

Convertible Ladies' Casual Wear Collection (S/S) for the U.S. Inspired by the Pearl Oyster

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Abstract—This study presents the design and development of a convertible; comfortable casual wear collection tailored for upper-class single women aged 25–30 in the United States. The collection addresses the distinct lifestyle demands and psychological needs of this demographic, situated within the context of contemporary American society, which often reflects relatively conservative attitudes toward sexual openness. The target consumers face a range of social and personal challenges stem from the pressures of a fast-paced, career-driven lifestyle, compounded by societal undervaluation and limited emotional support. These women frequently prioritize professional success, often working extended hours with minimal time allocated for leisure or personal well-being.

Given these circumstances, there is a clear demand for practical, versatile, and comfortable garments that can seamlessly transition between various social and professional settings. It gives a fact that the comfortability is not only a physical matter it also is very effective in psychologically as well. This collection is specifically designed to meet these requirements by integrating functional and convertible design elements that support dynamic lifestyles.

The conceptual framework for this collection draws inspiration from in the film *Miss Congeniality* (2000), whose protagonist, Gracie Hart, embodies qualities that resonate strongly with the target demographic— independence, resilience, and adaptability. The fashion collection draws design inspiration from the pearl oyster, which symbolizes transformation by turning a small particle of dust into a valuable pearl. This natural process symbolizes understated beauty and resilience, reflecting the often-overlooked value and strength of the women for whom this collection is designed.

The collection is developed under the Tommy Hilfiger brand, known for its innovative design solutions and youthful, contemporary aesthetic. Fabrics such as lightweight linen have been selected to enhance comfort, breathability, and suitability for the spring and summer seasons. The designs emphasize not only comfort and versatility but also incorporate elegant details, including decorative embroidery. The convertible features enable wearers to effortlessly adapt their outfits for varying occasions, offering both functionality and aesthetic appeal.

Key words: - Casual wear, Convertible, Spring & Summer, dynamic lifestyle, US

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I. INTRODUCTION

This study presents the design and development of a convertible and comfortable casual wear collection created for upper-class single mothers aged 25–30 in the United States. The collection addresses the specific lifestyle demands and psychological needs of this demographic, within the context of contemporary American society, which often maintains relatively conservative attitudes toward sexual openness.

The target consumers are well-educated women with stable, high-income careers who have consciously deprioritized traditional, committed relationships or marriage due to the demands of their fast-paced, career-driven lifestyles. Over time, the challenge of balancing professional and personal responsibilities has contributed to a decline in attention to personal appearance and self-care. Many reports limited time for rest or leisure, with work schedules that often extend late into the evening (Furstenberg, 2017).

Alongside professional commitments, these women frequently encounter a range of socio-psychological challenges, including difficult personal relationships, exposure to substance abuse, and struggles with mental health. Such challenges are often exacerbated by societal disregard or a lack of recognition, despite their significant contributions in both professional and personal spheres.

In this context, comfort becomes essential for both physical and mental well-being. The collection integrates this principle, aiming to promote relaxation and self-care through clothing. Additionally, the garments feature convertible designs, offering multiple styling or functional options within a single piece. This versatility not only enhances practicality but also reduces textile waste, supporting eco-friendly and sustainable fashion practices.

A. Scope of the study

In the U.S. apparel market, most garments are designed to be either form-fitting or comfortable, with limited options that meet the specific needs of niche consumer groups. Many customers in this segment hesitate to purchase fitted garments, as they are often suitable for

only a few occasions. The proposed clothing collection addresses this gap by offering convertible designs that can be worn as comfortable garments when desired and transformed into sleek, form-fitting pieces when required. This dual functionality aligns with the dynamic lifestyles of the target consumers, providing versatility and enhancing practicality.

While some convertible garments exist in the U.S. market—such as Tommy Hilfiger’s high-shine puffer jacket, convertible recycled cargo pants, and cropped vest puffer jackets—these options rarely meet the style, comfort, and functional requirements of this specific consumer niche. The proposed collection therefore offers an innovative alternative: garments that combine comfort and elegance in a single piece, allowing wearers to adapt their look to different occasions while reducing the need for multiple clothing items. This multifunctionality supports environmental sustainability by promoting extended garment use and reducing textile waste.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *The Fashion brand “Tommy Hilfiger”*

Tommy Hilfiger, founded in 1985 in New York by Tommy Hilfiger, is a globally recognized premium fashion brand, now owned by PVH Corp since 2010. The brand gained major popularity in the 1990s after going public in 1992, introducing licenses such as Pepe Jeans USA in 1995, and launching its first women’s clothing line in 1996. Expanding internationally, it opened stores in Beverly Hills (1997) and London (1998), solidifying its global retail presence. Known for its “Classic American Cool” style, the brand became synonymous with relaxed, casual, music-inspired fashion during the 1990s. Over the years, it diversified into women’s intimates (2001), fragrances (2003, with Beyoncé as ambassador), and digital innovations, including a digital sales showroom in 2015. As a premium brand, it is recognized for durable, high-priced products. Initiatives like the Tommy Hilfiger Frontier Challenge (2018) highlight its support for fashion innovation, and in 2021, it received the BFC Outstanding Achievement Award.

Key competitors in the youthful casual wear market include Calvin Klein, Ralph Lauren, Burberry, Hugo Boss, Lacoste, Zara, H&M, Gucci, and Perry Ellis. While Calvin Klein and Ralph Lauren dominate the casual wear sector, they have yet to significantly engage in convertible garment production.

Tommy Hilfiger is a leading American premium brand offering apparel, footwear, accessories, fragrances, and home furnishings, with product lines for women, men, children, and sportswear. Known for its youthful and aesthetic design approach, the brand operates over 2,000 retail stores in more than 100 countries worldwide. Its casual yet stylish womenswear aligns well with the concept of combining comfort and sleek, fitted design elements. The brand incorporates

sustainable materials such as Tinsel, organic cotton, recycled fabrics, linen, and Better Cotton, while employing diverse construction techniques including printing, embroidery, patchwork, and tie-dye. Tommy Hilfiger also embraces functional innovation through convertible designs, as seen in products such as convertible belt bags, easy-convertible duffels, high-shine puffer jackets, recycled cargo pants, and cropped vest puffer jackets. This focus on versatility and aesthetics demonstrates the brand’s alignment with adaptable, multi-use fashion concepts.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. *Customer research and survey*

This research identifies and examines a high-profile customer group comprising single, upper-class women in the United States aged 25 to 30. This demographic is characterized by sophisticated taste, strong purchasing power, and an appreciation for functional yet fashionable apparel. These women are highly educated, ambitious, and financially independent, with an average monthly income ranging between \$14,000 and \$18,000.

These women are socially active, career-focused, and lead busy lifestyles, with some working extended or irregular hours. Personality traits include being energetic, independent, punctual, and socially engaged, while also modern in outlook yet sometimes lacking self-motivation. They are conscious of their reputation and enjoy quick shopping trips during their limited free time. Comfort and practicality are top priorities in clothing, as they prefer garments that are easy to wear and do not require excessive time to style. They do not view marriage or serious relationships as essential at this stage, but seek social and professional acknowledgment, including admiration from men. Many experience psychological challenges such as depression and anxiety, and some may struggle with substance use due to the demands of their lifestyles. In terms of fashion behavior, they avoid purchasing clothing suited for only one occasion, instead preferring versatile garments, especially those with dual functionality. Purchases are typically made once or twice a month depending on their availability, and they are willing to invest in high-priced items if these meet their expectations.

Being self-reliant and socially active, this customer group places a high value on apparel that seamlessly integrates comfort, versatility, & modern aesthetics. They prioritize garments that offer adaptability across various occasions, enabling transitions from professional environments to social settings without compromising style. Their wardrobe preferences reflect their commitment to personal autonomy, convenience, and a chic, contemporary appearance.

To address the needs of this customer segment, a comprehensive study was conducted on global fashion trends, styles, and emerging techniques in convertible and comfortable fashion design.

A. Concepts and design development steps

The conceptual influence for target market selection is drawn from the film “Miss Congeniality” (2000), directed by Donald Petrie. The film’s protagonist, Gracie Hart, is a highly capable FBI agent whose intelligence and competence are initially disregarded due to her unpolished appearance. Her transformation during the narrative parallels the experiences of the target customer—capable, intelligent women who are frequently underestimated. The story underscores the themes of self-acceptance, empowerment, and the realization that embracing one’s identity and lifestyle is a source of strength.

This research guided the development of sustainable concepts because of more than one use, design inspirations, and thematic directions. The conceptual foundation for designing approaches for the collection is inspired by the natural sea creature, pearl oyster (*Pinctada maxima*) (Figure 01(a)).

In nature, pearls are formed as a defense mechanism when a foreign particle enters the oyster’s shell. Over time, the mollusk encapsulates this irritant with layers of nacre, producing a smooth, elegant pearl. This process symbolizes transformation, resilience, and the creation of beauty from adversity. Much like the oyster, whose plain exterior conceals the precious pearl within, the target customer group often has their inner strength, intelligence, and resilience overlooked by society based solely on external perceptions.



Figure 1: Inspiration for fashion collection: Pearl oyster (*Pinctada maxima*) in different views.

The creating concept boards (Figure 2), mood board, and colour palette are developed based on the inspiration “pearl oyster”. The trend boards, material selections and technological applications are aligned with current fashion trends and the symbolic themes of transformation and resilience. Also, the cropped tops were the top trend of the spring and summer (S/S) seasons. Initial design sketches incorporate convertible garment techniques and decorative embroidery, reflecting the functional and aesthetic desires of the target market. Extensive fabric research was conducted to select materials that meet the customer’s requirements for comfort, versatility, and

durability. According to preferences Linen fabric was selected (Deihl, 2018).

These materials were then used to develop embroidery samples and finalize the collection’s garments, ensuring that both functionality and elegance are achieved in the final designs.

Figure 3 shows the development of six front looks for final range development and Figure 4 shows the convertible appearance for three looks developed in the fashion collection.



Figure 2: Concepts & design developments boards

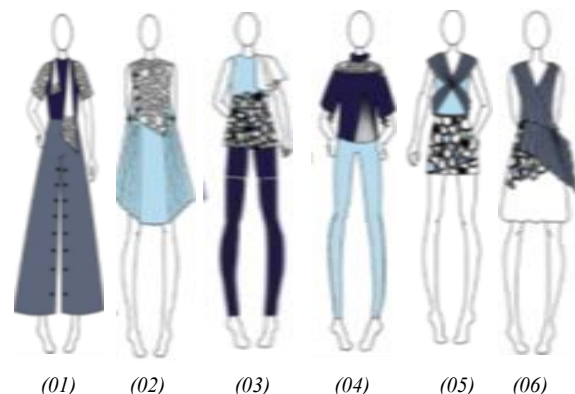


Figure 4: Front looks of six designs in fashion range development

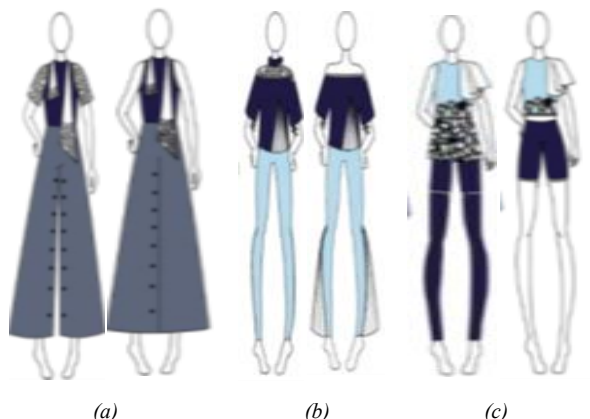


Figure 04: Convertible appearance: (a) Look 1, (b) Look 4 and (c) Look 5.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the findings from the customer survey, it was identified that the target consumers have a strong preference for comfortable, casual garments that can be worn across multiple occasions while aligning with current fashion trends in color and style. These garments must offer ease of wear, practicality, and functionality to accommodate the demands of their fast-paced, time-constrained lifestyles.

Fabrics that are breathable, lightweight, soft, and allow for ease of movement are particularly valued by this customer group. In response to these requirements, the collection was designed with convertible silhouettes, enabling garments to be adapted for various settings, from professional environments to casual gatherings. Additionally, the designs incorporate embroidery as a value-added surface embellishment, enhancing the aesthetic appeal while maintaining functionality. Also, the cropped tops were the top trend of the spring and summer (S/S) sessions.

The development process also involved an in-depth study of the clients' body types and garment measurements ensure the accurate fit and comfort. Fabric selections were made with consideration for their suitability for the S/S fashion trends, prioritizing materials that offer both comfort and durability in warmer climates. According to preferences, Linen fabric was selected (Deihl, 2018). Based on these findings and creative approaches, the final fashion collection was developed with six outfits design in Figure 3 and 4, each featuring two convertible looks, resulting in a total of twelve looks for the fashion collection.

Live model photographs of the six final design outfits shown in Figure 5 to 10. The photographs of the six final designs show the convertible looks of each design. Each design showcases unique silhouette transformations that provide multiple styling options within a single garment, contributing to both functional and sustainable fashion practices. This collection emphasizes versatility, comfort, and adaptability, allowing the wearer to seamlessly transition between different social, professional, and casual settings.

The detailed descriptions of each look are provided as follows:

Look 1: This features a short blouse and wide-leg trousers paired with a shawl, adorned with embroidery patterns inspired by the design concept (Figure 5(a)). The trousers can be effortlessly transformed into a flowing maxi skirt, offering versatility for both formal and casual occasions. It is styled with a multifunctional T-shirt that converts into a sleeveless top by detaching the sleeves (Figure 5(b)). A coordinating sash serves as both a practical accessory and a stylish detail, enhancing the overall aesthetic of the outfit



(a) (b)

Figure 5: Live modeling: (a) Look 1, (b) convertible appearance of look 1



(a) (b)

Figure 6: Live modeling: (a) Look 2, (b) convertible appearance of look 2

Look 2 (Figure 6) showcases a tent-shaped dress silhouette with generous volume in the lower section, which can be adjusted into a more fitted shape using hidden drawstrings or adjustable seams. This design offers the wearer the option of a relaxed, free-flowing style or a structured, body-contouring look, depending on the occasion (Figure 6(b)). The upper section is enhanced with a panel adorned with intricate embroidery, while the main body of the dress is crafted from linen for a natural, breathable finish.



Figure 7: Live modeling: (a) Look 3, (b) convertible appearance of look 3

Look 4 (Figure 8) presents a loose-fit, non-bodycon dress designed for versatility and style adaptability. The garment can be transformed into a coordinated mini skirt and crop top set, allowing the wearer to shift from a modest, relaxed look to a youthful, playful ensemble. By unzipping the closure at the waistline, the top and bottom sections separate with ease. The hems can then be gathered by tightening the drawcords, creating a stylish, ruched effect that adds texture and visual interest to the overall look.



Figure 8: Live modeling: (a) Look 4, (b) convertible appearance of look 4.

Look 5 (Figure 9) is an elegant maxi-length dress designed for remarkable versatility. With a simple fastening of discreet hooks and loops in the skirt section, it transforms seamlessly into a chic short dress, offering effortless adaptability for any occasion—from formal gatherings to casual outings. This quick, fuss-free transformation not only enhances comfort and convenience but also empowers the wearer to redefine their style instantly, making it a perfect blend of functionality, elegance, and modern design innovation.

Look 6 (Figure 10) is a refined, tailored ensemble that blends sophistication with transformative design. The pencil-cut trousers conceal hidden pleats or side panels, which, when released, elegantly expand into dramatic bell-bottoms for a bold statement (Figure 10(b)). Paired with a versatile blouse that effortlessly converts into an off-the-shoulder style, this look offers the wearer endless styling possibilities—from a polished, structured silhouette to a relaxed, alluring fit—making it an impeccable choice for those who value both elegance and adaptability.

Therefore, all six outfits in the collection demonstrate the potential to transform garment shapes and silhouettes, offering a practical design solution that meets the needs of modern niche-market consumers who value functionality, comfort, and sustainability



Figure 9: Live modeling: (a) Look 5, (b) convertible appearance of look 5.



Figure 10: Live modeling: (a) Look 5, (b) convertible appearance of look 5.

CONCLUSION

This collection presents a range of convertible garments designed to shift effortlessly from structured, body-contouring forms to more relaxed, comfort-oriented silhouettes. In today's fast-paced, work-driven society, many women seek apparel that supports both their physical comfort and the practical demands of their dynamic lifestyles. Traditional casualwear often prioritizes aesthetics over comfort, leaving wearers constrained during everyday activities such as commuting, caregiving, shopping, or managing errands. This collection challenges that norm by offering transformable designs that empower women to adjust their garments in response to their immediate needs—enhancing both functional and emotional comfort.

From a sustainability perspective, the adaptability of these garments significantly contributes to more responsible fashion consumption. By allowing one garment to fulfill multiple roles across various daily contexts, the need for excessive clothing purchases is reduced, thus minimizing material waste and lowering the environmental impact associated with overproduction. The emphasis on multifunctionality extends the life cycle of each piece, aligning with sustainable design principles such as longevity, versatility, and reduced resource dependency. Moreover, by prioritizing wearer comfort and agency, the collection promotes emotional durability—encouraging users to build longer, more meaningful relationships with their clothing. Ultimately, the collection raises awareness about the value of designing for both human well-being and environmental responsibility, advocating for a more mindful and sustainable approach to fashion.

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