

Educational paradigms in the training of fashion designers

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ABSTRACT: Major transformations in the field of fashion design, driven by digitalization, require a profound reconfiguration of the educational paradigms that underpin the professional training of fashion designers. Analyzing the transition from the traditional paradigm, centered on knowledge assimilation, to transdisciplinary paradigms, which favor active learning, critical reflection, and the integration of emerging technologies, the study highlights the importance of the balance between the artistic, technological, and entrepreneurial dimension. The study proposes an analytical perspective on fashion design education, examining the need to adapt the curriculum towards an integrative educational approach, focused on skills, interdisciplinarity and innovation. The pedagogical implications determined by the need to adapt the curriculum are also discussed, emphasizing the importance of applying educational methods that stimulate creativity, autonomy and innovation capacity, essential for adapting future designers to the dynamics of the fashion industry. The conclusions reveal the need to articulate flexible educational paradigms, focused on the holistic training of the fashion designer, through which it becomes able to integrate into a constantly transforming socio-cultural context.

KEYWORDS: educational paradigms; fashion design; creative training; interdisciplinarity; innovation; artistic education;

Introduction

In a global context marked by accelerated digitalization, sustainability and the redefinition of cultural identities, the training of fashion designers is a complex process. In fashion design, the notion of paradigm takes on particular relevance, as this field is deeply influenced by cultural, technological and economic dynamics, the term "paradigm" being used in this case to designate that set of models, practices and concepts existing at a given time. Educational paradigms represent the way in which this field has evolved, their analysis being useful from the perspective of understanding

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creative and scientific evolution, as well as for identifying ways to educate and train a fashion designer, which today can no longer be reduced to the transmission of technical skills, but involves the development of critical, creative and interdisciplinary thinking.

The concept of paradigm was consecrated by Kuhn, who saw it as a set of practices and beliefs shared by a community, with each historical era being characterized by a dominant paradigm (Kuhn, 1996). Understood as an aesthetic and cultural system, it embodies not only trends but also expressions of profound cultural transformations. Transposed to fashion, the term designates the conceptual and aesthetic framework within which designers create, the paradigm in this case representing not only a formal model, but a system of meanings through which consumers interpret clothing products. From Kuhn's theory, an essential aspect is the idea of "paradigm shift", which in fashion manifests itself frequently and visibly, being generated by factors such as: technological innovations, social changes, global crises, etc. An eloquent example of a paradigm shift would be the transition from fast fashion to slow fashion, the dominant values characterized by rapid consumption being replaced by values that emphasize durability.

Educational paradigms in fashion design

If we relate to the fashion industry, the concept of paradigm represents a valuable theoretical tool, allowing its understanding not only as an aesthetic practice, but also as a cultural and social phenomenon. In fashion, paradigms are not fixed, but dynamic, they reflect the continuous changes of society. In an educational context, the paradigm defines the way in which the teaching and learning process is organized, it influences the curricular structure, pedagogical methods, the relationship between theory and practice. The teaching and professional training method influences the way in which designers think and create, its modification being dictated by the need to adapt the curriculum, the importance of applying educational methods with a role in stimulating creativity, etc.

In the training of fashion designers, one of the methods approached was that based on the master-apprentice relationship, characterized by the hierarchical relationship between teacher and student, the direct transmission of knowledge, with an emphasis on perfecting the techniques of prototype execution. This traditional manner constituted the starting point in the education of fashion designers, which, although ensuring a solid technical basis, limited the development of creative autonomy and the capacity for innovation, in the absence of a reflexive dimension, the student risking remaining an executor, not a creator (Schön, 1983).

As education in the field became institutionalized, the emphasis began to be placed on the exploration of individual creativity, on the development of one's own aesthetic language. This method oriented towards the expression of creative individuality, on the training of the designer as an author, capable of generating visual discourses, with an exclusively artistic orientation, also determined a dissociation from the economic and

functional realities of the fashion industry, forming graduates sometimes incapable of understanding the demands of the market (Kawamura, 2005).

In the contemporary context, fashion design education has registering more frequently embedded in an interdisciplinary paradigm. The need to integrate fields such as digital technology, social sciences and environmental studies, understanding the profession as an activity that works with projects and that must generate solutions, has conditioned the educational system to redesign its training practices (Rocha et. al., 2018). Training a fashion designer requires an interdisciplinary framework that integrates technology, sociology and anthropology with the ethics of production, prepared to understand fashion as a cultural and economic phenomenon, the acquired skills including consumer analysis, but also the use of emerging technologies and addressing sustainability issues (Fletcher, 2014).

In parallel, the student-centered educational model, characterized by learning through projects, involvement in multidisciplinary work teams, and the achievement of as many internships as possible, has constituted a model that directly involves the student, this being an active element of their own training. In the case of this training modality, direct contact with industry through internships and educational partnerships stimulates autonomy, responsibility, and adaptability, facilitating the student's transition from academia to the professional environment (Schön, 1983).

The growing awareness of the environmental impact of the fashion industry has determined to a sustainable approach, which has involved the use of biodegradable materials, the adoption of design practices that apply principles of waste reduction, the education of fashion designers including concepts such as circular economy, the use of renewable resources. The approach redefines the role of the designer who becomes an agent of social and ecological change, not just a creator of aesthetic objects (Fletcher, 2014; Gwilt, 2020). Education for sustainability has offered a means to unlock the paradigm of fashion education, towards an education based on the cultivation of culture, creativity and critical thinking, requiring fashion designers to be able to respond to global and local contexts in order to contribute to the prosperity of societies, cultures and economies (Dilys, 2013).

Education in the digital age includes advantages of accessibility and flexibility, but the use of design software, virtual stimulation and digital prototyping programs, and last but not least, online learning platforms, can represent real challenges. The loss of direct contact with materials and the diminution of the tactile experience can constitute an unsupervised learning experience, a type of machine learning. In addition, artificial intelligence can offer a wide range of services to fashion companies, which will force the elimination of many research stages from the concept phase of projects. This technology offers significant opportunities in terms of efficiency and innovation, but also raises questions about the loss of the tactile dimension and dependence on technology (Gwilt,

2020).

From the beginning, technology has had a profound impact on educational organizations, the transparency of services, student mobility, accessibility of information, interaction through digital systems with higher education institutions, the use of communication and information tools by students to manage their education, imply a rethinking of pedagogy, its preparation for the information and digital communication era (Beetham & Sharpe, 2013). In this context, reforming the teaching method assume re-articulating the field to a new context. The potential of digital technologies to disrupt norms, to change professions, implies adapting the curricula which, from a pedagogical point of view, must consider the introduction of completely new activities and forms of learning.

Conclusions

Over time, trainers have had to respond simultaneously to several educational requirements: expanding creativity, acquiring technical skills and integrating emerging technologies. Regardless of the objectives, all the methods mentioned coincided with understanding the role of the designer in the fashion industry, a determining role in the conception and development phase of a clothing project. Currently, there are several methods, processes and pedagogical practices for educating in clothing design, one technical and engineering, one conceptual, and another based on innovation. These methods leave their mark on the way a designer relates to the profession, one trained in a traditional paradigm will prefer technique and execution, while one trained in a contemporary paradigm will integrate concepts such as sustainability or digital design.

The analysis of educational paradigms has highlighted the fact that, over time, the main challenges have been maintaining a balance between creativity and industry requirements, accessibility to a complex education and the successful integration of technology, without losing the aesthetic and social dimension of the profession. The current trend is towards hybridizing educational models, where technical skills, artistic creativity, critical thinking and social responsibility are integrated into a coherent framework. In the future, a change and reassessment of the necessary skills is expected, and it is expected that educational paradigms in the training of fashion designers will reflect the profound transformations of the industry and implicitly of the profession.

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