# Research on the Co-creation of Young People in Jewelry Design Connotation

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#### ABSTRACT

The jewelry industry must devise tactics that cater to the aesthetic demands of young people and encourage their purchase inclination, as the luxury market is becoming more youthful. The younger generation of the Internet era has seen tremendous changes in jewelry purchasing trends and choices because of the tremendous influence of various groups of people and an abundance of information on their conception of jewelry aesthetics. Through a co-creation method that gives them a role as designers, this paper encourages jewelry brands to incorporate young people's needs and creativity into their jewelry designs. Considering young people's unique aesthetics for jewelry, this paper suggests that when designing jewelry, jewelers should focus on showcasing the unique design concepts and connotations favored by the younger generation and co-create with them to learn and gain insights into their ideas from five different perspectives: unique personalities and tastes, different regional cultures, popular trends and topics, changes in values and attitudes, and life and usage scenarios.

Keywords: Jewelry design, Young people, Co-creation, Young people's aesthetics.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Jewelry has always been an integral part of people's daily lives. Jewelry has been around since about two million years ago when mankind was just born. The history of jewelry goes hand in hand with the history of art, war, and architecture, and it has always been considered an icon throughout the historical period (Mavromoustaki, 2018). With the democratization of luxury goods, today's luxury goods are more accessible compared to the traditional retail of the past (Simge, 2020), which has somehow led to the fact that young people have taken over a significant part of the luxury market, with more disposable income and a greater willingness to spend. In the traditional conception of jewelry design, the artistic element is the most crucial aspect, and the appearance design of the jewelry gives the jewelry a unique status, culture, emotion, and symbol of decoration (Zheng, 2023). For today's jewelry design, the exterior design is still important, but customers increasingly value the inner meaning of the jewelry that can establish an emotional connection. Thus, to appeal to the younger generation, which is becoming a stronger consumer group, jewelry brands must first fully understand young people's jewelry preferences and aesthetics, and express the concept of jewelry according to these special needs. In addition, as the becomes increasingly interconnected, customer preferences are changing rapidly, the frequency of consumption is high, and needs are subtle, forcing marketers to continually shorten the distance between information about needs and information about solutions (Bharti & Agrawal, 2018). In this context, it is necessary to apply cocreation to jewelry design, and Ostrom et al. (2010) argued that the issue of customer co-creation in the field of innovation and new product development is an important research hotspot, which has the potential to contribute to the development of the field of product/service innovation and to benefit the customer, the organization, and even the whole society. It can be seen that applying co-creation to jewelry design and allowing jewelry brands to work with the younger generation is more capable of designing jewelry products that are more popular and acceptable to the younger generation, further promoting the development of jewelry brands in the direction of youthfulness. So when jewelry brands are designing, to attract the gradually stronger consumer group - the younger generation, they

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must have a full understanding of young people's jewelry preferences and aesthetics.

### 2. JEWELRY REJUVENATION

Jewelry is regarded as a concentration of beauty and shine, and thousands of years ago, humans created unique jewelry with the premise of adorning the body, showing social status, and expressing socioeconomic and cultural (Mavromoustakaki, 2018). In modern society, people realize their values by dressing themselves elaborately and wearing different types of jewelry, and this process is not limited by gender, age, skin color, or beliefs, and all tend to beautify themselves in one way or another, and as jewelry is deeply rooted in human material and social culture because of its power to represent symbols, emotions, or functions (WANG, 2018), it has also turned out to be one of the best means for people to prove and express themselves.

Currently, the younger generation is becoming the core consumers of the luxury market, and the future of jewelry brands is in the hands of the younger generation (Jiang & Lyu, 2023). In China, for example, the country's jewelry industry had a very strong showing during the Double 11 shopping festival in 2023. From the summary of data from major online shopping platforms, this year's Double 11 online jewelry consumption in China showed a significant tendency of youthfulness. According to JD's statistics, young consumers under the age of 35 have become the main consumers of online jewelry, accounting for 67% of the transaction value, of which 11% are under the age of 25, and 56% are between the ages of 26 and 35. The data clearly shows that the demand for jewelry among the vounger generation is gradually rising (Gems & Ujewelry Trade Association of China, 2023).

While brand aging is inevitable over time, older brands represent an immeasurable asset, meaning that the brand has built a solid foundation in customer recognition and awareness (Jiang & Lyu, 2023), furthermore, to maintain traditional values and lasting stability, as well as to ensure that predetermined high-quality standards are met, jewelry companies need to continue to use In addition, to maintain traditional values and lasting stability, as well as to ensure the achievement of the desired high-quality standards, jewelry companies must continue to use traditional materials such as diamonds and gold (Avidano, 2023). However, the question of how to "rejuvenate" jewelry and how to design jewelry that is more compatible with young

people's preferences has become an issue that jewelry brands must consider to transform and further expand their markets.

### 3. CO-CREATION ADVANTAGE

The term "co-creation" has been embraced by a wide range of people and describes a shift in mindset away from seeing organizations as decision-makers about the value to a more participatory process in which organizations and people co-create and develop meaning (Ind & Coates, 2013). Although involving customers in shaping products and services is relatively new in market research, and co-creation is often viewed from a managerial perspective, there is precedent in the design world from the 1970s, when Scandinavians adopted a methodology known as "participatory design" (Ind & Coates, 2013).

The rise of the Internet has had a significant impact on businesses in that user participation in productive activities has increased dramatically. The significant increase in engagement has become especially pronounced with the advent of Web 2.0 technologies. For some highly successful Web 2.0 platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Flickr, Twitter), user-provided content constitutes a major part of the value of their services (Rayna et al., 2015). Sarmah & Rahman (2017) emphasize that a vibrant business environment heralds a dramatic change in the way business operations and processes will be conducted, which will also change the processes that companies have used in The traditional company-centered approach will gradually face reduced customer satisfaction, which will lead to reduced profits. This phenomenon reveals that the utility of traditional isolated value creation strategies is fading, and all of these factors are combining to push companies away from focusing on closed innovation and towards finding external sources of innovation. As a result, the concept of "co-creation" customers and stakeholders has not only attracted a lot of attention from the academic community but has also become a key strategy for many firms in their innovation and change processes.

But over the past decade or so, the label "co-creation" has proliferated. As there is little consensus on what constitutes 'co-creation', Ramaswamy & Ozcan (2018) provide us with an innovative and unifying perspective by theorizing that co-creation is defined as interactive creation in an interactive system environment provided by an interactive platform, which includes active

participation and organizational structures. Ind & Coates (2013) provide a new perspective on coinnovation from a participatory design perspective, which states that by engaging end-users, products and services can be made more relevant and usable, as well as less risky. This suggests that we need to proactively connect with participants and embrace their input for the benefit of the user and the organization as a whole. Participatory design (similar to design thinking) can cover the development of iterative prototypes as a means of testing user response.

Bharti & Agrawal (2018) suggest that the qualifying criteria for co-creation activities are activities with a high degree of customer involvement (ideally at every stage of product and service development). Co-creation covers a wide range of activities, such as supporting the design phase, evaluating ideas and alternatives or assisting in determining the modalities of a launch campaign, advising on the development of a new product or service, as well as the improvement of an existing product or service (Mandolfo et al., 2020).

Given the changing interests of young people, and their qualities of being articulate about their needs, applying the co-creation approach to them could not be more appropriate. Collaboration in jewelry design not only allows the jewelry industry to better understand its ideas but also provides young people with more opportunities for expression. A certain degree of design identity transformation will also increase their sense of responsibility for the results of their designs, which will drive consumption.

## 4. YOUNG PEOPLE'S JEWELRY AESTHETICS AND BUYING TRENDS

In the course of the history of mankind, the birth of aesthetic culture is closely connected with the high philosophy held by our ancestors, the spiritual sphere, exclusive literary and aesthetic creations, and the values of the (Abdurakhimovna, 2021). Therefore, development of social spirituality and worldview plays a crucial role in the process of shaping the aesthetic culture of youth. In the current online environment, the aesthetic concepts of the younger generation have undergone a remarkable transformation, which further has a profound impact on their aesthetic concepts and purchasing behavior towards jewelry.

### 4.1 Diversification of Consumption Needs

There is a significant difference in the way the younger generation views jewelry consumption compared to the previous generation. Opportunities to purchase jewelry go beyond mere weddings or relationships, and not just for certain formal occasions. They have a variety of needs for jewelry, including gift-giving, personal use, wearing for specific occasions, everyday decoration, and rewarding themselves (Jiang & Lyu, 2023). They view consumption as a form of self-reward, an affirmation or praise of their taste (Wang & Qiao, 2020). Nowadays, young people's desire to obtain jewelry from others is diminishing, and even if no one is willing to give it away, they still tend to purchase jewelry on their own to satisfy their needs.

### 4.2 High Attention to New Technology

The younger generation uses the internet almost every single day and they keep a keen eye on all the new things happening around the globe, which also covers a wide range of emerging technologies. For example, in the last few years, the laboratory cultivation of diamonds has received a lot of attention, especially from the younger generation. The diamond industry has undergone a profound transformation as laboratory cultivation diamonds has made it a practical and sustainable alternative to traditional diamond mining. Younger generations are undoubtedly the main drivers of this trend, becoming increasingly concerned about the ethical and environmental impact of the products they buy, and more price-sensitive, as a result, labgrown diamonds are becoming more and more popular with consumers, while mined diamonds are gradually losing market share (Avidano, 2023).

### 4.3 Following the Right Values

In every period of history, the younger generation has always been bravely on the front line, more susceptible to the agitation of others and more inclined to steadfastly pursue what they believe to be right. Choosing to consume products they support has become one of the many ways modern young people express their opinions. Regarding the younger generation, Albouy & Adesida (2018) suggest that because they have more access to environmental education, they are more inclined to buy sustainable products and invest more in sustainable products than previous generations. As a result of their deep awareness and continued concern for environmental issues, young

people are implementing various environmental measures with increasing frequency and their environmental awareness is changing their consumption and purchasing habits (Aleixo, 2020). More than just sustainability, Wang & Qiao (2020) emphasize that topics such as environmentalism, futurism, feminism, and individualism not only attract eyeballs but also reflect the "cool" image favored by young Chinese consumers.

### 4.4 Trend in Gender Mobility

During Paris Fashion Week in January 2020, the Japanese fashion house Comme des Garçons and Mikimoto launched a collaborative collection centered on the theme of "men wearing pearls". The collection combines the idea of "genderlessness" and brings a new way of categorizing jewelry. The ambiguity and neutrality of gender are particularly evident amongst Millennials and Generation Z. They have a more open and neutral understanding of gender. Their understanding of gender is more open and diverse, while the trend of gender fluidity has had a profound impact on the aesthetic orientation of the younger generation (Zheng, 2023). Not only in jewelry, but also in the daily wear of young people can be seen, that their choice of clothing has blurred the concept of gender to a once extent, and only choose their favorite design styles.

### 4.5 Rational Consumption Highlight

When young consumers shop for their favorite goods or services, their choices have shifted from relying mainly on sensibility to valuing both sensibility and rationality, and they are more inclined to seek more benefits rather than incur greater costs (Siriguppi et al., 2020). Although the percentage of the younger generation buying luxury goods such as jewelry is gradually increasing, it is a way for them to satisfy themselves and improve their quality of life, and it is also the result of equivocation for them after a certain amount of thinking, where a certain amount of money is used to buy spiritual pleasure. In the study by Wang & Qiao (2020), the young delegates argued that the average person can occasionally buy one or two items from light luxury brands, and for them, the occasional purchase of a luxury brand is an exchange for the lifestyle of the upper middle class.

### 4.6 Focusing on Personalization

Due to the influence of various elements of their personality, opinions, values, and actual behavior,

young people exhibit unique consumption habits. Because they are going through the identity-shaping stage, they tend to acquire certain items to define their identity (Holbrook & Schindler, 1989). Younger consumers tend to pursue a more diversified lifestyle and will pick the right product or brand based on their personality (Valentine & Powers, 2013). In addition, the new generation has experienced a shift in aesthetic standards for jewelry; for example, young people emerging in the information age are more self-aware and are more inclined to display unique personalities and everyday practical designs rather than pursuing traditional luxury jewelry (Zheng, 2023).

### 4.7 Valuing Brand Worth and Celebrity Effect

Although millennials are more inclined to support and choose emerging brands, they tend to be more cautious when purchasing luxury items like jewelry, preferring well-known brands to reduce potential risks. Brand loyalty and luxury brand consumption behaviors are quite common among the youth population because these products help to strengthen their self-perception (Gil et al., 2012). Although there is growing skepticism about the authenticity of opinion leaders (Djafarova & Bowes, 2021), they are playing an increasingly important role in influencing young people and their shopping behavior in digital marketing (Sun et al., 2022). Opinion leaders, whose personalities fall somewhere between those of public figures (relatively less approachable) and friends or peers (more approachable), create a stronger connection with their audience through regular communication and sharing of interests (Dhanani, 2017). In the U.S., most young people trust opinion leaders more than celebrities and empathize deeply with them. This is because they connect with opinion leaders through shared interests, daily interactions, and feedback on the content they create, something that is difficult to achieve with traditional celebrities (Burgess, 2017). By surveying a random sample of 400 respondents from Generation Z in China, Sun et al. (2022) revealed that opinion leaders, friends, peers, and celebrities all play an important role in terms of purchase intentions, except that friends and those of their age had the greatest impact; followed by the influence of opinion leaders; and although celebrities had a great impact, compared to other figures, their influence was relatively weak.

### 4.8 The Prevalence of Hedonism

Piper (2011) explains hedonism as a doctrine that regards pleasure as the most important virtue, i.e., that human beings must be happy, and he believes that pleasure is the ultimate destination for human beings. The findings of Remiswal et al. (2021) show that for young people, hedonism has both positive and negative aspects. In any case, hedonism has permeated young people's daily lives, including a change in jewelry consumption, and Wang & Qiao (2020) directly point out that young Chinese consumers are more hedonistic than previous generations, believing that happiness can be achieved by consuming luxury brands, a belief that is particularly prominent among consumers born after 2000. This view is particularly pronounced among consumers born after 2000. The hedonistic culture is a result of advances in communication and technology (Remiswal et al., 2021), and today's new generation is more inclined to view hedonism and materialism positively, and the premiums associated with luxury brands allow them to feel a sense of shopping for selfsatisfaction, rather than just for the functionality and basic needs that are readily available in traditional brands. In their view, shopping for luxury jewelry is somehow a way to achieve a sense of well-being.

## 5. CO-CREATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN JEWELRY DESIGN CONNOTATION

Strauss & Howe (1991) define generational groups as groups of people who were born in the same timeframe and who grew up with similar life experiences and major catastrophic events that have led to similar values, attitudes, and beliefs among the individuals in each group, thus differentiating them from other groups of the same generation. According to Moreno et al. (2017), young people of this generation are self-centered and they often choose to present themselves through traditional or electronic means; if they can find a friendly place to display their preferences and satisfaction with a product, branded service, or website, they choose to do so, and due to the fast speed of communication, this generation can quickly and freely process and express information. Meanwhile Chandon et al. (2017) state that they expect their beloved luxury brands to respond as if they were friends on online social platforms and similarly interact with them in their quest for a rewarding experience. Younger consumers, due to their strong desire for social

status and fulfillment of social needs, are often willing to pay extra for luxury and fashionable items and make purchasing choices accordingly (Kim & Johnson, 2015). As a result, we have learned that this generation of young people is very keen on interacting and co-innovating with brands, and they are also looking for products and brands that align with their personalities, tastes, habits, and values.

According to Heine & Phan (2011), consumers differentiate between luxury goods based on six characteristics: price, quality, aesthetics, rarity, extraordinary, and symbolism; Jhamb et al. (2020) findings suggest that sensory, intellectual, behavioral, and affective experience play a key role in helping consumers shape their perceptions of luxury brands. Thus, we know that the "rarity" and "extraordinary" qualities of jewelry can greatly attract the attention of young consumers. In addition to assessing the value and quality of jewelry through basic factors such as price, material, or craftsmanship, it is also possible to provide them with an emotional experience through the intrinsic content of the jewelry. In terms of emotional experience, customers' commitment and enjoyment when interacting with a brand is crucial (Cho et al., 2015), therefore, jewelry brands need to work hand in hand with young consumers when thinking about the deeper meanings of jewelry to gain a deeper understanding of their true inner feelings and needs.

### 5.1 Unique Personalities and Tastes

Heine (2012), in his attempt to categorize luxury in six ways, once pointed out that luxury belongs to personal items, i.e. some items may be luxurious to one person, but to another, they may not be considered as luxury. Luxury goods are especially prominent among young consumers, this is because they are always on top of the latest trends, and as fashion leaders, they use their image to express their views and needs. Once they decide on products and services, they expect a shift towards personalization and customized features (Tang & Chan, 2017). Moreover, the younger generation tends to acquire status, individuality, and a sense of rebellion through the consumption of luxury goods (Moreno et al., 2017). Gil et al. (2017) point out that young people who have a clearer sense of self-awareness may be less attracted to "high-profile" or "over-the-top" design styles, and prefer more restrained design elements. For example, LEOVARIDIS et al. (2020) illustrate that vintage styles are currently becoming very popular

among young people. Vintage products are seen as fashionable and the new generation is among the first to adopt this new trend. For them, personal image is very important and vintage products help to enhance their image, therefore, the younger generation is gradually becoming the main consumers of antiques. LEOVARIDIS et al. (2020) also state that the younger generation tends to choose vintage-style products because they desire to differentiate themselves from the general public and see them as a means of differentiating themselves from the rest of the population, thus better satisfying them as members of a group, thereby better satisfying their identity and acceptance as members of a group.

### 5.2 Different Regional Cultures

The global demand for luxury goods forms an integral part of the global consumer culture, and from this perspective, global luxury brands can convey universal recognition and cross-cultural messaging (Eng & Bogaert, 2010). While many famous jewelry designs elicit universal recognition, Rose & DeJesus (2007) have long pointed out that culture can have a powerful influence on people's evaluations of wealth and luxury goods, and Heine (2012) suggests that luxury goods are culturally relative, and that culture not only shapes people's perceptions of luxury goods but may also influence their Eng & Bogaert's (2010) study indicated that perceptions of luxury, which are spread through media and social channels, are driven by a common cultural context. For example, the collective culture represents Asian values, which makes people in the region often express and present themselves within their group through luxury goods. For example, according to Cui et al. (2015), in China, consumers of luxury goods are more inclined to purchase items that are customized specifically for their country, as well as those products that are integrated with Chinese culture and image.

### 5.3 Popular Trends and Topics

In categorizing luxury, Heine (2012) points out that luxury has both temporal and context-specific relativities, which suggests that luxury is not a fixed concept, it changes over time, while people's perceptions of luxury may also change depending on the context. What is closely linked to time and context is the hot trends or topics that are happening at the moment, Gil et al. (2017) point out that many young consumers will look for products they consider prestigious by connecting with

emerging trends; Wang & Qiao (2020) also illustrate that jewelry brands have the responsibility to convey the diverse aspirations of the younger generation in the dimension of ideology to trigger the It is the responsibility of jewelry brands to convey the diverse aspirations of the younger generation in an ideological dimension that resonates deeply with young consumers and gives them a distinctive "youthfulness", e.g. combining it with current hot topics. In the Internet age, information changes rapidly, and each phase has its unique hot topics and trends, so if jewelers can understand and take these trends into account when designing their jewelry products, they may be able to appeal to a younger audience that corresponds to them.

### 5.4 Changes in Values and Attitudes

People born during specific periods have the values, beliefs, and attitudes of those periods (Simge, 2020), and the current younger generation tends to be attracted to brands and companies that have strong values, high social morals, and nontraditional backgrounds (Moreno et al., 2017). Eng & Bogaert's (2010) research results suggest that personal values and attitudes can have an impact on luxury consumption. For example, with the gradual rise of women's economic status and the evolution of society's concept of marriage, the traditional advertising slogan "A Diamond is Forever" may no longer be relevant to modern society. To adapt to the changing values of young people, jewelry brands should reduce the "love" component in their marketing advertisements and adopt more "true self" and "self" concepts related to the self-reward of young people. Self-reward related concepts.

### 5.5 Life and Usage Scenarios

Currently, the younger generation has ready access to a wealth of information resources, which makes the choices they make at this age seem more sensible and reasonable (Kardes et al., 2011), and due to their weaker purchasing power, the younger generation can only consider light luxury brands as occasional consumption products (Wang & Qiao, 2020). Meanwhile, LEOVARIDIS et al. (2020) suggest that young people are more inclined to choose products and services that can help them to be recognized by others or enhance their image. Therefore, to more accurately attract young people and increase their demand for jewelry, jewelry brands need to understand their daily activities and

life scenarios and design jewelry according to these potential usage scenarios. Zheng (2023) points out that the daily activities of the younger generation are very diverse, and the main scenarios can be classified into leisure, work, and sports. For the younger generation with a strong sense of ritual, different scenes will be matched with different clothes and decorations to enhance sophistication of their lives, and if jewelry brands understand their various life scenarios, they will know to a large extent what kind of jewelry products they should design.

### 6. CONCLUSION

Prehistoric humans began producing artistic works from everyday objects some 75,000 years ago, and jewelry has always been an essential part of our daily existence. The target audience for luxury businesses has shifted from the elite to the socioeconomic middle class as a result of the democratization and creation of new conceptions of luxury. The younger generation has progressively taken over as the primary consumer group in current markets, therefore jewelry makers need to give brand rejuvenation thoughtful consideration. By using co-creation methods that enable the younger generation to become the product's new designer while the original designers can take on more roles as coordinators, collaborators, and observers, we encourage jewelry brands to better understand and tap into the creativity of this generation. Jewelry brands will gain direct access to information about the younger generation through this approach, and they will also establish stronger relationships with them, which will create new commercial chances. This paper makes the argument that jewelry makers should focus more on the deeper meanings of their designs in addition to their typical outer appearance. They should also aim to establish appealing brand emblems that will attract the interest of young consumers and satisfy their need to possess distinctive products. outlines five Ultimately, this paper perspectives that jewelry brands need to create with the younger generation in the field of jewelry design: unique personalities and tastes, different regional cultures, popular trends and topics, changes in values and attitudes, and life and usage scenarios.

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