

An Analysis of The Malaysian Designer's Headgear Design by Shamil Nazri

Mohammad Shafirul Riza Ibharim*

*Department of Fashion, Faculty of Art & Design,
Universiti Teknologi MARA Perak Branch
Seri Iskandar Campus, Perak,
Malaysia
Corresponding author
Email: shafirulriza@uitm.edu.my*

Muhammad Salehuddin Zakaria*

*Department of Fine Art, Faculty of Art & Design,
Universiti Teknologi MARA Perak Branch
Seri Iskandar Campus, Perak,
Malaysia
Email: msalehuddin@uitm.edu.my*

Received Date: **01.07.2025**; Accepted Date: **20.08.2025**; Available Online: **08.09.2025**

**These authors contributed equally to this study*

ABSTRACT

This research is to investigate the concept and idea of headgear in terms of design, manufacturing methods, and materials used in the fashion industry. This study also examines manufacturing differentiation based on a literature review by era and provides information as a source in new. The method of obtaining information from this study is based on primary data, which is an interview with the designer of headgear, namely Mr. Shamil Nazri. Some of his collections have been selected for the discussion process. In addition, secondary data was also obtained through this study by looking for research gaps from past literature reviews. The results of this study found that there are differences in various aspects of the concept of headgear production. Furthermore, this study can document detailed information regarding the concept of ideas, designs, manufacturing methods, and materials used to produce headgear. This research should be done for documentation and reference for researchers and students in the future. It is hoped that the next generation will be able to produce better quality headgear so that it can dignify the country's fashion industry through headgear.

Keywords: *Analysis, Concept and idea, Malaysian designer, Headgear*

INTRODUCTION

In the world of modern fashion, headgear or headwear is not just a mere complement to appearance, but it plays an important role in reflecting individual identity, culture, social status and self-expression. From

classic hats to avant-garde designs on the catwalk, headgear has become a significant element in the evolution of style and a visual marker of certain eras, communities and ideologies. The study of headgear in fashion is important because it opens a wider understanding of how this small element can have a major impact on global fashion trends, the development of visual identity, as well as its relationship with history, culture and material innovation.

In addition, this study also allows designers and academics to understand the transformation of headgear design from a functional and aesthetic perspective, in addition to assessing its influence on sustainability and technology in today's fashion. With increasing awareness of sustainability in the fashion industry, research into materials, techniques and reuse of headgear can contribute to more responsible and innovative design practices. Therefore, this study not only contributes to the development of knowledge in the field of fashion but also supports the development of an industry that is more inclusive, competitive and relevant to future needs.

This study also examines the headgear produced by a local designer, Mr. Shamil Nazri, using easily available recycled items. This is because it is more economical. The design sector is characterized by similar energy-saving tendencies. The design of clothing, considering the energy-saving factor, is reserved for many jobs today. However, important image components such as headdresses are still under-investigated in the context of designing images, regarding the main technological aspects of their implementation. Headgear often combines functionality with symbolism, reflecting individual needs, safety requirements, or cultural identity. The limitations in producing headwear designs come from various angles, including culture, function, comfort, and aesthetics. Here are the main limitations that designers often face in this context: cultural and religious boundaries, function and practicality, aesthetics and ceremony themes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the era of fashion modelling, it has gone through a phase of change from time to time according to trends and the passage of time. In the history of Western clothing, women's hairstyles and headdresses have been well-studied, but men's headdresses have not (Kim & Mun 2004). Most of the head coverings that show diversity in form and ornaments can be used in fashion shows for accessories and complement an outfit. The design sector is characterized by similar energy-saving tendencies. Clothing design, considering energy-saving factors, is reserved for many jobs today (Yakymchuk et. al, 2020).

In terms of explaining one's identity, the head is the most crucial component of the body. Furthermore, headgear increases head insulation and, therefore, is mainly problematic under warm conditions. However, the head is among the most sensitive body parts related to thermal comfort, thereby directly affecting the willingness to wear headgear (Bogerd, 2015). Headpieces can indicate a variety of unexpected things, but they can become significant symbols of identity, social standing, profession, and self-expression (Denissa & Piliang, 2017). However, according to the views of Suhaili and Nurul Batrisyia Izzati (2024), think that the traditional head covering has become an important symbol and character of Malaysian Malays. It also represents the rich cultural heritage and traditions of the Malay community. The objective of the research is to develop an AR filter as a platform to promote Malay clothing and evaluate the effectiveness of AR as a platform to raise awareness, preserve and promote cultural heritage.

Headgear is also produced using second-hand waste such as fabric. The use of recycled materials is important as a measure to reduce environmental pollution. According to South Korean Ministry of Environment statistics, textile waste discarded during production increased from 1.12 million tons in 2010

to 4.51 million tons in 2018 (Lee, 2021). This waste not only results in a loss of economic expenses, time, and labour that are necessary to produce textiles and textiles, but it also, sadly, has a significant negative influence on the environment (Rissanen, 2013).

Headwear wrapped around the head has many distinctive examples above the knot. Types of decoration differ dramatically in form and material. Complex types are combinations of all other types, with the designer's personality standing out. The characteristics of headwear are revealed first as an expansion of material categories, second as an expression of dramatic form, and third as a complete coordination of creative fashion images. Headwear reflects the designer's creativity in producing various photos. After this, they will become important as fashion items and independent designs in fashion styling (Choi & Kim, 2016).

Headgear Design

Renowned fashion designer Iris Van Herpen frequently combines fashion with technology. The use of 3D printing and kinetic design enhances both the visual impact and legibility of complex concepts, allowing audiences to more readily interpret the symbolic narratives embedded in the work (Bolton, 2016). The headpiece was created in collaboration with artist Casey Curran for the Couture Spring Summer 2021 fashion show. The headpiece is gently shape-shifting their silhouette, continuously re-framing the visage with a theme of "Minds in Motion" (Petrarca, 2021). Eighteen transparent monofilament threads snake their way through a series of 18 brass coils, arranged to create a serpentine motion in the lifting and falling of each quill, symbolic of the turbulent motion of minds, through rectification of reality.

Designer Mijoda Dajomi created a headwear collection inspired by the effects of climate change on weather and natural water resources, named the "Daughters of Rain" (Betts, 2024). The rain-harvesting hat consists of hats that double as vessels to collect and store rainwater. The primary purpose of this headpiece is to spread awareness about the relationship between water and the environment. The headpiece was produced using a waste cotton fabric, then a beeswax coating was applied to the fabric to create a leather-like texture. The headpiece blends creativity with environmental crisis as a statement to raise public awareness about critical ecological issues.

Malaysian headpiece designer Bremen Wong is known for combining organic shapes and architecture into the design (Boey, 2019). Using waste materials has been a practice to promote sustainability. The use of plastic and paper as the main material to shape the wispy ribbons, layered waves, and acquire the movement and dimension of swirling smoke and animated ocean tides (Leong, 2023). The theme of the headpiece is "Being Sustainable," exhibited during the Bremen Wong 2nd Solo Exhibition in 2023.

Table 1. Comparison of Headgear Design

Designer	Iris Van Herpen	Mijoda Dajomi	Bremen Wong
Theme	Minds in Motion	Daughters of Rain	Being Sustainable
Material	3D Printing	Cotton and Beeswax	Plastic and Paper
Purpose	Fashion Show	Fashion Collection	Exhibition

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses data collection methods from primary and secondary sources as the mechanism of this study. The purpose is to unravel the research questions and objectives based on the concept and idea of headgear in the modelling industry. The method of data collection is obtained through primary data, which is an interview with a fashion headgear designer in the country, namely Mr. Shamil Nazri, to get information about his headgear production process. In addition, the researcher also obtains information from secondary data through reading, such as journals, books, magazines, newspapers and so on, to obtain clearer information about headgear. Data collection through this method will help the writer assess the headgear production process more accurately and clearly.

The following is detailed feedback from the community regarding headgear design obtained from 22 respondents using a survey method based on several questions. Based on the first question regarding the age of the respondents who answered, most of them were in the age range of 18 - 25, which is 86.4% of the 22 respondents who answered. This age range is the younger generation who are more interested in using headgear. The second question regarding gender was answered mostly by women, 16 people or 72.7% of the 22 respondents. This is because women are more interested in fashion than men. This causes the respondents who answered this question to be higher. Based on the third question, which is the type of job of the respondents who answered, most of them were students, which was 81.8%. While 4.5% were from the professional group and 13.6% from the education group. The highest percentage from the student group is because students are often up to date with fashion developments both domestically and internationally.

Based on the next section, the more critical question is regarding "Do you know what headgear is?" Out of 22 respondents, 95.5% know headgear. This means that the development of the fashion world is increasingly receiving attention from all levels of society, especially fashion headgear. The next question was "How often do you wear headgear (e.g., helmets, hats, turbans, caps)?" 45.5% answered that they wear headgear daily for safety, fashion, or protection. Next, regarding "What type(s) of headgear do you typically wear or are familiar with?" based on this question, 77.3% answered Religious or cultural (e.g., hijab, turban), which is for the purpose of covering the head. This is because most of the marriage culture in terms of wearing there are users of headgear. The next question is, "What do you believe are the primary purposes of headgear?" From this question, as many as 45.5% stated that people who chose cultural or religious tradition for wearing headgear. The last question for this section is "What factors most influence your perception of headgear?" 45.5% chose comfort as the main factor in choosing to wear headgear. In addition, 18.2% chose headgear for safety purposes.

The next section is about questions that are aimed at concepts and designs. That is, based on the first question regarding "Have you seen this kind of headgear design before?" which was answered by 22 respondents, 81.1% answered "Yes" while 18.2% answered "No". This shows that most people know the needs and uses of headgear in everyday life. The next question was regarding "Are you aware that the theme of this headpiece is 'Women Goddess' and 'Empowering Women'?" 95.5% agreed that this headgear is often worn and empowered by women. While 4.5% disagreed with this statement. Next, the question "Are you aware that the headgear is made using recycled satin fabric and feathers?" The respondents who answered were 16 people, or 72.7% who said "Yes". While 6 people or 27.3% said "No" this is because perhaps not all people know about the needs and functions of the fabric used in the production of headgear. Based on the next question regarding "Does the use of sustainable material enhance your appreciation of this design?" out of a total of 22 respondents, 95.5% agreed by answering "Yes" and 4.5% answered "No". Based on this question, many agreed because the use of sustainable materials rather than plastic can protect the environment.

Apart from that, other factors influence the production of headgear designs. Based on the feedback from the survey that was produced through questions such as "Based on the headgear design above, how would you rate the following elements?" Based on the answers from the "Creativity" point of view, 50% of respondents agreed from the creativity point of view in the selection of headgear. While from the "Craftsmanship" point of view, 54.5% of respondents agreed on the Craftsmanship point of view in its use in headgear. Next, from the "Symbolism" point of view, 54.5% of respondents also agreed. From the "Dramatic Impact" point of view, 45.5% of respondents agreed on the production of headgear. While the last, from the "Wearability" point of view, 45.5% agreed.

Based on the selection of designs for wearing headgear is based on the theme of an event. Through a survey conducted, 50% of respondents agreed that wearing headgear is based on the theme outlined in an event. The next question was "Would you consider this piece as?". Based on this question, most respondents chose headgear to be used in "Fashion" events, which is 59.1% agreeing.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework in this analysis is two relevant frameworks that can be integrated in design theory: the function form context model. This model, often used in industrial and fashion design, balances functionality, aesthetic form, and contextual appropriateness. Based on the first step in collecting data for this study, the headgear designer was interviewed to obtain detailed information on various factors in producing headgear from an idea and concept perspective for documentation purposes. Next, discussions were held to assess and gather feedback from the community and users about their experiences with headgear in daily life. This type of analysis is crucial for helping designers improve headgear, ensuring that each design meets users' needs for comfort, aesthetics, and safety. Access is required for future improvements. If there is a negative response, the designer needs to be more careful in making improvements. From the interview, insights revealed both the conceptual strengths and design challenges of the headgear by Shamil Nazri. Results from the interview indicated a strong emotional reception to the symbolic elements in translating the design and idea. The use of a metal structure was perceived as a powerful visual metaphor. Moreover, the incorporation of recycled fabric and natural materials was widely appreciated, as it resonated with contemporary values of sustainability in fashion. However, several challenges emerged throughout the design process. Structurally, the headgear faced limitations in terms of weight balance and wearability, particularly due to the metal wire framework, which risked instability during wear or movement. This highlights a common tension in conceptual fashion between visual abstraction and practicality. Additionally, limited time and resources affected material choices and refinement opportunities. Overall, the interviews underscored the need for a balance between conceptual expression, structural function, and communicative clarity in the development of headgear designs.

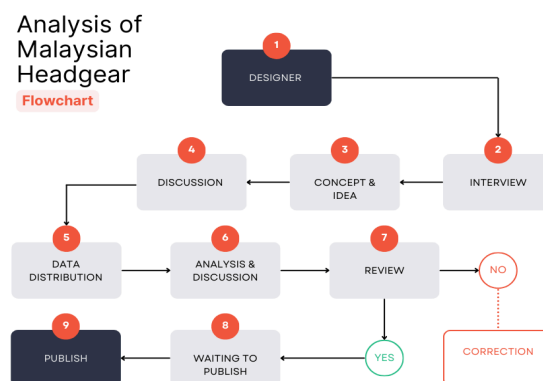


Figure 1. Analysis of Malaysian headgear

FINDINGS

The researcher found that the theme and concept are important at the beginning of the process. The idea of the design comes from the purpose of the design and the person wearing the headgear. Furthermore, most of the headgear is used for personal and commercial purposes in the fashion industry.



Figure 2. Headgear idea and concept
(Source: author's personal collection)

Concept and Idea

The production of headgear must have an idea and concept for an event; the headgear produced must fit the theme. Mr. Shamil Nazri creates his headgear using homemade materials. In addition, he also uses materials such as plastic, patchwork, bottles, and so on. He processes and repaints the materials, turning them into head decorations for the wearer. The use of fabric waste is crucial as a measure of environmental pollution. We reuse the waste to create new products like headgear. According to Hwang and Lee (2023), due to the mass production system of fast fashion, a large amount of textile waste is produced in the production process also has a major negative impact on the environment. Recycling fabric waste is a crucial element in advancing the circular economy within the textile industry. The need for fabric waste recycling is mostly motivated by resource recovery considerations and the adverse environmental effects of disposal and landfilling (Dissanayake & Weerasinghe, 2021).

The manufacturing of these headgear designs has garnered attention as a pioneering approach to the realization of sustainable fashion. Numerous designers have created and suggested innovative pattern-making procedures to produce headgear utilizing materials that are derived from garbage that has been reused.

Material

The result found that most of the materials can be made from recycled materials. This is because the headgear is used as an accessory to complete the wearer's look. The materials can be collected from the

remnant fabric or trimming used from the garment. Furthermore, this headgear design is commonly for a collaboration project between the fashion designer and the headgear designer to work on the same client.

Making Process

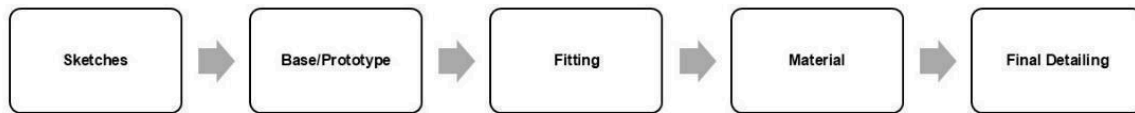


Figure 3. Making up a process flowchart

The process involved transferring ideas into sketches, prototypes, fittings and the final product. As shown in the figure above, the first idea was transferred into a sketch to design the headgear that is aligned with the theme and concept. It is followed by making the base of the headgear to ensure that the sizing can fit the wearer. This process involved fitting according to the head of the client. The process is continued by identifying the right material to cover the base of the headgear. Finally, additional material is used to add value and finalize the detailing of the headgear design.

Design

From designs 1, 2 and 3, each design was analysed with a different theme and concept. Each of the designs also used different types of materials to align with the theme and concept. Moreover, the process of making the headgear has affected the shape of the design. The table below shows the summary of each design characteristic.

Table 2. Summary of Shamil Nazri Headgear Design: Theme and Concept, Materials and Purposes

Headgear	Design 1	Design 2	Design 3
Theme & Concept	Women Goddess	Glam Rock	Blue Floral Fantasy
Base Material	Hairband and metal wire	Recycled metal wire	Hairband and metal wire
Additional Material	Feathers and recycled satin fabric	Spray paint and feathers	Artificial flowers
Purpose	Fashion Show	Music Video	Photoshoot

Design 1

The first design is a collaboration between Shamil Nazri and Seth & Luna, a Malaysian fashion brand, to do a project for the Haute Couture Spring Summer 2023/24 Fashion Show on October 8, 2023. The theme for this design is Women Goddess and Empowering Women. The idea comes from the women's cancer survivors in conjunction with Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The materials used in this headpiece are feathers, metal wire and recycled satin fabric. This headgear is made by using a steel, ready-made hairband as a base and a metal wire to create the round shape. The base of the headgear is covered with recycled satin fabric to complete the look. Finally, feathers are placed randomly around shaped metal wire to give this dramatic and empowering look to the model.



Figure 4. Headgear design 01
(Source: Shamil Nazri's personal collection, 2023)

Design 2

The idea and concept for the second design are inspired by Rock Glam. This design is for Stacy Anam, a Malaysian Singer, to wear for the music video “Nyala”. The idea is to give a dark, gothic look while maintaining the femininity of the wearer. The process of making this design involves using recycled metal wire as the base of the headgear. This metal wire is coloured with black spray paint and the shape of the headgear is designed to look like a mohawk to blend with the concept. There are feathers attached to the metal wire to complete the look.



Figure 5. Headgear Design 02
(Source: Shamil Nazri Personal Collection, 2024)

Design 3

The third design is for an editorial photoshoot in collaboration with a photographer and make-up artist. The theme and concept for this design are blue floral fantasy. In this headgear, there are different types of artificial flowers used to give a daydreaming mood to the design. The base for this headgear uses a ready-made steel hairband and metal wire to support the flowers. These artificial flowers are placed evenly so that the final look has a symmetrical balance to the design.



Figure 6. Headgear design 03
(Source: Shamil Nazri's personal collection, 2024)

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, fashion headgear has a significant part in the expression of personal identity, the formation of cultural identities, and the practicality of fashion. Fashionable headgear items, such as hats, caps, and headbands, serve as a statement of individuality, improve personal style, and often follow cultural or historical traditions. These things are more than simply accessories. In addition, they provide practical advantages, such as making stylish items, offering protection from the weather, and making day-to-day living more comfortable.

As fashion changes, headgear continues to represent shifting trends, ideals and innovation, integrating beauty with utility. Whether it's a timeless classic like the fedora or a trendy statement item, fashion headgear remains a flexible and crucial aspect of personal style and personality. Research on the concept and idea of headgear production in the fashion industry should be developed to a global level because research like this is important as the most important reference for designers who are just starting in the fashion world and focus on headgear design. In the modelling world, headgear is an additional accessory to modelling clothes at an event. Its purpose is as a highlighter in displaying clothes. In addition, headgear also serves as an accessory to protect yourself from the forest and heat. It has high aesthetic characteristics that can increase self-confidence in the wearer. Recommendation for future research. That can relate to several fields such as neuroscience, augmented reality, virtual reality, brain-computer interfaces, wearable health tech, and more. Here's a breakdown of key types of headgear that are shaping future research, such as AR/VR Headsets with Sensors, Smart Headgear for Health Monitoring, Neuroprotective or Performance-Enhancing Helmets and Transcranial Stimulation Headgear. Research like this needs to be documented for an academic purpose, which is a reference source for IPTA and IPTS students and so on.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This research was conducted to study the function and process of producing headgear using recycled materials by a local designer, Mr. Shamil Nazri. The author would also like to thank the College of Creative Arts, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Seri Iskandar Campus, Perak Branch, Malaysia, for providing the opportunity to produce this article.

REFERENCES

- Betts, R. (2024). *Mijoda Dajomi designs rain-harvesting hats for a water scarce future*. Dezeen. <https://www.dezeen.com/2024/08/20/mijoda-dajomi-rain-harvesting-hats/>
- Boey, S. (2019). *Inside the Atelier with Bremen Wong*. Buro247.My. Retrieved 2025, from <https://www.buro247.my/fashion/features/inside-the-atelier-with-bremen-wong.html>.
- Bogerd, C. P., Aerts, J. M., Annaheim, S., Bröde, P., De Bruyne, G., Flouris, A. D., & Rossi, R. M. (2015). A review on ergonomics of headgear: Thermal effects. *International Journal of Industrial Ergonomics*, 45, 1-12.
- Bolton, A. (2016). *Manus x Machina: Fashion in an age of technology*. Metropolitan Museum of Art.
- Choi, J., & Kim, J. (2016). Headdress Designs appearing in Haute Couture Collection-Focused on 2010 S/S~ 2015 S/S. *Journal of Fashion Business*, 20(2), 59-77.
- Denissa, L., Widodo, P., Adisasmito, N. D., & Piliang, Y. A. (2017). Exploration Cultural Signs on Jember Fashion Carnival Costume Headdress as the Medium of Expression and Communication. *Arts and Design Studies*, 51, 44-50.
- Dissanayake, D. G. K., & Weerasinghe, D. U. (2021). Fabric waste recycling: A systematic review of methods, applications, and challenges. *Materials Circular Economy*, 3, 1-20.
- Hwang, G. Y., & Lee, Y. (2023). What is the next step for zero-waste fashion? *International Journal of Costume and Fashion*, 23(2), 45-57.
- Kim, K., & Mun, Y. (2004). A Study on the restoration of men's headgear- focusing on hats. *Journal of Fashion Business*, 8, 116-125.
- Lee, J. S. (2021, September 28). Fast fashion, which produces 80 billion garments a year, is "irresponsible" in disposing of clothing waste. News Tree. <https://www.newstree.kr/newsView/ntr202109170003>
- Leong, G. (2023). *Milliner Bremen Wong tells a story of perseverance in "Being Sustainable" exhibition*. Optionstheedge.Com. Retrieved 2025, from <https://www.optionstheedge.com/topic/style/milliner-bremen-wong%C2%A0tells-story-perseverance-being-sustainable-exhibition>.
- Petrarca, M. (2021, January 28). *Iris van Herpen's SS21 haute couture show is one for the books*. Grazia. <https://graziamagazine.com/articles/iris-van-herpen-ss21-haute-couture-beauty/>
- Rissanen, T. I. (2013). *Zero-waste fashion design: A study at the intersection of cloth, fashion design and pattern cutting* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Technology, Sydney]. <http://hdl.handle.net/10453/23384>

- Suhaili Din, & Nurul Batrisyia Izzati Aziz. (2024, August). *MYAR: Preserving Malay traditional headwear with augmented reality filter*. In Proceedings of the Participatory Design Conference 2024: Situated Actions, Doctoral Colloquium, PDC places, Communities-Volume 3 (pp. 35-38).
- Tan, F. Y., Hassan, M. H. A., Johari, N. H., Omar, M. N., & Hasanuddin, I. (2022). The effect of wearing soccer headgear on the head response in soccer heading. *International Journal of Automotive and Mechanical Engineering*, 19(4), 10112-10120.
- Yakymchuk, O., Yakymchuk, D., Bilei-Ruban, N., Nosova, I., Horiashchenko, S., Horiashchenko, K., & Tuz, V. (2020). Development equipment for hydro-jet forming of women designer's headwear. *International Review of Applied Sciences and Engineering*, 11(3), 261-268.