

# The Intrinsic Dimension for Breast Cancer Patients: A Review of Perception in Clothing

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## Abstract

Breast cancer had its stigma, the various issue regarding physical change, emotion and body image concern after cancer treatment. Clothing with an intrinsic attribute for the consumer with disabilities( breast cancer survivor) has become necessary to enhance breast cancer survivor positive quality of life to breast cancer survivor, due to the decreased ability of movement, pain dimension and demotivated feeling. Therefore, breast cancer survivor wants to be a part of the society. Breast cancer survivors have difficulties in clothing selection that can suit their requirement during the treatment phase. This study was conducted to identify and understand the need of intrinsic attributes of clothing among breast cancer survivor. Review of past literature related to intrinsic characteristics was carried out as well as an interview with breast cancer survivors to discover the attributes required to fulfill the needs of breast cancer survivor. Five intrinsic characteristics emerged that involved (fitting, style, design, fabric content and the feeling of the garment) which served importance elements. However, these items and it relates to life quality little discovered. The paper reported preliminary findings derived from the semi-structured interviews conducted with three breast cancer survivor. An in-depth interview with the patients was done to gain more and deeper understanding of the social phenomenon. The paper concluded that comfort, wrinkle-free types of fabric and aesthetic values of clothing are needed to boost their self-esteem, while at the same time enhancing their life quality. These attributes are crucial to build their confidence and nurture their social life

Keyword: *Intrinsic Element, Aesthetic Values, Clothing, Disabilities, Breast Cancer*

## 1.0 Introduction

Clothing is a necessity in life. This includes the need to protect the body from the physical elements, like a weather (rain, snow, and heat) as described by Barnard (Chang, Hodges, & Yurchisin, 2013) (Freeman, Kaiser, & Wingate, 1985; Fujikami, Okabe, & Yatagai, 2011; Helena M. de Klerk, 2007; Jones & Giddings, 2010; Kaiser, n.d.; Lennon & Davis, 1989; Meinander & Varheenmaa, 2002; Nisbett & Johnson, 1992). However, it is not limited to just the basics only. It is also used as tools to introduce oneself in terms social and cultural identity of the community and to differentiate an identity element with others, for those who do not use

clothing as a medium of culture, they will cover and decorate their bodies with different materials such as paint beads and other (Kaiser, n.d.). Some critical observations were noted and summarized that the element of gender, physical abnormalities, religious needs, culture, and it will affect the meaning and terminology in clothing. Table 1 below shows the fundamental significance of the general terminology used to dress for laypersons and clothing scholar alike. But this will change with the needs of their particular needs.

Table 1: Every Day And Conceptual Clothing Terminology(adapted from Kaiser, n.d.)

Terminology	Meaning
Adornment	Any decoration, embellishment, ornamentation or alteration
Apparel or Attire	A body is covering, explicitly referring to actual garment constructed from fabric(.).
Clothing	Any tangible or material object connect to the human body and communication to others (Buckley, 1974)
fashion	A dynamic social process by which new style is created, introduced to a consuming public, and popularly accepted by the public(Owen-Crocker, 2012); as object: a style accepted by a large group of people at a particular time (Kaiser, n.d.)
Style	A distinctive characteristic or way of expression; style in clothing describe the lines that distinguish one form or shape from another (Kaiser, n.d.)

*Note: The social psychology of clothing meaning differs from people to people. Table 1 shows the general sense used by the public at large and clothing scholar alike.However, this will change with the need of the user.*

## 2.0 Reorganized body image

The moment breast cancer patients are the diagnosed that they have breast cancer, breast cancer patient lives were already changed. The impact of the loss through breast cancer is devastating for breast cancer patients (Bredin, 1999). The effect causes physical changes and interference of daily activity(Patricia A. Ganz, 1992). Breast cancer not only just leads to mastectomy scars the radiation can also result in redness and soreness in the affected area whereas chemotherapy often leads to hair loss and weight gain (Williams, 2015). According to ya cheng , clinical management of lymphedema encompasses an extensive variety of strategies, including manual lymphatic drainage, compression garments, pneumatic pumps, multilayer bandaging and surgery (Ya-Cheng Tina Shih, ying xu, Janice N. Cormier, Sharon Giordano, Sheila H. Ridner, n.d.) this treatment proven that, it will cause to recurrent infections, uneasiness, and physical limitation (Armer JM , Radina ME, 2003). Body image is a component of a broader concept of self that for women include feeling feminine and attractive (PAT FOBAIR, 2004; Przedziecki et al., 2013). For this reason, Clothing is considered to be a significant component of outer appearance to enhance confidence and a good attitude(Chang et al., 2013)(Jackson, 2004). Many studies have was done

regarding body changes because of breast cancer (Bredin, 1999; Cohen, Kahn, & Steeves, 1998; Ganz, Schag, Lee, Polinsky, & Tan, 1992; Pat Fobair\*, Susan L. Steward, Subo Chang, Carol D’onofrio, 2006; Singer, 2012; Watkins, 2011). Therefore, it is essential for breast cancer survivor to create positive body image or body experience through clothing; it is because clothing offers multiple purposes such as components of physical, psychological and social comfort (Kaiser, n.d.) Psychological and social comfort is affected because breast cancer survivor has an altered outer image, as well as an altered internal feeling about her body(Chang et al., 2013; Freeman et al., 1985; Helena M. de Klerk, 2007; Kaiser, n.d.). Only a few research had been done to overcome the fitting problem to accommodate these changes.

The women with breast cancer experienced changes to their bodies as an impact of treatment. Clothing is a necessity in life For breast cancer patient; clothing functions had more than just to cover their body, but also to manage their appearance. Clothing as a concealment from disability, deflections. It even to detract attention away from disability, compensation as a reward to a particular context for which stigma is no irrelevant to physically disability and to emphasizing social uniqueness(Freeman et al., 1985)(Kaiser, Wingate, Freeman, & Chandler, 1987)(Nagasawa, Hutton, & Kaiser, 1991).

### 3.0 Clothing Paradigm

Kaiser Sontag(1982) and Stone (1962) approximately clothes are related to the concept of self ((Lennon & Davis, 1989). Clothing is an essential human need with various function ((Kamalha, Zeng, Mwasiagi, & Kyatuheire, 2013)

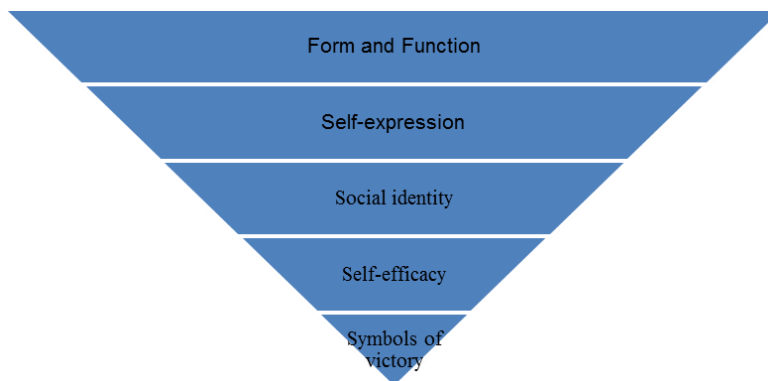


Figure 1 The Paradigm Of Clothing For Disabled Consumers *source* : (Chang et al., 2013)

Figure 1 above, shown five themes emerged from responses based on the phenomenological of interview data(Chang et al., 2013), The basic indicator showed form and function which represent the functional reason behind clothing for an individual with a disability. Followed by self-expression that demonstrated that clothing as a tool to express them self with what they wear and to reveal aspects of their personalities. The third level, social identity in which that clothing indicates to other what role the wearer is playing is consistent with what is known about non-disabled individuals from

previous research (Kaiser, n.d.). The fourth themes are self-efficacy, it means ability and confidence to solve the problematic and undesirable situation or to accomplish a particular goal, through cognitive affect process, motivation, affective and selection process (). Last but not least, the ultimate theme is a symbol of victory, in which clothing marks as a triumph, luxury, and prestige.

#### 4.0 Method

In line with the stage of this study, ten breast cancer survivors who had gone through breast cancer treatment were interviewed to get information about the quality of life. A semi-structured interview was conducted face to face with gathered deep understanding about the effect of breast cancer. The in-depth interview had been done the primary qualitative methods employed to explore how individuals with disabilities (breast cancer survivors) experience their daily lives and to understand these experiences relative to their clothing selection behaviors better. The main semi-structured character of interview prevented any theoretical or person from influencing the breast cancer patient with their experience.

#### 5.0 Procedure

The sample population consisted of women with a variety of upper body physical limitations due to breast cancer treatments. The sample of women was a purposive sample. The initial selection of the sample was done using a snowball method. According to Babbie (Babbie, 2007), snowballing is an appropriate method of obtaining participants, whereby a set of participants is recommended to the researcher by word of mouth through a support group and introduced by relative or friend of breast cancer patient or from social media. This process was carried until it reaches saturation point or state. This process to open up a line of inquiry and generate insight that will all the breast cancer survivors informed throughout the process of recovery, comfort and appearance are the important things for them. Therefore, the sample was not rigorously constructed to correct for bias. Instead, the firm selection was directed by a desire to sample widely and variously

This research used a purposive sampling method. Therefore results were only applicable to this sample or others with similar characteristics and are not generalizable to other large groups of individuals with disabilities or physical disabilities. The age average for this study was females from 32 years to 67 years old. The breast cancer survivor who had undergone the treatment between six months to 4 years length of time. The study is also focusing on the upper body limitation and attire.

Pseudonym	Age	Breast Affected	Cancer Stage	Years Since Treatment	Ethnicity	Treatment
BCP01	32	Right	II	3	Malay	Lumpectomy, Mastectomy, radiation, chemotherapy, hormone therapy
BCP02	42	Right	III	3	Malay	Lumpectomy, Mastectomy, radiation
BCP03	44	Right / right	II	2	Malay	Lumpectomy, chemotherapy
BCP04	55	Right	III	2	Malay	Mastectomy, lumpectomy, chemotherapy, radiotherapy, hormonal therapy
BCP05	65	left	II	3	Indian	Mastectomy, lumpectomy, chemotherapy, radiotherapy, hormonal therapy
BCP06	45	Right	II	1 ½	Chines	Mastectomy, lumpectomy, chemotherapy, radiotherapy
BCP07	67	Left	II	4	Indian	Mastectomy, lumpectomy, chemotherapy, radiotherapy, hormonal therapy
BCP08	62	right	III	1 ½	Chines	Mastectomy, lumpectomy
BCP09	32	Right	II	2	Malay	Mastectomy, lumpectomy, chemotherapy, radiotherapy
BCP010	34	Left	III	3	Malay	Mastectomy, lumpectomy, chemotherapy radiotherapy, hormonal therapy

Table 2: Participant Characteristic with multiracial identity (N=10)

## 6.0 Material

An interview time frame was developed to facilitate a conducive environment, also easy to interact with the breast cancer patient involved in this study. It provides a rich information of posttreatment breast cancer patient experience. Semi-structured questions were prepared to obtain a rich data from the breast cancer patient.

## 7.0 Procedure

During the interview, to validate and confirm perception, that clothing should be an issue for breast cancer survivor, most of the breast cancer survivors allied the following general physical problem related to the treatment of breast cancer. Like changes in body size or not suitable fitting, swelling and numbness in the affected arm and chest area, heat management and lack of motivation. This situation very crucial and breast cancer

survivors needs clothing that can provide a solution to this matter and can reduce the impact of treatment through psychology part. This way, they can express their feeling through clothing. Clothing is akin to tools or cosmetic, to deflect away from their weakness and disabilities. Clothing can emphasize their inner beauty, their spirits, and effort. Therefore clothing with intrinsic attribute importance for a better quality of life

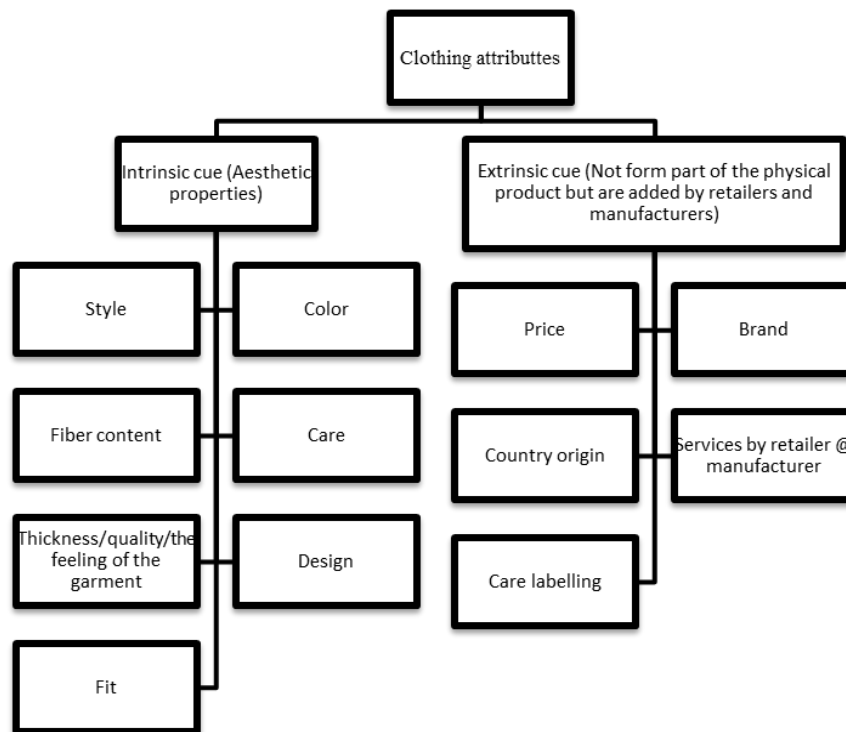


Figure 2 clothing characteristics analysis, intrinsic vs. extrinsic of clothing

Figure 3 shows Intrinsic cue versus extrinsic cue. From the investigation, the Intrinsic cue is more of aesthetic properties or the feeling of clothing (Jackson, 2004). This intrinsic factor gives a particular emotion to cover the internal and external scar, after breast cancer treatment. Intrinsic cue also plays a significant role, to provide extra comfort (Stokes & Black, 2015) to breast cancer patient. Comfort and appearance are the essential elements for breast cancer survivor to enhance the quality of life. This what the participant said regarding their clothing experience through the interview :

*Ill preferred cotton, because it makes me comfortable, perfect air circulation and suitable for our climate. I will-advised new patient if they want to do a checkup, please wear the front opening shirt. Much easier for them, to open and receives treatment. Sometimes, we also can pull the shirt to cover unnecessary parts. Because we don't know who will assist us during the checkup. If I go checkup, I will dress nicely, if I am wearing the red shoe, I will make sure I will match it with a red handbag (BCP07).*

*My first day home, after surgery, I cry because I can't take off my shirt as usually, even I can't raise my hand, I shouted calling for my maid or somebody else, to help me, but they can't do nothing because it was hurt to raise my hand. So I grab a scissor and cut my shirt. It is excruciating. (BCP10).*

*During the treatment period, I like to wear my husband shirt, it big and comfortable. (BCP10)*

*I love fashion, and I am a fashionable person, although I am not well, I don't want people to know that I lost one of my breasts, because I don't like the way they stare or look at me(BCP01).*

*I love to dance, and always do, although there a missing part of my body, I wound*

*Although I'm not well, I do not want other people to see me as a sick person. I will try to live as healthy and normal as I can, and I used, clothing to cover my weakness.(BCP02)*

Intrinsic cue	Design / construction / style	Fibre / content	Style / fashion / uniqueness	colour	Size /fit	The feeling of the garment/thickness/quality	Sensua l pleasure
(A. M. Fiore & Damhorst, 1992)Fiore, Damhorst (Lennon & Davis, 1989) Lennon (Anderson & Meyer, 1993)Anderson (Lamb, 2001)Lamb 2001	/		/		/		
Chang 2013	/		/				
Jay 2009					/		/
Kittichai 2010	/		/		/		
Rahman 2011		/	/	/	/	/	
Kim 2004		/	/	/			
Abrahan 1995	/	/	/	/	/	/	
Rochelle 2004	/	/	/	/	/	/	
Wolfendale 2011	/	/	/			/	
Fiore, Ogle 2000	/	/	/	/	/		/

Table 3: intrinsic element analysis

In order to identify which intrinsic attributes that are highly importance, several past studies related to intrinsic attributes of clothing here analyzed (A. M. Fiore & Damhorst, 1992)(Lennon & Davis, 1989)(Anderson & Meyer, 1993)(Lamb, 2001)(Chang et al.,



2013)(JAY, 2009)(Kittichai Watchravesringkan, 2010)(Rahman, 2011)(Kim & Kim, 2004)(Abraham-Murali & Littrell, 1995)(Jackson, 2004)(Wolfendale, Kennett, & Allhoff, 2011)( a. M. Fiore & Ogle, 2000). The review of these articles also helps to identify the common attributes preferred by the consumer. Style, fashionability, and uniqueness are more preferred by consumer followed by size and style. Nevertheless, fabrication also crucial to the consumer to provide a good sense of clothing and fulfill their needs. The last consumer also preferred the feeling of the garment to offer a maximum comfort for the high quality of life.

## **8.0 Recommendation**

More study is required in the area of clothing for breast cancer patient, such an extrinsic element, or accessories, breathable fabrics or flexible in the movement for clothing. The researcher will need to assess various types of extrinsic element of clothing that can offer a high volume of comfort to enhance quality of life breast cancer patient in future.

## **9.0 Conclusion**

The review of past studies managed to confirm the type of intrinsic element that is essential for clothing. This analysis is shown in, figure 3 and table 2. Based on the review and interview with participant this can conclude that attributes such as comfort, fabrication, design, and fitting are relatively significant toward their clothing needs. This study is consistent with what was found in past research, to maintain a good body image. Finally, an intrinsic element of clothing is not a natural achievement, but it combines various factors, such as wearer, environment, psychology, and society. A wearer, who understands and has a basic knowledge of the clothing, will be able to fascinate or adjust any deficiencies in clothing. On the other hand, clothing will bring the wearer to another level of confidence if the wearer utilize the benefit of clothing

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