



## AESTHETIC ASSESSMENTS OF UPCYCLED PRODUCTS MADE BY FASHION DESIGN STUDENT

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**Abstract.** *This study aims to assess the aesthetics of upcycling products made by students of the Vocational School of Fashion Design. The assessment is based on Djelantik's aesthetic theory, which includes aspects of form/appearance and appearance/presentation. The research methodology used in this study is quantitative with a pre-experimental one-shot case study design, involving 5 expert panelists who assessed 5 tote bag products with additional decoration using the embedding techniques. The results showed that the form/appearance aspect with the elements and principles of design obtained a score of 91.75%, which is included in the very good category. The appearance/presentation aspect which includes skills and facilities or media scored 96.3%, also included in the very good category. Overall, the aesthetics of additional decoration with sticking techniques on upcycling products received an average score of 94.25%, including in the very good category. According to the expert panelists, product 3 had the best results of adding decoration. In conclusion, the aesthetic assessment of additional decoration on upcycling products made by students of Vocational School of Fashion Design is very good.*

**Keywords:** *Aesthetic Assessment, Upcycling, Embedding Technique*

### INTRODUCTION

Fashion continues to evolve with rapidly changing trends, leading to significant textile production and clothing waste. Innovations like upcycling have become solutions to reduce textile waste by recycling old clothes into more valuable new products. At SMK Negeri 27 Jakarta, students are encouraged to use fabric scraps from fashion practice to create new products such as tote bags. However, these products often appear monotonous and less attractive. Therefore, this research evaluates the addition of embellishments to upcycled products to enhance their appeal, using techniques such as thread embedding, sequins and beads. The study aims to assess the aesthetics of the products based on the aesthetic theory by Djelantik, focusing on the aspects of form or appearance and presentation or display.

### Upcycle

Upcycle is a definition that refers to the reuse of clothing, textiles before or after use and then redesigning the clothing or textiles to follow current fashion trends (Myers & Gail Jeanne, 2014). Upcycle also has a concept where upcycling itself provides an opportunity for designers to lead the way in the sustainable use of the tons of textile waste produced to create more value from textile waste and meet the constant demand for the latest fashion, with more advanced technological developments with more sustainable production methods (Tyler D, 2015). Upcycle is a strategy that supports the recirculation of materials, thereby reducing the likelihood of fashion waste (Chuma, Muza, & Chipambwa, 2019). The three main methods in upcycling according to (Putri & Suhartini, 2018) are:

1. Creating New Products: Combining two or more garments to create a new product.
2. Altering Models: Changing the shape of old clothes into a new style.
3. Adding Embellishments: Using textile waste as decorations on other clothing to enhance aesthetics. In this research, adding embellishments will be used as methods for adding value to the products. There are three techniques of adding embellishments:

- a. Thread Embedding Technique: Using thread to create decorative designs on fabric, adding texture and aesthetic elements.
- b. Bow Embedding Technique: Finishes the edges of the fabric neatly and durably.
- c. Sequin Embedding Technique: Adds shimmering decorative elements to the fabric, enhancing the visual appeal with a distinctive sparkle.

## **AESTHETICS**

Aesthetics refers to beauty that can be seen with the eyes, felt with the touch of the hands and face, and heard with the ears (Natalia et al., 2022). According to Djelantik, aesthetics is a science that studies everything related to beauty and examines all aspects of what we call beauty (Ratnaningsih & Endah Wahyuningsih, 2022). According to Hasnidar, aesthetics can be interpreted as an arrangement that contains a pattern. A pattern combines its constituent parts and involves the harmony of elements, thus creating beauty for all who see it (Chairat, Noerharyono, Suliyanthini, & Radiona, 2023).

In his book, *Aesthetics: An Introduction* (Djelantik, 1999), Djelantik explains that aesthetics has three main aspects: form/appearance, content/substance, and presentation/display. Form/appearance includes elements that can be seen, such as shape and color, while content/substance relates to the meaning contained within and presentation/display refers to how an artwork is presented, including the skills and techniques used. The aspects used in this study are aspects of form or shape, which include the elements and principles of design and aspects of appearance or presentation, which includes skills and facilities or media.

## **BAG**

The term "bag" is defined as follows: In accordance with Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia, a bag is defined as a square-shaped container, typically utilized for the storage or transportation of items. Wulandari (in Budhi Rahardja et al., 2020) defines a bag as a unit that facilitates the storage, transportation and arrangement of items for convenient carrying. Farid Chenoune (Yoga Wiranto, Dwi Prasetya, & Tri Susanto, 2021) defines bags as non-rigid containers that are commonly used. In conclusion, bags are versatile tools that facilitate the efficient transportation of a variety of items. There are several types of bags, such as:

1. Sling bag  
A bag with a long strap that can be slung over the shoulder, making it a practical choice for a variety of situations.
2. Tote bag  
A capacious bag is frequently used in a professional context and is capable of accommodating a considerable number of items. The item may be decorated using a variety of techniques, including tie-dye, painting, embroidery, and screen printing, with the objective of enhancing its aesthetic appeal.
3. Shoulder Bag  
A bag that is worn on the shoulder. This bag is similar to a tote bag, but is typically smaller and more practical.
4. Micro Bag  
A small, compact bag that is typically used for carrying essential items such as cards and mobile phones.
5. Handbag  
A bag of various sizes and designs, used for a variety of occasions, from every day to formal events.
6. Bucket Bag  
A type of handbag that has a bucket-shaped body. A bucket-shaped bag with a drawstring is ideal for informal activities and can accommodate a considerable number of items.
7. Clutch  
A clutch is a handbag that is worn on the wrist and is typically used for formal and semi-formal occasions.

## RESEARCH METHODS

In this study, the researcher employed a quantitative research method using an experimental approach. The experimental research method is used to determine the effect of a specific treatment in a controlled condition (Sugiyono, 2013). This study utilized a pre-experimental one-shot case study design. According to Sugiyono, a one-shot case study design involves administering treatment to a specific group. In this research, the treatment involves adding embellishments such as embedding thread, biku - biku, and sequins to upcycled products made by students in the fashion department of SMK Negeri 27 Jakarta. The results will be evaluated by five aesthetic experts, and the assessment will be statistically analyzed.

This study uses a single variable. According to Abuzar Asra in (Turang, Golung, & Pasoreh, 2023) a single variable is used when research focuses on one variable. The variable in this study is the aesthetic evaluation of upcycled products made by fashion students. The operational definition of the aesthetic assessment of upcycled products created by fashion students is the assessment of the upcycling process by adding embellishments using embedding techniques to carrier bags, considering aesthetic aspects such as form/appearance and presentation/display, including sub-aspects such as design elements (shape, size, texture, colour) and design principles (proportion, rhythm, center of attention, harmony) as well as skills and tools or media.

The research subjects include a group of five expert panelists who will be given a questionnaire relating to the aesthetic assessments of upcycled products made by fashion students in the form of tote bags as the research objects, which have been enhanced with thread embedding, sequins and beads to increase the products' attractiveness and buyer interest. The research instruments used in this study are open and closed questionnaires, and the measurement scale in this study is a rating scale where the raw data is converted into a qualitative context (Sugiyono, 2013). Each question item is scored as follows: a) 4 for excellent, b) 3 for good, c) 2 for bad, and d) 1 for very bad. The rating scale interval is:

Table 1. The Rating Scale Interval

Description	Rating Scale				Description
Excellent	4	3	2	1	Very Bad

The questionnaire includes aesthetic aspects such as form/appearance and presentation/display with pre-defined answer choices, guided by the rating scale, and will be distributed to aesthetic experts. This study uses quantitative analysis with descriptive statistics. The data collected from the experts's evaluations will be tabulated quantitatively using percentage calculations and the results will be presented descriptively, supplemented with tables and graphs. Based on the evaluations of five panelists through questionnaire statements provided by the researcher, the data will be presented and the scores will be converted into evaluation percentages based on the table below:

Table 2. Assessment Criteria Based on Percentage

No.	Assessment Percentage	Criteria
1.	76% - 100%	Excellent
2.	51% - 75%	Good
3.	26% - 50%	Bad
4.	0% - 25%	Very Bad

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### RESULTS

Initially, the researcher analyzed the use of color in the batik motifs used on the tote bag products. Since the tote bags are products previously upcycled by students by adding leftover batik fabric to canvas fabric, color analysis was necessary to ensure that the added embellishments harmonized with the existing batik motifs on the tote bags.

Embellishments such as thread embeddings, sequins and beads were then added to the bags. Each product received different embellishments. The upcycled products with added embellishments were then evaluated by five aesthetic experts based on aesthetic aspects of form/appearance and presentation/display. Below is a detailed explanation of the results of the embellishments using thread embedding, sequins and beads:



Figure 1. Changes in Product 1 Before and After Adding Embellishments

For the 1<sup>st</sup> product, embellishments were added by embedding thread to the canvas fabric using sashiko techniques, combining naturalistic shapes on the empty areas above the batik fabric and batik kawung motifs on the empty areas below the batik fabric.



Figure 2. Changes in Product 2 Before and After Adding Embellishments

For the 2<sup>nd</sup> product, embellishments were added by embedding thread following naturalistic shapes that were pre-drawn on the empty areas of the canvas fabric. The thread used for attachment was cotton crochet thread for a thicker texture, while embroidery thread was used to embed the crochet thread.



Figure 3. Changes in Product 3 Before and After Adding Embellishments

The 3<sup>rd</sup> product was embellished by embedding sequins. The sequins were added following the existing batik motif shapes to emphasize the batik motifs. Sequins were also added to the handles of the bag to create a shiny accent.



Figure 4. Changes in Product 4 Before and After Adding Embellishments

For the 4<sup>th</sup> product, embellishments were added by embedding beads with embroidery thread. The first variation involved combining two beads and attaching them with embroidery thread, French knots and sequins. The second variation involved using a single bead and embedding it linearly with embroidery thread.



Figure 5. Changes in Product 5 Before and After Adding Embellishments

The 5<sup>th</sup> product was embellished by adding a cord of crochet thread in two different colors. The cord was pre-drawn with a pattern and embedded with embroidery thread.

In this research, aesthetic evaluation based on form/appearance refers to the suitability of added embellishments with design elements such as shape, size, texture, and color, and design principles such as proportion, rhythm, focal point, and harmony.

Table 3. Score of Product Aesthetics Assessment by Expert Panelists Based on The Aspect of Form/appearance

Table. 3 Assessment Criteria Based on Percentage

Products	Score	Percentage
Product 1	3,75	93,75%
Product 2	3,54	88,43%
Product 3	3,89	94,69%
Product 4	3,61	90,31%
Product 5	3,66	91,56%

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{3,67}{4} \times 100\% = 91,75\%$$

Based on the questionnaire results for the form/appearance aspect, the average score is 3.67, indicating a very good category with a percentage of 91.75%. The highest score was given to Product 3 with a score of 3.89 and the lowest to Product 2 with a score of 3.54. All five panelists agreed that Product 3 had the best embellishments to enhance the aesthetics of the upcycled product.

The sub-aspects used in the aesthetic evaluation based on presentation/display are skills and media. The sub-aspects assessed include the skill in using embedding techniques, the use of embellishment materials, and the quality of the materials used.

Table 4. Score of Product Aesthetics Assessments by Expert Panelists Based on The Aspects of Presentation/Display

Products	Score	Percentage
Product 1	3,93	98,3%
Product 2	4	100%
Product 3	3,73	93,3%
Product 4	3,73	93,3%
Product 5	3,86	96,7%

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{3,85}{4} \times 100\% = 96,3\%$$

Based on the questionnaire results for the presentation/display aspect, the average score is 3.85, which is in the very good category with a percentage of 96.3%. The highest score was obtained by product 2 with a score of 4 and the lowest by product 3 and 4 with a score of 3.73. The panelists stated that the skill in using embedding techniques, and the use of embellishment materials was good, but the material used to apply the embellishments should be adapted to the existing elements on the bag.

Table 5 Overall Assessments Results

Aspects	Product 1	Product 2	Product 3	Product 4	Product 5	Percentage
Aesthetics Based on Form/appearance	3,75	3,54	3,89	3,61	3,66	91,75%
Aesthetics Based on Presentation/display	3,93	4	3,73	3,73	3,86	96,3%

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Overall Percentage} &= \frac{\text{Total Overall Score}}{\text{Highest Scale Value}} \times 100\% \\ &= \frac{18,85}{4} \times 100\% \\ &= 3,77 \times 100\% = 94,25\% \end{aligned}$$

Based on the calculation of the total score from the two aspects and five panelists, the evaluation score is 3.77 with a percentage of 94.25%, which falls in the very good category. This indicates that the added embellishments on the upcycled products created by SMK fashion students are in line with aesthetic theory by (Djelantik, 1999).

## DISCUSSION

The aesthetic evaluation of the upcycled products by the SMK fashion students based on the presentation/display aspect received a percentage score of 96.3%, categorized as very good. The aesthetic evaluation based on the form/appearance aspect received a percentage score of 91.75%, categorized as very good. This is consistent with previous research by (Khosyi, Prabawi, & Suliyanthini, 2023) study on tote bag aesthetics, which shows that the products and embellishments created in this study consider aesthetic

aspects, from the application of design elements and principles to how the product is presented or displayed.

The study is also consistent with (Vera, Sudirtha, & Angendari, 2021) research on Abyorhokokai batik motifs with sequin variations that effectively convey the meaning of the motif. This finding is consistent with the current study, where product 3, which used sequins on the batik motif of the tote bag, received the highest evaluation score and was the most favored by the panelists as it highlighted the existing batik motif more effectively.

Overall, the aesthetic evaluation score of the upcycled products was 94.25%, demonstrating the effectiveness of the embellishment techniques in enhancing the aesthetic appeal of the products according to the aesthetic theory (Djelantik, 1999).

## CONCLUSION

The results demonstrate that the form/appearance aspect was rated an average score of 3.67, with a percentage value of 91.75%, categorizing it as very good. Similarly, the presentation/display aspect received an average score of 3.85, with a percentage value of 96.3%, also categorized as very good. Therefore, the overall score from both aspects was 3.77 with a percentage value of 94.25%, which was categorized as very good. From these aesthetic evaluations, it can be concluded that the addition of embellishments using thread embedding, beads, and sequins significantly enhanced the aesthetic value of the upcycled products created by SMK Tata Busana students. Both evaluated aspects, form/appearance and presentation/display, demonstrated excellent results, indicating that the applied embellishment techniques effectively met the high aesthetic standards according to Djelantik's aesthetic theory.

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