionally, and learning happens unconsciously. Informal education is crucial in shaping individuals' abilities to interact with their environment, respond to new situations, and engage in self-directed learning. Fashion education is tied within informal education settings, media and daily life experiences. No doubt that these informal contexts contribute to fashion learning and the implications for personal and professional development.

Mass media play a fundamental role in informal learning processes by "bombarding" users with information, which requires them to make selections and manage emotional responses. The omnipresence of fashion-related content in media, including television, social media, magazines, and online platforms, provides continuous exposure to fashion trends, styles, and cultural norms. This constant exposure shapes individuals' perceptions and understanding of fashion, often without their conscious intent (Berk & Wallinger, 2019).

Fashion blogs, influencer content, and social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest are powerful informal educational tools. They offer insights into styling, trends, and the fashion industry, influencing viewers' fashion choices and inspiring personal creativity. These platforms enable users to engage with fashion content actively, fostering a community of shared interests and collaborative learning. Such informal learning environments contribute significantly to individuals' fashion literacy and ability to navigate and interpret fashion trends.

Informal learning in fashion can occur through everyday interactions, such as shopping experiences, conversations with friends, or personal experimentation with clothing. These experiences help individuals develop a sense of style, cultural awareness, and the ability to make fashion choices that reflect their identities. Informal education supports the development of critical soft skills, such as decision-making, emotional intelligence, and aesthetic judgment, which are essential in both personal and professional contexts.

5. Fashion pedagogy and luxury aesthetics

By starting from a positive understanding of luxury in fashion as an expression of human creativity,

a sense of beauty and devotion to aesthetic excellence implemented through performance, it is fair to ask whether it is possible to integrate the culture of luxury-often criticized in fashion with the pedagogical and educational dimension of fashion. In a historical moment where both material and spiritual values are diminishing, does it still make sense to hope for redemption through enjoying beauty? Moreover, is pursuing the myth of luxury still linked to the desire to improve one's quality of life through fashion?

Asking what luxury means is asking to questioning one of the manifestations of beauty and pleasure, likely concerning their most intimate and inherent nature – ephemerality. This question prompts deep reflection on the essence of humanity and its continuous pursuit of pleasure and enjoyment.

While the experience of beauty is immediate, luxury can be considered a product of social or psychological construction – the history of luxury dates to periods before the Neolithic era. As Gilles Lipovetsky asserts in his insightful essay, "The Empire of Fashion: Dressing modern democracy," luxury did not begin with the manufacture of expensive goods but with the concept of spending, which preceded the accumulation of rare items. Before becoming a hallmark of materialistic culture, luxury was a cultural manifestation, a mental attitude characteristic of *homo socialis*, seeking to affirm its capacity for transcendence and non-animality.

Thus, although elusive, the concept of luxury and its definition are closely tied to the psychological perception of reality. In an era where consumer credit has enabled anyone to possess rare and "exclusive" goods, surpassing the boundary that a century ago was accessible only to a fortunate few with economic and social power, the nature of this concept has been enriched with meanings related to the qualitative level of life.

Before the 19th century, owning and displaying luxury goods meant concurrently declaring one's status and adhering to ethical and religious values. In the 18th century, this function was questioned by Kant's introduction of the *Judgment of taste*, which established the foundation of beauty and refinement in the sentiment and the degree of awareness and, thus, knowledge of the sensory data. Kant argued that the pleasant is not the beautiful, but beauty provokes pleasure. The more the subject receives an aesthetic education, the more they can enjoy the pleasure of the sensory experience triggered by appreciation.

At the end of this century, the idea of beauty and utility would emerge, quickly contradicted by the daily practice of desiring possession of utterly useless objects that satisfy only the desire for beauty. Two centuries later, the birth of design would mark adherence to a higher, democratic aesthetic ideal that claims beauty as a right, allowing anyone to improve their quality of life by surrounding themselves with functional yet pleasant objects, which have acquired the status of artworks.

With the Industrial Revolution and generalizing the world of commodities, consumption became a practical act within the domestic sphere. Mechanization and the scientific organization of labour blurred the boundary between work and non-work. Thus emerged the "leisure society," where work is just one aspect of daily life and not necessarily the most important. That is the society of autonomous individuals, as Dumazedier (1962) states, where rest, entertainment, and self-valorization alternate with work times. Work is often experienced as a constraint, obligation, punishment, or obstacle to manifesting individual qualities. This process has led to a new way of considering the relationship between "wealth" and "value." Today, we witness a reversal: while the consumer society still exists, its effectiveness has diminished because it is no longer the capacity and mode of consumption that favour and enhance the sense of belonging to society but the ability to access the "network."

Contemporary society is a liquid society where ways of living are levelled. In this context, luxury is no longer unique, rare, or limited but can be duplicated, imitated, and reproduced. Luxury is linked to a new conception of time (and fashion): pleasure-time, or free time, the time for oneself, the hedonistic space dedicated to self-care, recognizing the immeasurable value of "priceless things." Consequently, we are led to reflect on the concepts of useful and useless, which acquire new meanings. Useful and useless (where useless refers to everything that lacks a specific use value, everything that can be considered a whim, superfluous) coexist and cohabit when, through our experience, "the useless reveals its useful sides," provoking immense pleasure in us. As Thierry Paquot (2007) states, they are signals that do not deceive and are perceived only by you. Neither advertising nor a promotional message nor a neighbour's advice will indicate the utility of the useless. The proof is obtained through experience, which cannot be transmitted. I call this experience luxury and attribute utopian values to it.

Luxury thus appears, with a definition found in Fourier (1996), as that which aims at the complete joy of the senses. It belongs not to the world of commodities but is the human disposition towards happiness. It is a result to be achieved – like grace – and not an object to be purchased. A personal, subjective, intimate dimension of luxury cannot be economically quantified. It is a dimension where, for example, time is not dependent on the cyclical movement of the stars but is understood as *aion*, a flowing that I make present by giving it meaning and substance. It is a time that will constitute my being. From this perspective, luxury is an art of living, a way of being in the world that gives time priceless value.

It is the attainment of happiness or what creates the conditions for its attainment. Luxury requires not only profound self-knowledge but also self-control so that one can continue to desire. The enjoyment of a luxury good is perceived by most as an opportunity to confirm personal identity as unique and extraordinary, and this still evokes emotion.

In the context of fashion education, luxury intersects with concepts of beauty, aesthetics, and identity formation. Fashion education must address not only the technical and creative aspects of design but also the more profound philosophical and cultural implications of luxury and beauty (Svendsen, 2006). That involves fostering an understanding of luxury as both an aesthetic and ethical pursuit, emphasizing the relevance of creating designs that appeal to the senses and resonate with the values and identities of individuals and societies.

Luxury in fashion is often associated with exceptional craftsmanship, high-quality materials, and unique design. However, it also encompasses a deeper appreciation of beauty and aesthetics, which can be cultivated through education. Kant's philosophy, which posits that beauty provokes pleasure, underscores the importance of aesthetic education in enhancing the enjoyment of luxury. By training students to appreciate the subtleties of design and the emotional responses they evoke, fashion education can cultivate a more profound appreciation for luxury as an art form.

Luxury, beauty, and fashion are intrinsically linked through their emphasis on aesthetics, personal expression, and cultural significance. Educators can promote a more inclusive, ethical, and profound understanding of beauty by integrating luxury and fat pedagogy concepts into fashion education. This approach fosters critical thinking, personal growth,

and a deeper appreciation for the art of living, ultimately enriching the educational experience and preparing students for meaningful contributions to the fashion industry.

The intersection of capitalism, culture, and fashion presents a fertile ground for pedagogical exploration and critique. When aligned with cultural critique, fashion pedagogy offers an original and unique lens through which to examine and challenge the dominant economic and cultural paradigms. This chapter delves into the role of fashion education as a critical tool in understanding and deconstructing capitalist influences, emphasizing the potential of fashion pedagogy to foster a more inclusive and reflective cultural dialogue.

6. Educational models and practices in fashion education: a critical analysis

Real-world applications and experiential learning are essential components of innovative fashion education. For example, makerspaces and community-based workshops provide hands-on experience in design and production, fostering creativity and practical skills. No doubt that higher education can serve societal needs by producing innovation competencies and supporting regional development through applied research and development projects.

Internships and industry collaborations also play a crucial role in bridging the gap between academic learning and professional practice. These experiences allow students to apply their knowledge in real-world settings, gaining valuable insights and building professional networks.

Promoting inclusivity and diversity in fashion education is crucial for creating an equitable learning environment that respects and values all students. Danowitz and Tuitt (2011) describe how incorporating inclusive pedagogical practices, such as engaged pedagogy and critical race theory, can help address issues of racism, sexism, and other forms of inequality in higher education.

Fashion educators can implement inclusivity by diversifying the curriculum to include various cultural perspectives, histories, and practices. That broadens students' understanding of fashion and fosters a more inclusive and representative approach to design. Encouraging students to explore and incorporate their cultural identities into their work can lead to more prosperous and varied fashion expressions. Innovation in fashion education curricula requires the engagement of specific pedagogies, which are as follows:

▪ Engaged pedagogy, which emphasizes the fundamental relevance of educators being fully present and participatory in learning. This approach encourages mutual respect and collaboration between teachers and students, creating a dynamic and interactive learning environment. Engaged pedagogy also promotes critical thinking and self-reflection, essential skills for fashion professionals.

▪ Pedagogy of experiential learning, which involves learning through direct experience and reflection, is another critical component of innovative fashion pedagogy. By participating in internships, industry projects, and hands-on workshops, students can apply theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios, gaining practical skills and insights. This approach enhances learning outcomes and prepares students for the demands and challenges of the fashion industry.

▪ Innovation pedagogy, as discussed by Kettunen et al. (2013), is a pedagogical approach that supports innovations and regional development by extending individual-based learning to include collaborative and networked learning. This approach emphasizes the development of generic innovation competencies, which are crucial for students to participate in diverse innovation processes in their future workplaces.

Educational models and practices in fashion education are evolving to address the industry's complex sociocultural, political, and practical demands. Key focus areas include integrating diversity, inclusion, and equity into curricula, bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills, and promoting a decolonized approach to education.

Reed, Covington, and Medvedev (2022) advocate incorporating social justice pedagogy into fashion education to prepare students for an industry that often overlooks these critical aspects. They emphasize participatory action research (PAR) to increase social justice awareness among students. Cheang and Suterwalla (2020) discuss the importance of decolonizing the curriculum by challenging Eurocentric frameworks and fostering more inclusive definitions of fashion. That involves broadening reading lists and actively reconceptualizing teaching methods to support decolonized practices.

Also, effective work-based learning models are crucial for bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills in fashion education.

That involves incorporating real-world experiences and reflective practices into the curriculum, Ma (2022) highlights the challenge-based learning (CBL) approach, which enhances sustainability competencies through organized design thinking processes. This method promotes creative problem-solving skills and metacognitive development among fashion students (Ma, 2022).

Cheang et al. (2022) critique the dominance of Eurocentric narratives in fashion education and calls for a decolonized approach that acknowledges diverse cultural contexts and practices. This approach integrates indigenous knowledge and non-Western perspectives into the curriculum. Domínguez (2020) argues for decolonial practice-based teacher education that cultivates educators' abilities to engage in epistemic disobedience, learning to teach while resisting coloniality in schools. Simončič (2023) promotes integrating theoretical and practical aspects of fashion education, encouraging a reflective approach that considers the socio-political context of fashion production. El-Mahdy (2023) explores the intersection of architecture and fashion, suggesting that incorporating structural design principles can lead to innovative educational methods in fashion design.

7. Curricular innovations: implementing fashion pedagogy in higher education

Fashion education in higher education is evolving rapidly, driven by the need to integrate innovative pedagogical practices that address the dynamic nature of the fashion industry. One of the most significant trends in fashion education is the integration of interdisciplinary approaches that combine art, psychology, pedagogy, and business.

This holistic perspective allows students to understand fashion as a multifaceted discipline comprehensively. According to Laužikas and Mokšeckienė (2013), the symbiosis of art and business in fashion design education helps students grasp the commercial aspects of the industry while fostering creative and innovative thinking. Moreover, incorporating psychological principles into fashion education helps students understand consumer behaviour and the emotional impact of fashion. This interdisciplinary approach equips students with the skills to create designs that resonate with diverse audiences and adapt to changing market trends.

Below, we mention some specific strategies for achieving curricular innovation in fashion and higher education.

1) *Technological integration and digital transformation*. Technology integration in fashion education is fundamental to preparing students for the digital age. Technologies such as 3D printing, virtual reality (VR), computer-aided design (CAD), and artificial intelligence (AI) have been revolutionizing the way fashion is designed and produced. Zhao, He, and Su (2021) highlight incorporating digital competencies and entrepreneurial skills into the curriculum to enhance students' innovative and collaborative capabilities. Innovative pedagogical models like flipped classrooms and blended learning environments allow students to engage with digital tools and resources, fostering a more interactive and immersive learning experience. These methods also support developing problem-solving and critical thinking skills essential for success in the fast-paced fashion industry.

2) *Development of critical pedagogy and cultural awareness*. Critical pedagogy is relevant in implementing the methodologies of fashion education as it encourages students to question and challenge societal norms and power structures. According to Hasanefendic et al. (2017), individuals who drive innovation in higher education often are motivated to change institutionalized practices and are interested in fostering inclusive and transformative educational environments. Critical pedagogy, which emphasizes the role of education in challenging and transforming societal norms, can be particularly effective in addressing body image issues in fashion. The use of feminist pedagogy in dance technique classes, for example, has challenged traditional body ideals and promoted a more inclusive understanding of beauty and movement (Barr & Oliver, 2016). This approach can be adapted to fashion education to create more inclusive and empowering learning environments. Incorporating innovative pedagogical approaches, such as embodied pedagogy and reflective learning, can enhance the effectiveness of fashion education. Embodied pedagogy, which integrates body and mind in the learning process, encourages students to engage physically and emotionally with the material (Nguyen & Larson, 2015). On the other hand, reflective learning allows students to critically examine their experiences and perceptions, fostering a deeper understanding of body image and fashion.

The case of so-called fat pedagogy can be seen as exemplary. Fashion education extends beyond technical skills, integrating theoretical and critical perspectives to foster a comprehensive understanding of the field. Body pedagogies, which involve how

bodies are taught, represented, and experienced in educational settings, are vital in fashion education (Rich, 2010; Rich et al., 2020). Educators can address body image, inclusivity, and representation by incorporating body pedagogies, promoting a more holistic approach to fashion education.

Fat pedagogy, which challenges the thin-centric ideals prevalent in fashion, provides a framework for creating more inclusive and diverse educational practices. This specific pedagogy responds to the need for educational interventions to reduce weight-based oppression. Given the growth in fat studies-related courses, it is essential to identify best practices that improve the experiences of fat students, change the dominant discourse around body weight, shape, and size, and challenge social hierarchies and the structures of dominance perpetuating weight bias in educational contexts (Cameron & Watkins, 2018).

Implementing fat pedagogy in fashion education presents several challenges. Traditional curricula often emphasize thin-centric ideals, making it difficult to shift these entrenched perspectives. However, the rising interest in fat studies and body positivity is transforming fashion education. By incorporating fat pedagogy, educators can foster a more inclusive and equitable learning environment that challenges societal norms and promotes diversity.

This pedagogical approach also underscores the importance of addressing weight bias beyond fashion education. By cultivating a critical understanding of body image and weight-based oppression, educators can contribute to broader societal change. This aligns with the goals of social justice education, which seeks to dismantle systems of oppression and promote equity for all individuals (Cameron, 2015). Fat pedagogy offers a transformative approach to fashion education, emphasizing body positivity and inclusivity. Integrating fat studies into fashion pedagogy not only enhances educational practices but also contributes to societal change by challenging weight-based oppression and promoting diversity.

3) *Developing sustainability and ethical practices*. Sustainability is increasingly becoming a focal point in fashion education, reflecting the industry's growing environmental and social responsibility commitment. Murzyn-Kupisz and Hołuj (2021) emphasize the need for comprehensive sustainability education that spans various dimensions of fashion, including design, production, and consumption. In the first chapter of this article, we have seen how the Latin word "modus" carries a rich tapestry of meanings and connotations that deeply resonate with the concept of fashion. In its most fundamental sense, "modus" means "measure," "manner," or "way." This notion of measurement and moderation inherently ties to the principles of balance and proportion, which are critical in fashion.

In fashion, "modus" extends beyond physical measurements to encompass a broader aesthetic and philosophical approach. Moderation, a core aspect of "modus," suggests an equilibrium in design – where the harmony between elements such as colour, texture, and form is achieved. This balanced approach is critical to creating pleasing and timeless styles. Moreover, "modus" implies a manner or mode of expression, reflecting individual and cultural identity through clothing. In this sense, fashion becomes a language, where each choice of attire communicates a specific message or sentiment. By embracing "modus," fashion enthusiasts and designers alike strive for a moderation that avoids excess and focuses on refined elegance. The "less is more" principle aligns with the idea of "modus" as moderation, where simplicity can lead to sophistication and timeless elegance. Moreover, dressing appropriately for different occasions and contexts involves a sense of moderation, aligning with societal expectations and the idea of "modus" as a way or manner of doing things.

In contemporary contexts, moderation in fashion also relates to sustainable practices. That includes mindful consumption, choosing quality over quantity, and embracing timeless pieces over fast fashion. The concept of "modus" as moderation encourages a more sustainable and responsible approach to fashion. Moderation in fashion can also reflect adherence to cultural and social norms. No doubt that the connection of "modus" to moderation in fashion emphasizes the ethical relevance of balance, simplicity, sustainability, and social appropriateness. It highlights how fashion can express measured and mindful choices, contributing to personal style and broader cultural values.

Educators can integrate sustainability into the curriculum by incorporating courses on sustainable materials, ethical production methods, and responsible consumption. Practical projects and industry partnerships focused on sustainability help students develop the skills and knowledge to create beautiful and sustainable fashion.

8. Conclusion: towards an epistemology of fashion pedagogy

In the previous chapter, we have seen how fashion education increasingly recognizes the need to integrate diversity, inclusion, equity, and social justice into its curriculum. By bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills and promoting a decolonized approach, fashion education can prepare students to meet the complex demands of industry and contribute to a more inclusive and equitable society.

Sustainability is a growing focus in fashion pedagogy, reflecting the industry's increasing commitment to environmental and social responsibility. By incorporating sustainability into the curriculum, fashion educators encourage students to consider the environmental impact of their designs and adopt ethical production methods. This approach aligns with the broader societal movement towards sustainability and responsible consumption.

Fashion pedagogy also shapes popular culture. Fashion consumption and the media's influence on fashion trends are critical areas where fashion education intersects with popular culture. Educators can use popular culture as a pedagogical tool to engage students and make learning relevant to their lives (Koh & Benson, 2011). This approach enhances student engagement and ensures that fashion education remains current and reflects contemporary cultural trends.

In conclusion, an epistemology of fashion pedagogy must be sketched using an interdisciplinary approach, commitment to inclusivity and social justice, reflection on embracing technological advancements, and focus on sustainability. This framework underscores the importance of critical thinking, cultural awareness, and ethical responsibility in fashion education. By integrating these elements, fashion pedagogy prepares students for professional success and empowers them to contribute positively to society and culture and critically engage with the world.

Authors note:

Emanuele Isidori serves as a Full Professor specializing in General and Social Pedagogy at the University of Rome Foro Italico, Italy.

Irina Leonova is a Full Professor with a focus on Human Resources Management at Lobachevsky State University of Nizhni Novgorod, Russia.

Roberta Alonzi is a Full Professor of Italian Language in the Department of Modern Languages at RUDN University in Moscow, Russia.

Maristella Trombetta is a Lecturer and teaches History of Aesthetic in the Department of Humanistic Research and Innovation at the University of Bari Aldo Moro, Italy.

Elsa M. Bruni is a Full Professor of Didactics at the University G. d'Annunzio of Chieti-Pescara, Italy.

Angela Magnanini serves as an Associate Professor of Didactics, specializing in Special Education, at the University of Rome Foro Italico, Italy

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