

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Choosing the Subject

Streetwear, a subculture-turned-fashion phenomenon, has witnessed a remarkable surge in popularity and cultural significance over the past decade. This surge has been notably catalyzed by influential figures who have transcended their primary domains to become tastemakers in the realm of fashion. The origins of streetwear found in the 1980s, when disenfranchised youth looked outside of mainstream fashion culture for a means of self-expression. It has grown over time into a multibillion-dollar worldwide industry that includes everything from high-end fashion labels to reasonably priced streetwear clothing lines (Streetgox, 2023).

Streetwear fashion is not just a clothing choice, it reflects values, cultural norms, and social identity. Transformations in the world of streetwear fashion cannot be understood separately from the social and cultural changes occurring in society. Kanye West, with his broad and multidimensional influence as a musician, fashion designer, and cultural figure, is at the center of this research. His fashion style has gained recognition and attracted worldwide attention, playing an important role in shaping and influencing streetwear trends (Rob, 2020). Therefore, this research becomes relevant and important in the context of global fashion development.

The fascination with streetwear can be traced back to its roots in urban youth culture, where it emerged as a form of self-expression and identity. Streetwear, characterized by casual, comfortable clothing with a distinct urban aesthetic,

originated from the streets and skateboarding culture but has since permeated high-end fashion runways and luxury boutiques. The emergence of streetwear as a dominant force in fashion was marked by its departure from traditional sartorial norms. It embraced a more relaxed, inclusive, and individualistic approach to style, challenging the established boundaries between high and low fashion. Streetwear became a canvas for personal expression, incorporating elements of graffiti, hip-hop, skate culture, and athletic wear into its visual language.

During the late 2010s, the democratization of fashion, facilitated by social media platforms and online communities, played a pivotal role in elevating streetwear to new heights. Consumers were no longer passive recipients of fashion trends dictated by elite designers, instead, they became active participants, shaping trends through digital platforms and peer-to-peer influence. Streetwear, with its roots in subcultures, resonated with this shift, offering a mode of self-presentation that transcended socio-economic boundaries.

In fact, Kanye West's influence as both a musical icon and a fashion influencer became increasingly pronounced. His unique ability to straddle the worlds of music and fashion positioned him as a trendsetter with unparalleled cultural resonance. The YEEZY brand, with its distinct aesthetic characterized by minimalist designs, earthy tones, and avant-garde silhouettes, became a symbol of Kanye West's creative ethos and fashion-forward vision. The collaboration between Kanye West and Adidas proved to be a strategic move that not only solidified his presence in the fashion industry but also catapulted streetwear into the mainstream (Santana et al., 2023). The YEEZY Boost sneaker line, in particular, achieved cult

status, with its limited releases generating unparalleled hype and demand. The scarcity model adopted by YEEZY releases, a common strategy in streetwear, heightened the brand's allure and contributed to the phenomenon of "*hypebeast*" culture, where consumers fervently pursued limited-edition items as status symbols (Adidas, 2016).

Furthermore, Kanye West's influence extended beyond his own fashion endeavors. His collaborations with other major fashion houses and designers, such as Louis Vuitton and Virgil Abloh, further cemented his role as a tastemaker and trendsetter. The integration of streetwear aesthetics into high fashion collections became a defining feature of this era, blurring the lines between luxury and street culture. In the celebrity fashion, Kanye West's personal style became a subject of fascination and emulation. His penchant for oversized silhouettes, distressed denim, and unique accessories contributed to a shift in the perception of what constituted "high fashion." Kanye West's fashion choices were widely documented and disseminated through social media, amplifying their impact and reinforcing his status as a style icon (Santana et al., 2023).

In addition to his impact on fashion aesthetics, Kanye West's influence on the cultural perception of streetwear cannot be understated. The democratization of fashion, spurred by social media, allowed for greater inclusivity and diversity in representation. Streetwear, with its roots in subcultures, became a vehicle for marginalized communities to assert their identity and challenge traditional notions of beauty and fashion. As streetwear continued to gain prominence, it became a canvas for social and political expression. Graphic prints, slogans, and symbols

used in streetwear designs often conveyed messages of resistance, empowerment, and social commentary. Kanye West, known for his outspoken views and advocacy for social justice issues, infused these themes into his fashion ventures, further aligning streetwear with cultural and political movements.

The importance of this research lies in its in-depth examination of how Kanye West's fashion style represents and reflects the transformation in streetwear fashion. Through comprehensive analysis, this research will identify and discuss changes in designs, values, and concepts that emerged in streetwear fashion during this period. This becomes increasingly significant considering that streetwear is not only a form of clothing, but also a form of cultural expression that plays a role in depicting the values and identity of society at any given time.

In addition, this research will explore the role of Kanye West as an American artist in shaping and popularizing streetwear trends. West's overall influence, whether as a musician, fashion entrepreneur, or cultural figure, will be explored to understand his broader impact on the world of fashion. This not only contributes to the understanding of how celebrities can influence fashion trends, but also provides practical insights for fashion industry players, designers and marketers in identifying and responding to changing consumer trends.

B. Problem Formulation

In accordance with the previously discussed background, the formulation of the problem in this research can be described as follows:

1. How are developments in the transformation of streetwear fashion identified through Kanye West's fashion style?

2. What is the role of Kanye West as an American artist in shaping and popularizing streetwear trends from 2017 to 2022?
3. What symbolization or concepts emerged in streetwear fashion between 2017 and 2022?

C. Objectives of the study

Referring to the background and formulation of the problem above, the objectives of this study can be described as follows:

1. To analyze the developments in the transformation of streetwear fashion identified through Kanye West's fashion style.
2. To analyze the role of Kanye West as an American artist in shaping and popularizing streetwear trends from 2017 to 2022.
3. To analyze the symbolization concepts emerged in streetwear fashion between 2017 and 2022.

D. Scope of the study

The scope of this study is focused on the transformation of streetwear fashion from 2017 to 2022, taking representations of Kanye West's fashion style as the center of analysis. The scope of the research includes analysis of the evolution of Kanye West's fashion style, identification of developments in the streetwear fashion industry during the research period, mapping of symbolization or concepts that emerge in streetwear fashion, as well as evaluation of Kanye West's role as an American artist in shaping and popularizing streetwear trends.

E. Review of Related Studies

The First researcher is Sterling Smith (2020) with the title “The fusion of Rap & Fashion”. This research gave several points to the reader about how The Rap culture can merge into a mainstream Fashion trend (Smith, 2022).

The second researcher is Talia (2014) with her journal “Rap & Fashion”. In this journal, the writer focused on the history of Hip-hop itself. And then she analyzes why hip-hop became so much popular that its culture of it could be giving birth to a new fashion trend (Levinas, 2014).

The third researcher is Erwin Ing (2013) with the journal called “Hip-Hop as Identity, Trends, Cultural, & style”. Ering explained that not only a trend but turns out that hip-hop culture can be a lifestyle. Bringing identity to its music and listeners (Ing, 2013).

The fourth researcher is Tasha Lewis (2013) with the journal called “Outfitting the Urban”. This journal explains and analyzes fashion itself. From an outfit that only people who listen to hip-hop want to wear to a fashion style in this current era (Lewis, 2013).

The fifth researcher is Yasmin Akilah (2022) called “Fashion Hip-hop di Kalangan Remaja Laki – Laki Surabaya Tahun 1984-2000”. With this journal, Yasmin analyses the reason and the behavior of Surabaya’s teenagers on their reason to jump into the Hip-hop fashion trend (Aisyah.Y, 2022).

In simple terms, these five studies give us a detailed understanding of how hip-hop culture and fashion are closely connected. They help us see the historical roots of hip-hop's impact on clothing and explore the cultural and identity aspects tied to this connection. Together, these studies provide a solid foundation to better

grasp how Kanye West's influence has shaped streetwear. This combined research helps us see the bigger picture of how hip-hop culture has affected fashion, and it's crucial for understanding how Kanye West fits into this narrative. Kanye, being a big figure in both hip-hop and fashion, becomes a key player in the ongoing changes in streetwear. The connection between hip-hop and fashion goes beyond just what people wear; it involves expressing culture, asserting identity, and creating a shared story that resonates with different communities. This simple understanding, shaped by what each researcher has discovered, is vital for uncovering the broader cultural and identity impacts of Kanye West's influence on streetwear.

F. Method Research

The research method that used in this study includes several stages designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of Kanye West as an American artist on the popularity of streetwear from 2017 to 2022. This study adopted a qualitative approach in the research methodology. Where this method can be defined as a research approach that is interpretive, contextual, and descriptive. This method focused on in-depth understanding of social and cultural phenomena, prioritizes the significance of context, as well as giving special attention to the process and content of human interaction (Creswell, 2018).

In depth, this research implemented literature study methods, content analysis and visual analysis. Literature studies in this study provided a solid theoretical basis for understanding the conceptual framework of streetwear and the role of Kanye West in it. Content analysis provided in -depth insight into the narrative and public response to Kanye West and visual analysis involved

monitoring of Kanye West's design evolution and personal style during the specified period with a focus on visual aspects that reflect streetwear trends.

1. Data and Source of Data

With the research method and data collection that has been set, while this research optimized the use of secondary data sources. In the context of this research, literature studies utilized secondary data sources such as academic books, journal articles, and official publications. Content analysis depend on secondary data originating from social media, news articles, and documented interviews. Meanwhile, visual analysis use visual data from photos, videos, and other visual materials that represent the appearance and design of streetwear represent by Kanye West. The integration of data sources is expected to provide a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of streetwear fashion development, the symbolization and concept emerged from the streetwear fashion and the role of Kanye West on the popularity of streetwear from various perspectives.

2. Method and Technique of collecting data

Data collection techniques in this study involved several methods in accordance with the qualitative approach used. The following are data collection techniques that can be applied:

1) Study of literature

Literature study into the theoretical foundation of this research. Researchers conducted a search and analysis of literature from books, journals, and articles related to streetwear, fashion trends, and the impact of celebrities, especially the role of Kanye West. Through

literature studies, researchers will compile a solid framework to guide research and understand further context of streetwear phenomena that represented by Kanye West.

2) Content Analysis

Content analysis techniques focused on understanding public responses to streetwear trends that represented by Kanye West. Through analysis of social media content, news articles, and documented interviews, researchers identified patterns in public narratives, comments, and thoughts that arise related to streetwear.

3) Visual Analysis

Visual analysis techniques allowed researcher to understand streetwear aesthetic evolution during the study. Through monitoring photos, videos and other visual materials that include the appearance of Kanye West and Streetwear product design, researchers identified key visual elements that characterize this fashion trend. This analysis helped in exploring the relationship between visibility, creativity, and streetwear attractiveness to consumers.

3. Method and Technique of Analyzing Data

The techniques and stages of data analysis in this research has adapted the qualitative methods used. The following are the techniques and stages of data analysis that applied:

1) Study of literature

The literature analysis stage in this research begins with a careful review of literature related to streetwear, fashion trends, and the impact of celebrities, especially the role of Kanye West. Literature research included searching and evaluating books, journals, articles, and related theoretical sources relevant to the research topic. During this stage, the researcher compiled a synthesis of findings from the literature that forms the theoretical basis for this research. The literature analysis also helped identify knowledge gaps that this research can fill, as well as provide in-depth context for understanding the evolution of streetwear and the impact of celebrities on the world of fashion.

2) Content Analysis

The content analysis stage involved collecting and investigating social media content, news articles, and documented interviews relating to streetwear. Data from these sources analyzed qualitatively to identify main categories, patterns and public sentiment towards streetwear trends represented by Kanye West.

3) Visual Analysis

The visual analysis began with an in-depth look at photos, videos and other visual materials covering Kanye West's appearances and streetwear designs. These visual observations allowed researcher to identify key visual elements, aesthetic trends, and changes in streetwear design over the research period. Visual coding involved categorizing these elements, while further analysis helped link these elements to

broader developments in the fashion industry. Overall, this stage of visual analysis provides in-depth insight into the role of visual aesthetics in the popularity of streetwear represented by Kanye West.

G. Significance of The Study

The significance of the research on "Streetwear Fashion's Transformation From 2017 to 2022 Represented by Kanye West's Fashion Style" is paramount within the realms of both the fashion industry and popular culture. Firstly, this study addresses the transformative developments in streetwear fashion by focusing on Kanye West's distinctive fashion style. By dissecting and interpreting West's fashion choices over the specified period, the research provides nuanced insights into the evolution of streetwear aesthetics. This contributes significantly to the fashion industry's understanding of how a prominent figure like Kanye West can act as a catalyst for change, shaping trends that resonate with the broader cultural landscape.

Besides, this research delves into the emergence of symbolizations and concepts within the streetwear fashion domain between 2017 and 2022. This aspect of the study adds a crucial layer to the comprehension of the sociocultural influences embedded in streetwear. By identifying and analyzing these symbolizations and concepts, the research sheds light on the underlying narratives and cultural shifts that define the streetwear culture during the specified timeframe. Such insights have implications beyond the fashion realm, offering a lens through which broader societal trends and attitudes can be observed and understood.

Furthermore, this research also underscores the pivotal role of Kanye West, an American artist, in shaping and popularizing streetwear trends. Understanding the impact of celebrities in the fashion industry is vital, and Kanye West's influence is particularly noteworthy due to his multifaceted presence as a musician, entrepreneur, and cultural icon. By unraveling West's contributions, the research not only contributes to the scholarly discourse on celebrity influence in fashion but also provides valuable lessons for marketers, designers, and industry stakeholders. These insights can inform strategic decisions within the fashion landscape, guiding industry professionals in navigating the intersection of celebrity culture and fashion trends.

H. Presentation

In the forthcoming research, the research will be structured across four comprehensive chapters, each playing a crucial role in elucidating the multifaceted aspects of the study. The initial chapter serves as the bedrock, delving into the foundational elements of the identified issues, articulating the problem formulation, elucidating the research objectives, delineating the research scope, explicating the chosen methodology, and outlining the theoretical approaches employed. This chapter establishes the conceptual framework that guides the entire research endeavor.

In the second chapter, the focus shifts towards a detailed exploration of the information sources utilized to interpret and construct the researcher's dataset. This section provides insight into the diverse range of primary and secondary sources leveraged to inform the study, including interviews, content analysis, visual

materials, surveys, and a comprehensive review of the relevant literature. The chapter underscores the meticulous approach taken to gather rich and varied data, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.

The third chapter is dedicated to the analytical phase of the research. It unfolds the intricate process of analyzing the collected data, employing qualitative methods such as thematic analysis for interviews, content analysis for media sources, visual analysis for images and videos, and statistical descriptive analysis for survey data. This section elucidates the systematic procedures undertaken to distill meaningful patterns, themes, and insights from the amassed information, contributing to a nuanced comprehension of the research questions and objectives.

Finally, the last chapter encapsulates the culmination of the study, presenting the findings derived from the meticulous analysis conducted in the preceding chapters. This section serves as a synthesis of the research outcomes, offering a coherent narrative that aligns with the research objectives. Additionally, the chapter provides a succinct summary of the key findings, their implications, and potential areas for future exploration. Through this structured framework, the research endeavors to contribute substantively to the understanding of the influence of Kanye West as an American artist on the popularization of streetwear from 2017 to 2022.