Children's Clothing Culture in East and West from the Perspective of Cross-cultural Contrast

Min DENG

School of Public Languages Education, West China Normal University, Sichuan Nanchong, China
Stepbystep54@163.com

Keywords: Cross-cultural comparison; East and west; Children; Clothing culture.

Abstract. Based on cross-cultural comparison, this paper analyses the current situation and challenges of children's clothing culture in western countries and China, explores the successful experience of the rapid fashion model with "fast and fashionable" as its distinct feature in China's development, and points out that the innovation and development of China's children's clothing industry can draw on the unique advantages of the fast fashion model in Western countries, such as luxury brand design, popularization, fast mode, parity strategy and so on. The author expects that the design concept and operation mode under the fast fashion trend can provide the scientific basis of theory and practice for the local children's clothing brand, meet the needs of children's clothing consumers and improve the international competitiveness of children's clothing in China.

Introduction

As early as 2006, the International Centre for Fashion Trend Research declared that the trend of garment industry in the next decade is "fast and fashionable". So what is the meaning of "Fast and Fashion"? We can get some enlightenment from its English words.

In Europe, Fast Fashion is called Fast Fashion, literal translation. In the United States, "Speed to Market" focuses on the market characteristics of products under this model. In Britain, "HIGH STREET FASHION" has been translated into high street fashion by Chinese consumers. But I think the most appropriate name is the new word "McFashion" coined by the Guardian, which refers to this trend. The prefix "MC" is taken from McDonald's (McDonald's). Its characteristics are clear at a glance: Fast-selling fashion like fast food industry.

Fast fashion is abbreviated as "Fast fashion". Its concept is "to provide fashionable styles and elements at present", and with the basic characteristics of low price, large amount and limited quantity, to stimulate consumers' purchase desire to the maximum extent and meet their dual needs of material and spiritual.

Under the joint influence of the four social waves of economic globalization, social democratization, consumer youthfulness and network universalization, fast fashion brand emerged as the times require. As a new mode or a new fashion style, what impact will the concept of Fast Fashion bring to the development of Chinese clothing, especially children's clothing? What inspiration or drawbacks will it bring? This will be the focus of this paper.

Market Prospects and Current Situation of Children's Wear Design

Great Market Prospects

China has a large population of children. According to the main data bulletin (No. 1) of the Sixth National Population Census in 2010, of the 31 provinces, autonomous regions, municipalities directly under the Central Government and servicemen in mainland China, the population aged 0-14 is 22245 9737, accounting for 16.60%. Influenced by the central government's policy of liberalizing the two-child policy, the target population of women of childbearing age is around 80 million. In the first year of policy implementation, about 5 million new people were added. Since then, it will decline year by year, and the short-term population growth may gradually release in the next five years, totaling 15-25 million. Such a huge number of children's population base and the number of
potential children's population will have a huge impetus for the vigorous development of the children's wear industry.

As an important part of household consumption in China, children's consumption will increase rapidly with the acceleration of urbanization, the full liberalization of the second child policy and the improvement of household consumption level. The consumption demand for children's clothing is strong, and has been showing an upward trend. According to the survey data released by the National Bureau of Statistics, the average annual growth rate of children's wear in China has exceeded 30%, and the total sales of children's wear in 2015 exceeded 140 billion yuan. Shangpu Consulting also put forward a series of delightful forecast data in the Report on Dynamic Research and Profit Forecast of China's Children's Wear Market from 2014 to 2017: the demand for children's wear will increase by more than 20% in the coming years. In the increasingly fierce competition in the apparel industry, children's wear may become the most intense field for a large number of enterprises to compete. With such a strong demand for children's wear consumption and such a huge market capacity, the children's wear industry will become another high growth industry for investment and employment in the next stage of China, and the children's wear design professionals will also become the leader in the employment wave.

The Current Situation of Children's Dress Design in China

Because the modern children's wear industry in China began in the early 1990s, it started late and lacked perfect product system and professional children's wear R&D and design, it has long been a disadvantaged category in China's clothing industry.

According to the author's understanding, there is a shortage of full-time children's clothing designers in China at present. Up to now, most art colleges in China have not set up specialized children's wear design specialty. However, among the few children's wear designers; there are still many who are initially engaged in adult wear design. When they design children's clothing, they simply and directly apply the design method of adult clothing to children's clothing design, or simply imitate or copy the design of foreign children's clothing brands, ignoring the physiological development law of Chinese children themselves, national cultural elements and psychological characteristics, and only understand children's clothing design as a miniature version of adult clothing in design concept.

Technically, the design of children's clothing should take into account its safety, comfort and environmental protection, such as the ecological environment protection of children's clothing, the safety, delicacy and durability of accessories, besides the aspects of shape design, color design, fabric design, pattern design and series design. Qualified children's clothing design works not only focus on the basic aspects of children's clothing style, structure and color.

It should also reflect the special requirements of children's wear safety design and ecological design. For example, children's clothing with fine workmanship can not only meet the aesthetic needs of children and parents, but also be comfortable and natural. It should also ensure safety: buttons, belts, etc. are not easy to fall off, and free ends are not allowed to pull belts, so as to avoid accidental injuries such as infants eating by mistake or children's safety accidents caused by clothing ropes, functional ropes and decorative ropes.

In a word, there are a series of problems in children's wear in our country at present: the model of children's wear is not standardized, the design is partial to adulthood, and the quality of children's wear is high.

The difference is uneven. Children's wear industry focuses on processing, assembly and other low-tech areas, while the most important professional R&amp;D and innovation links are very scarce, design and R&amp;D talents in short supply. Therefore, it is urgent to strengthen the research and development and design innovation of children's wear.

Enlightenment of Fast Fashion Concept on Children's Wear Design in China

As a trend, Fast Fashion has three meanings: fast speed, popular price and keeping up with fashion trend. Fast fashion brands based on this model are popular all over the world. In most cities
and towns in China, H&M, ZARA, ASOBIO, Imprinted Fine Products, C&A, GAP, Uniqlo and so on can be found in the central business district. Fast fashion brands located in high-end commercial areas and prosperous transportation hub areas can not only provide convenient services for consumers, attract their patronage, but also enable consumers to obtain relaxed and pleasant shopping environment and shopping experience after tense work. Fast fashion products have so many supporters, for many reasons, such as keeping up with the current trend, new product production speed is too fast, window display conversion frequency is high, so how to use the advantages of fast fashion concept for our children's wear design services?

**Popularization of Luxury Brand Design**

Children's clothing design can also set up fashion trend strongholds around the world like fast-selling brand design agencies, collect fashion elements in time, and respond quickly. Compared with China, the children's wear industry in Europe and the United States started earlier and paid more attention to children's wear design in line with the healthy development of children's physiology. In the United States, Britain, Canada and other developed countries, professional children's wear research and development institutions have been set up to study the style design and fabric innovation of children's wear in the current season on the basis of scientific children's wear size series and system. At the same time, the positioning of children's wear in China can also follow the way that fast fashion brands find a balance between fashion and pricing. It can not only satisfy children's pursuit of fashion, but also reach the price that ordinary consumers can bear. The way of balancing the two can not only win the favor and love of children, but also win huge profits for the brand through small profits and multi-sales.

Therefore, our country's children's wear design should draw lessons from the fast fashion concept of popular luxury brand design, which is also the most significant advantage of fast fashion brand.

**Fast Mode**

Fast fashion is bound to take on a fast form. Because it is fast enough to present popular elements to consumers in time. Children's wear design should also avoid the lag of the feedback of fashion information; otherwise children's wear manufacturers may lose competitiveness due to the lack of fashion for children's wear. This kind of speed requires that products not only keep up with the trend, reflect the fashion and design sense, but also develop and distribute products quickly, and respond quickly to the feedback from the market and consumers. Take Zara, a fast fashion brand, as an example. It can develop 40,000 new clothing styles every year. In fact, it can launch 12,000 to 2,000 styles. On average, it can launch as many as 30 styles every day. In addition, fast fashion brands have new products on the market almost every week, so they can attract consumers to patronize them frequently.

The team of children's wear designers should quickly collect the most popular elements of children's wear through fashion strongholds, quickly integrate resources, and quickly enter the market for consumers to choose. To establish the high-speed operation of children's wear brand, we can also draw lessons from the high-speed supply chain system of fashion fast brand. According to statistics, it only takes about 2 weeks for Fast Fashion Brands to develop products from consumer demand research, creativity, design, proofing, production, logistics transportation to shelves. Each product will not last long in the store, which can not only improve the renovation rate of store products, but also effectively avoid the impact of discounted inventory on revenue.

Based on the reference of the advantages of fast fashion products, there are many styles and fashionable children's wear products are coming out quickly, which can greatly reduce the experience risk of children's wear manufacturers, improve the effectiveness and marketability of products, and thus expand the market scale. For school-age children, the body shape of boys and girls is in the formation stage. Gender differences between men and women gradually emerged. They gradually broke away from childishness and developed independent personality. Therefore, as far as psychological characteristics are concerned, school-age children have certain imagination and judgment, and begin to desire to grow up and deliberately imitate adult dress and behavior. Boys are naughty and active, girls are delicate and shy, advocate independence and freedom, and dress up to
be fashionable, bright-eyed, distinctive personality and hate duplication. Therefore, for school-age children's clothing design can be a good reference to the fast fashion concept, not only to meet the children's lively and active, the pursuit of personality psychological needs, but also to reduce the probability of shirt collision.

Parity Strategy

In human life, childhood is the golden period of growth and development, and it is also a special and critical period for the rapid development of physiological and psychological aspects. Children grow and develop vigorously, and their body shape changes enormously. For children's clothing, the design should not only meet the aesthetic needs of children and parents for style and appearance, ensure the health and safety of children's clothing, and adapt to the law of children's physical and mental development, but also consider saving and environmental protection. Because of the rapid growth of children's body, traditional children's wear has the characteristics of short use cycle, high production cost and high abandonment rate. Many children's wear have not been used for long or even face the situation of being abandoned after purchase, which brings huge waste to family economy and ecological environment. Therefore, the author believes that the design of children's clothes should focus on the principle of simplicity and decency, avoid excessive decoration and complex design; the choice of fabric should also reflect comfort, nature, durability, parity, recyclability, recycling and other elements, in order to reduce the cost of children's clothes on the premise of environmental protection and safety, refuse waste, and sustainable development.

Conclusion

China's children's wear culture has the best industry in the world. However, the lack of professional design for children's wear in China, the lack of professional books for children's wear design in higher education and other issues make the development of China's children's wear industry lag behind and in a disorderly low-level market stage. Under the tide of globalization in China, how to revitalize the domestic children's wear industry and enhance the design level and market competitiveness of products? The author believes that by analyzing and researching the international trend of Fast Fashion and the fast fashion brand under the changed concept, a series of ideas can be provided for the design and marketing of children's wear in China to meet the needs of children's wear consumers and improve the country of children's wear in China.

Acknowledgement

Funding: This project is funded by China West Normal University Teaching Reforming and Studying Project "A Cross-cultural Contrastive Study of Chinese and Canadian Students' Extracurricular Reading". (Project number 17YC064).

References


