

# A Survey on the Research Trends of the Knitwear Fashion Field in Korea

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**Abstract** *The purpose of this study is to investigate research trends in the knitwear fashion field and suggest future directions for fashion businesses and research. Research trends in the knitwear fashion field were investigated. A total of 134 articles on knitwear fashion field among 4027 published in five journals - Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design, Journal of the Korean Society of Costume Culture, Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles, Journal of the Korean Society of Fashion & Costume, and Journal of the Korean Society of Costume - from 2001 to 2010 were analyzed. Most (32.84%) of articles related to knitwear fashion were published in Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design. The knitwear fashion field was divided into fashion design, clothing construction, textile science, fashion marketing, and history of costume. The majority (43.28%) were on the research topic of fashion design, followed by textile science, clothing construction, fashion marketing, history of costume. From 2001 to 2010, the number of papers relating to knitwear fashion increased from year to year. The further development of the knitwear fashion field can be expected in the future.*

**Key words** *Knitwear Fashion Field, Research Trends, Journals, Research Topic*

## **Introduction**

There has been a renewed appreciation of knitwear in current times, among people who value activity and unique style, since knitwear offers a comfortable fit and can be coordinated in various ways. Moreover, there is growing interest in knitwear fashion, as a wide range of textile techniques have been developed.

Knitwear was recognized as a fashion field in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Robinson, 1976), and its reach expanded in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The market share of knitwear in the current fashion market is increasing, as knitwear is drawing attention with the renewed interest in knitwear as a fashionable style.

The knitwear industry in Korea began to develop in the 1960s based on the government's export-driven policy, which initiated a period with a high level of growth (M. Lee, 1988), and the growth of specialized knitwear companies resulted in a change from knitwear as underwear to outerwear (Kim,

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2001). In the 1990s, with the widening variety and consumers of knitwear products, various brands developed knitwear to meet the needs of their consumers (Hong, Lee, & Kim, 2002).

The growing popularity of casualwear in the domestic apparel market led to the trend of wearing knitwear to create a casual look, which increased knitwear production in the fashion industry (Park & Lee, 2009).

The market share of knitwear products has shown steady progress in the casualwear market for approximately the last 10 years, and has reached 36.9% of the market (Korean Apparel Industry Association, 2010). However, the import of knitwear products has also steadily increased since 1990 (Korean Apparel Industry Association, 2010), and research on domestic and foreign knitwear fashion has revealed that foreign knitwear fashion is much diverse for design features such as items, silhouettes, colors, patterns, textile techniques, and fabrics (Choi, 2008; Choi, 2009; Choi, 2012). In this context, it is critical for domestic knitwear fashion to continue its product differentiation efforts for aspects such as design, fabric, price, and quality, to meet consumers' diverse needs.

In summary, the domestic knitwear fashion field has developed since the products and consumers of knitwear started expanding in the 1990s, following a period with a high level of growth in the 1960s, and the 37% market share of knitwear products in the 2010 casualwear market demonstrates that the importance of knitwear in the fashion industry as a whole increased as a result of the growing demand for knitwear and the growth of the knitwear fashion industry. Since there is steady growth in knitwear product imports, although the proportion of knitwear production is growing in the fashion industry, research on various aspects of domestic knitwear fashion needs to be conducted to further advance the domestic knitwear fashion industry and build a competitive edge in the global market. Therefore, it is most urgent to understand research trends in knitwear fashion to thus provide the knitwear fashion industry with necessary information and present research directions in the research on knitwear fashion.

The previous studies on knitwear fashion can be summarized according to their major topics as follows.

S. Lee and Kim (2006) classified knitwear items in fashion collections into 20 types, and analyzed the trends their changes. Jang (2008) developed knitwear designs for Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability (LOHAS) products using natural dyes. Choi (2009) studied the formative features of knitwear through analyses of the design characteristics and textile techniques used in overseas knitwear fashion. J. A. Yoon and Lee (2010) analyzed the characteristics of modifiable knitwear fashion designs and created actual products.

Hong, Lee, and Kim (2002) studied the knitwear purchasing behavior of women in their 20s and 30s and identified their favorite designs and complaints. J. Lee, Han, Kwon, Kim, and Lee (2010) investigated the differences in knitwear purchase behavior, including their interest in knitwear, the images they seek associated with knitwear purchases, buying motivation, selection criteria, and favorite designs of male college students classified by how they manage their appearance. M. Lee (2008) investigated the relationship between knitwear buying motivation and consumer satisfaction, and the influence of knitwear buying motives on consumer satisfaction in women in their 20s and 30s.

Ko and Park (2009) analyzed the trends in knit fabric through the analysis of the components of collections, such as knit structure, gauges, and knitting techniques. Kang, Kwon, and Kim (2007) investigated the effects of healthy, comfortable knit fabric on the thermal physiological function of the human body.

H. Yoon and Song (2005) developed knitwear patterns for one-piece dresses with five knit fabrics using a computer-aided design (CAD) system by analyzing the amount of changes in measurements for various body parts obtained from meters attached to ligament areas. Heo (2003) provided an evidence basis for creating patterns for stretch knit fabric by conducting a comparative analysis of four torso bodice patterns and sleeve patterns for moderate stretch knit fabrics regarding the appearance and the functional evaluation of their fit.

In summary, the primary topics of previous studies on knitwear fashion included fashion design, fashion marketing, textile science, and clothing construction.

Specifically, fashion design topics include the development of knitwear designs and the analysis of formative features; fashion marketing topics include the comparison of individuals and groups in knitwear purchase behaviors and the relationship between buying motivation and consumer satisfaction; textile science topics include knit structures and knitting methods for knit fabric, and the properties of knit fabric such as performance; clothing construction topics include the development of patterns for each type of knit fabric, and the comparative analysis of different types of knitwear pattern.

The objective of the present study is to identify the research trends of Korean studies on knitwear fashion, for which demand is growing every day, and present future research directions for related fields, and an evidence basis for knitwear product development and the knitwear industry.

## ***Methods***

### **Research subjects**

The research trends in knitwear fashion were investigated using research articles published in five Korean journals for 2001–2010. The journals are *Journal of the Korean Society of Costume*, *Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles*, *Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design*, *Research Journal of the Costume Culture*, and *Journal of the Korea Fashion and Costume Design Association*.

The selection criterion for the journals to include among the 14 academic journals on clothing and textiles was that the journal must have published 10 or more articles on knitwear fashion, based on a journal article search with knitwear fashion key terms such as “knit fashion,” “knitwear,” and “knit design.”

The total number of articles published in the five journals is shown in Table 1. In total, 4,027 articles were published in the five journals in 2001–2010, and *Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles* published the most (1,648), followed by *Journal of the Korean Society of Costume* (1,089), *Research Journal of the Costume Culture* (786), *Journal of the Korea Fashion and Costume Design Association* (384), and *Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design* (120).

Regarding the trends in the number of articles published each year, the highest number of articles

(453) was published in 2009, and the number of articles has subsequently slightly decreased. The decrease in the number of articles published in 2010, after the steady increase between 2001 and 2009, can be accounted for by the decrease in the number of articles in journals published by large academic societies (e.g., *Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles* and *Journal of the Korean Society of Costume*), despite the increase in journals that have published fewer articles (e.g., *Research Journal of the Costume Culture*, *Journal of the Korea Fashion and Costume Design Association* and *Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design*). More articles were published in the latter half of the 2000s than in the earlier half.

**Table 1.**  
The number of articles published in each journal by year

Journal \ Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total
<i>Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles</i>	155 (9.41%) (46.27%)	165 (10.01%) (46.35%)	143 (8.68%) (40.97%)	159 (9.65%) (41.19%)	154 (9.34%) (40.00%)	172 (10.44%) (40.09%)	166 (10.07%) (37.30%)	181 (10.98%) (40.49%)	180 (10.92%) (39.74%)	173 (10.50%) (39.14%)	1648 (100%) (40.92%)
<i>Journal of the Korean Society of Costume</i>	95 (8.72%) (28.36%)	99 (9.09%) (27.81%)	96 (8.82%) (27.51%)	96 (8.82%) (24.87%)	96 (8.82%) (24.87%)	120 (11.02%) (27.97%)	134 (12.30%) (30.11%)	127 (11.66%) (28.41%)	120 (11.02%) (26.49%)	106 (9.73%) (23.98%)	1089 (100%) (27.04%)
<i>Research Journal of the Costume Culture</i>	65 (8.27%) (19.40%)	59 (7.51%) (16.57%)	72 (9.16%) (20.63%)	80 (10.18%) (20.73%)	81 (10.31%) (21.04%)	80 (10.18%) (18.65%)	84 (10.69%) (18.88%)	84 (10.69%) (18.79%)	90 (11.45%) (19.87%)	91 (11.58%) (20.59%)	786 (100%) (19.52%)
<i>Journal of the Korea Fashion and Costume Design Association</i>	20 (5.21%) (5.97%)	33 (8.59%) (9.27%)	30 (7.81%) (8.60%)	37 (9.64%) (9.59%)	40 (10.42%) (10.39%)	42 (10.94%) (9.79%)	47 (12.24%) (10.56%)	42 (10.94%) (9.40%)	43 (11.20%) (9.49%) (11.31%)	50 (13.02%) (11.31%)	384 (100%) (9.54%)
<i>Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design</i>	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	8 (6.67%) (2.29%)	14 (11.67%) (3.63%)	14 (11.67%) (3.64%)	15 (12.50%) (3.50%)	14 (11.67%) (3.15%)	13 (10.83%) (2.91%)	20 (16.67%) (4.42%)	22 (18.33%) (4.98%)	120 (100%) (2.98%)
Total	335 (8.32%) (100%)	356 (8.84%) (100%)	349 (8.67%) (100%)	386 (9.59%) (100%)	385 (9.56%) (100%)	429 (10.65%) (100%)	445 (11.05%) (100%)	447 (11.10%) (100%)	453 (11.25%) (100%)	442 (10.98%) (100%)	4027 (100%) (100%)

### Sorting research materials

Research articles were first sorted based on their titles and key terms to identify knitwear fashion articles.

The key terms to flag an article for knitwear fashion included knit, knitwear, “knit fashion,” “knit design,” “knit product,” “knit clothing,” “sweater,” “knitting,” “knit structure,” “knitting technique,” and

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“knitting method.”

The research articles on knitwear fashion were then sorted according to research topic. When an article was concerned with more than one research topic, it was classified according to the topic to which the research method and the content of the article most pertained. Research topics were identified based on subtopics and study content including fashion design, textile science, clothing construction, fashion marketing, and the history of costume.

### **Data analysis**

The research articles included in the study were analyzed according to publication year and published journal. The articles were also analyzed according to research topic, and the trend changes over time were also examined.

The data was described using descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage, and the trends of changes were presented in pie charts and bar graphs.

## ***Research Trends in Knitwear Fashion***

### **Overview of research publication in knitwear fashion**

The research articles published in five journals including *Journal of the Korean Society of Costume*, *Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles*, *Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design*, *Research Journal of the Costume Culture*, and *Journal of the Korea Fashion and Costume Design Association* between 2001 and 2010 were investigated according to research topic in knitwear fashion to identify the knitwear fashion research trends.

The publication of knitwear fashion research in the five journals by year is shown in Table 2.

In total, 4,027 articles in the journals were reviewed, and 134 of them were selected as articles on knitwear fashion.

Out of these 134 articles on knitwear fashion, the highest number of articles (N=44, 32.84%) were published in *Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design*, and these 44 articles accounted for 36.67% of all the articles (120) published in *Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design* in the study period. The number of articles on knitwear fashion out of the total number of articles published by each of the other four journals is as follows: 21 (5.47%) out of 384 articles in *Journal of the Korea Fashion and Costume Design Association*, 30 (3.82%) out of 786 articles in *Research Journal of the Costume Culture*, 24 (1.46%) out of 1,648 articles in *Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles*, and 15 (1.38%) out of 1,089 articles in *Journal of the Korean Society of Costume*. The largest number of articles was published in *Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design* even though the journal was founded in 2003 and has published the lowest total number of articles (120), probably because, unlike other four journals, *Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design* has specialized in knit design. The distribution of the articles on knitwear fashion by journal is: 44 (32.84%) in *Journal of the Korean*

*Society of Knit Design*, 30 (22.39%) in *Research Journal of the Costume Culture*, 24 (17.91%) in *Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles*, 21 (15.67%) in *Journal of the Korea Fashion and Costume Design Association*, and 15 (11.19%) in *Journal of the Korean Society of Costume*.

Research trend by year shows that the number of articles on knitwear fashion has steadily increased from two articles in 2001 to 28 in 2010. Among the five journals, *Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design* has shown the largest increase: From five in 2003 to 12 in 2010. All five journals have shown a larger increase in the latter half of the 10-year period.

More than twice the number of articles was published in the latter half of the period than in the earlier half: There were 39 articles published between 2001 and 2005 and 95 articles published between 2006 and 2010.

Moreover, the number of articles on knitwear fashion increased 14 times between 2001 (two articles) and 2010 (28 articles); and 3.5 times between 2003 (eight articles), when *Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design* was founded, and 2010 (28 articles). Compared to the increased rate of the total number of articles published in the five journals (32%) for the 10-year period from 335 articles in 2001 to 442 articles in 2010 (Table 1), the increase rate of articles on knitwear fashion is far greater.

The ratio of articles on knitwear fashion to all articles published in the five journals increased three-fold between 2003 when *Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design* was founded and 2010, from 8 (2.29%) out of 349 articles to 28 (6.33%) out of 442 articles.

These results suggest the growing importance of knitwear fashion research in the field of clothing and textiles. In addition, the increase of knitwear production in the fashion industry and the steady growth of knitwear products to its 36.9% market share in the casualwear market in 2010 indicate the expansion of knitwear fashion in both research and industry.

**Table 2.**

The number of articles on knitwear fashion published by each journal by year

Journal \ Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total
<i>Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design</i>	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	5 (11.36%) (62.50%)	2 (4.55%) (16.67%)	5 (11.36%) (41.67%)	2 (4.55%) (20.00%)	3 (6.82%) (17.65%)	5 (11.36%) (26.32%)	10 (22.73%) (47.62%)	12 (27.27%) (42.86%)	44 (100%) (32.84%)
<i>Research Journal of the Costume Culture</i>	1 (3.33%) (50.00%)	2 (6.67%) (40.00%)	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	4 (13.33%) (33.33%)	2 (6.67%) (16.67%)	3 (10.00%) (30.00%)	3 (10.00%) (17.65%)	2 (6.67%) (10.53%)	7 (23.33%) (33.33%)	6 (20.00%) (21.43%)	30 (100%) (22.39%)
<i>Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles</i>	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	1 (4.17%) (20.00%)	1 (4.17%) (12.50%)	3 (12.50%) (25.00%)	3 (12.50%) (25.00%)	3 (12.50%) (30.00%)	6 (25.00%) (35.29%)	3 (12.50%) (15.79%)	2 (8.33%) (9.52%)	2 (8.33%) (7.14%)	24 (100%) (17.91%)

Year Journal	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total
<i>Journal of the Korea Fashion and Costume Design Association</i>	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	2 (9.52%) (40.00%)	1 (4.76%) (12.50%)	2 (9.52%) (16.67%)	1 (4.76%) (8.33%)	1 (4.76%) (10.00%)	2 (9.52%) (11.76%)	6 (28.57%) (31.58%)	1 (4.76%) (4.76%)	5 (23.81%) (17.86%)	21 (100%) (15.67%)
<i>Journal of the Korean Society of Costume</i>	1 (6.67%) (50.00%)	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	1 (6.67%) (12.50%)	1 (6.67%) (8.33%)	1 (6.67%) (8.33%)	1 (6.67%) (10.00%)	3 (20.00%) (17.65%)	3 (20.00%) (15.79%)	1 (6.67%) (4.76%)	3 (20.00%) (10.71%)	15 (100%) (11.19%)
Total	2 (1.49%) (100%)	5 (3.73%) (100%)	8 (5.97%) (100%)	12 (8.96%) (100%)	12 (8.96%) (100%)	10 (7.46%) (100%)	17 (12.69%) (100%)	19 (14.18%) (100%)	21 (15.67%) (100%)	28 (20.90%) (100%)	134 (100%) (100%)

### Research topics in knitwear fashion

Research topics in knitwear fashion were identified based on subtopics and study content, as shown in Table 3. The subtopics and study content of fashion design as a research topic included design development, aesthetic features, design study, formative features, knitting techniques, technique research, prints, collection analysis, accessory designs, wellbeing fashion, work analysis, design analysis, and item trends.

The subtopics and study content of textile science as a research topic include fabric property evaluation, dye fastness, biophysical property research, properties of ply yarn, structure development, knitting technique, structure research, texture comparison, laundry and care, knit product form, the affective aspect of fabric, fabric properties, and shape stability.

The subtopics and study content of clothing construction as a research topic included the production method, pattern development, pattern study, armhole shape, and sewing.

The subtopics and study content of fashion marketing as a research topic included purchase behavior, branding strategy, manufacturer study, consumer satisfaction, export features, consumer segmentation, and product planning.

The subtopics and study content of the history of costume as a research topic include the cultural history.

**Table 3.**  
Classification standards for research topics in knitwear fashion

Topic	Subtopic	Details of Subtopics
Fashion design		design development, aesthetic features, design study, formative features, knitting techniques, technique research, prints, collection analysis, accessory designs, wellbeing fashion, work analysis, design analysis, and item trends
Textile science		fabric property evaluation, dye fastness, biophysical property research, ply yarn properties, structure development, knitting techniques, structure research, texture comparison, laundry and care, knit product form, affective aspect of fabric, fabric properties, and shape stability
Clothing construction		production method, pattern development, pattern study, armhole shape, and sewing
Fashion marketing		purchase behavior, branding strategy, manufacturer study, consumer satisfaction, export features, consumer segmentation, and product planning
History of costume		Cultural history

The distribution of research topics represented in research articles on knitwear fashion published in the five journals is shown in Table 4. Figure 1 shows the pie chart with distribution of the research topics in the research articles on knitwear fashion for the entire 10-year period.

The 134 research articles on knitwear fashion were classified into five research topics. The topic “fashion design” accounted for the highest number of articles (N=58, 43.28%), followed by “textile science” (N=30, 22.39%), “clothing construction” (N=25, 18.66%), and “history of costume” (N=1, 0.75%).

According to the yearly trends of research articles by research topic, the topic “fashion design” showed the largest increase from zero articles in 2001 to 16 articles in 2010. A comparison of research topics regarding the highest number of articles published in a year for each topic suggests that the increased number of articles was concentrated in “fashion design.” Specifically, the highest numbers of articles on “fashion design” were 13 in 2009 and 16 in 2010, in contrast to the five articles on each of “textile science” and “clothing construction.” The number of journal articles on fashion design increased by 26, from 16 in the earlier half to 42 in the latter half of the period; the number of journal articles on “textile science” increased by 12, from nine in the earlier half to 21 in the latter half; the number of journal articles on “clothing construction” increased by seven, from nine in the earlier half to 16 in the latter half; the number of journal articles on “fashion marketing” increased by 12, from four in the earlier half to 16 in the latter half. Only one journal article was published on “history of costume,” it was published in the earlier half of the period.

This result shows a sharp increase in the number of articles for all research topics except “history of costume” between the earlier and the latter half of the study period.

“Fashion design” articles were most frequently published among journal articles on knitwear fashion. There was a steady increase in the number of articles on this topic since the beginning of the



study period, and the rapid growth in the latter half of the study period, demonstrating strong research interest in this topic and suggesting that research on this topic will continue to grow in the future.

“Textile science” articles were published second-most frequently. The number of these articles was higher in the latter half of the period, showing a modest increase compared to the earlier half; however, the yearly number of publications slightly fell, following its peak of six each in 2007 and 2008.

“Fashion marketing” ranked fourth among the five research topics in terms of the number of articles; however, the number of articles increased four-fold between the earlier and the latter half, offering an outlook of further increase in the future.

**Table 4.**  
Distribution of research topics in knitwear fashion by year

Topic \ Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total
Fashion design	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	2 (3.45%) (40.00%)	6 (10.34%) (75.00%)	3 (5.17%) (25.00%)	5 (8.62%) (41.67%)	4 (6.90%) (40.00%)	2 (3.45%) (11.76%)	7 (12.07%) (36.84%)	13 (22.41%) (61.90%)	16 (27.59%) (57.14%)	58 (100%) (43.28%)
Textile science	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	5 (16.67%) (41.67%)	4 (13.33%) (33.33%)	4 (13.33%) (40.00%)	6 (20.00%) (35.29%)	6 (20.00%) (31.58%)	2 (6.67%) (9.52%)	3 (10.00%) (10.71%)	30 (100%) (22.39%)
Clothing construction	1 (4.00%) (50.00%)	1 (4.00%) (20.00%)	1 (4.00%) (12.50%)	3 (12.00%) (25.00%)	3 (12.00%) (25.00%)	1 (4.00%) (10.00%)	5 (20.00%) (29.41%)	3 (12.00%) (15.79%)	3 (12.00%) (14.29%)	4 (16.00%) (14.29%)	25 (100%) (18.66%)
Fashion marketing	1 (5.00%) (50.00%)	2 (10.00%) (40.00%)	1 (5.00%) (12.50%)	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	1 (5.00%) (10.00%)	4 (20.00%) (23.53%)	3 (15.00%) (15.79%)	3 (15.00%) (14.29%)	5 (25.00%) (17.86%)	20 (100%) (14.93%)
History of costume	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	1 (100%) (8.33%)	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	1 (100%) (0.75%)
Total	2 (1.49%) (100%)	5 (3.73%) (100%)	8 (5.97%) (100%)	12 (8.96%) (100%)	12 (8.96%) (100%)	10 (7.46%) (100%)	17 (12.69%) (100%)	19 (14.18%) (100%)	21 (15.67%) (100%)	28 (20.90%) (100%)	134 (100%) (100%)

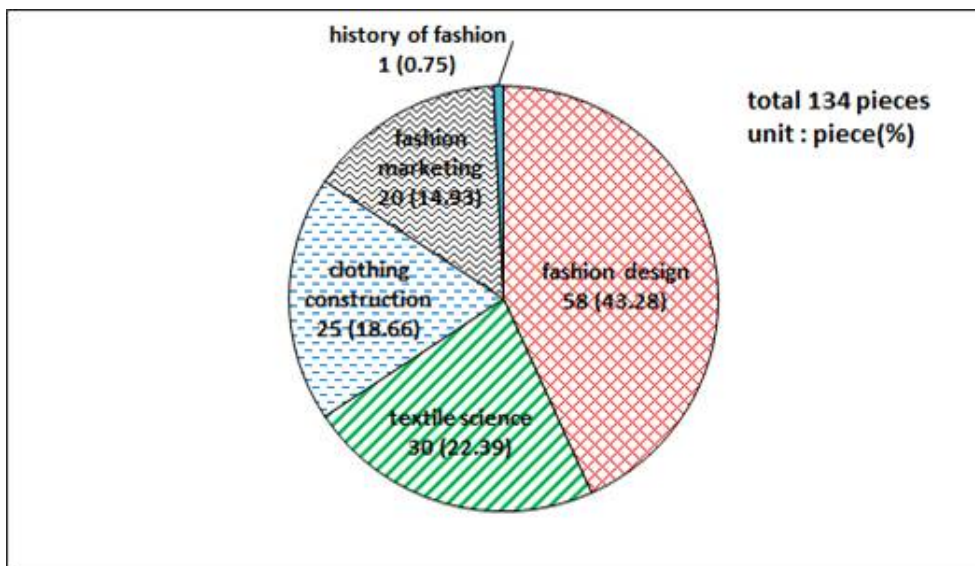


Figure 1.  
Distribution of knitwear fashion research topics

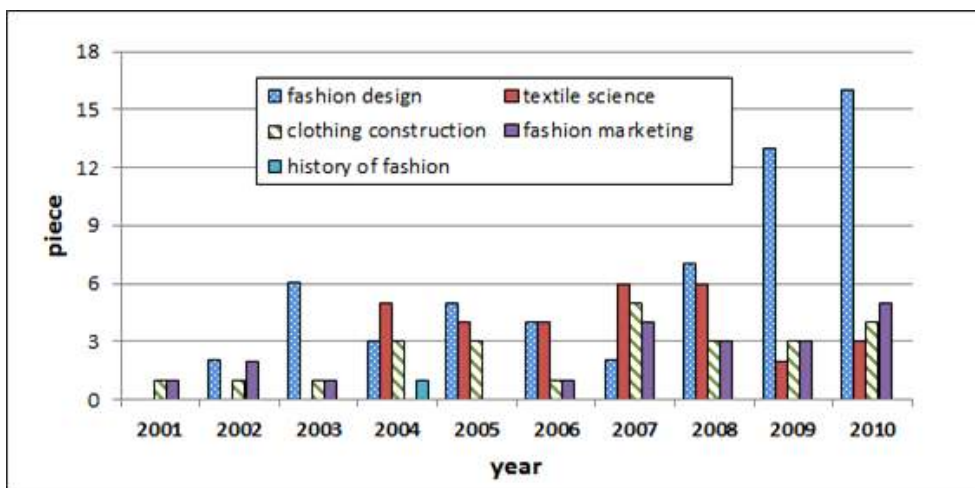


Figure 2.  
Yearly trend of knitwear fashion research topics

### Research topics in knitwear fashion by journal

The distribution of research topics shown in the articles published by the five journals including *Journal of the Korean Society of Costume*, *Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles*, *Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design*, *Research Journal of the Costume Culture*, and *Journal of the Korea Fashion and Costume Design Association* is shown in Table 5.

In *Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design*, the largest portion (N=32, 72.73%) of the 44 articles on knitwear fashion were on “fashion design.” The rest consisted of four articles on “textile science,” four on “clothing construction,” three on “fashion marketing,” and one on “history of costume.” Among the five journals included in the study, *Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design* published the most articles on “fashion design” (55.17%).

In *Research Journal of the Costume Culture*, the largest portion (N=13, 43.33%) of the 30 articles on knitwear fashion were about “clothing construction.” The rest consisted of 10 articles on “fashion marketing,” five on “fashion design,” and two on “textile science.” Among the five journals, *Research Journal of the Costume Culture* published the most articles on “clothing construction” (52.0%).

In *Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles*, the largest portion (N=16, 66.67%) of its 24 articles were on “textile science.” The rest consisted of four articles on “fashion marketing,” three on “fashion design,” and one on “clothing construction.” Among the five journals, *Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles* published the most articles on “textile science” (53.33%).

In *Journal of the Korea Fashion and Costume Design Association*, the largest portion (N=10, 47.62%) of the 21 articles were on “fashion design.” The rest consisted of seven articles on “textile science,” three on “clothing construction,” and one on “fashion marketing.”

In *Journal of the Korean Society of Costume*, the largest portion (N=8, 53.33%) of the 15 articles were on “fashion design.” The rest consisted of four articles on “clothing construction,” two on “fashion marketing,” and one on “textile science.”

Articles about “fashion design” were published more frequently in *Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design*, *Journal of the Korea Fashion and Costume Design Association*, and *Journal of the Korean Society of Costume* than other journals, and most frequently in *Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design*. The publication of articles on “textile science” was concentrated in *Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles*, with only a few articles on the topic in other journals. “Clothing construction” and “fashion marketing” articles were published most frequently in *Research Journal of the Costume Culture*, with only a few articles on the topics in other journals. “History of costume” articles were published only once and in *Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design*.

The results for the research topics and the journals show a clear distinction in publication orientation among the journals. Specifically, *Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design*, *Journal of the Korea Fashion and Costume Design Association*, and *Journal of the Korean Society of Costume* published many articles on “fashion design”; *Research Journal of the Costume Culture* published many articles on “clothing construction” and “fashion marketing”; *Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles* published many articles on “textile science.”

**Table 5.**  
Research topics in knitwear fashion by journal

Journal Topic	<i>Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design</i>	<i>Research Journal of the Costume Culture</i>	<i>Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles</i>	<i>Journal of the Korea Fashion &amp; Costume Design Association</i>	<i>Journal of the Korean Society of Costume</i>	Total
Fashion design	32 (55.17%) (72.73%)	5 (8.62%) (16.67%)	3 (5.17%) (12.50%)	10 (17.24%) (47.62%)	8 (13.79%) (53.33%)	58 (100%) (43.28%)
Textile science	4 (13.33%) (9.09%)	2 (6.67%) (6.67%)	16 (53.33%) (66.67%)	7 (23.33%) (33.33%)	1 (3.33%) (6.67%)	30 (100%) (22.39%)
Clothing construction	4 (16.00%) (9.09%)	13 (52.00%) (43.33%)	1 (4.00%) (4.17%)	3 (12.00%) (14.29%)	4 (16.00%) (26.67%)	25 (100%) (18.66%)
Fashion marketing	3 (15.00%) (6.82%)	10 (50.00%) (33.33%)	4 (20.00%) (16.67%)	1 (5.00%) (4.76%)	2 (10.00%) (13.33%)	20 (100%) (14.93%)
History of costume	1 (100%) (2.27%)	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	0 (0.00%) (0.00%)	1 (100%) (0.75%)
Total	44 (32.84%) (100%)	30 (22.39%) (100%)	24 (17.91%) (100%)	21 (15.67%) (100%)	15 (11.19%) (100%)	134 (100%) (100%)

### Conclusions

There is a growing appreciation of knitwear for its comfortable fit and coordination versatility, and its market share of the Korean fashion industry is increasing. However, since knitwear product imports are also increasing, research on the various aspects of Korean knitwear fashion should be conducted to further advance the Korean knitwear fashion industry and build a competitive edge in the global market. Specifically, knitwear fashion research trends need to be identified to provide the knitwear fashion industry with information, and present research directions for related research fields. The knitwear fashion field is a specialized research field that focuses on knit fabric, and research on various topics has been conducted in the field. The present study investigates knitwear fashion research trends through the analysis of Korean knitwear fashion research articles involving the following: Selecting 134 journal articles on knitwear fashion out of 4,027 articles published in five academic journals including *Journal of the Korean Society of Costume*, *Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles*, *Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design*, *Research Journal of the Costume Culture*, and *Journal of the Korea Fashion and Costume Design Association* for 2001–2010; analyzing the number and research topics of the 134 articles by journal and publication year; and examining their trends over time.

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The conclusions based on study results are as follows.

1. Among the five journals, the highest number of articles on knitwear fashion were published in *Journal of the Korean Society of Knit Design*, followed by *Research Journal of the Costume Culture*, *Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles*, *Journal of the Korea Fashion and Costume Design Association*, and *Journal of the Korean Society of Costume*, in that order.
2. More articles on knitwear fashion were published in the latter half of the 10-year period than in the earlier half, and publication increased every year to the largest number of articles in 2010.
3. The number of articles on knitwear fashion increased 14 times between 2001 and 2010, and 3.5 times between 2003 and 2010; the proportion of the articles on knitwear fashion for all clothing and textile articles in the five journals increased approximately three-fold from 2.3% in 2001 to 6.3% in 2010.
4. Knitwear fashion research topics can be divided into “fashion design,” “textile science,” “clothing construction,” “fashion marketing,” and “history of costume.”
5. Among the research topics, “fashion design” was the most frequently published, followed by “textile science,” “clothing construction,” “fashion marketing,” and “history of costume,” in that order of frequency.
6. Articles on “fashion design” were more often published in the latter half of the period than its earlier half, and showed a steady increase for 2008–2010. In contrast, only one article was published on “history of costume” in 2004.

In summary, the study findings suggest that knitwear fashion is a growing research field with an increasing number of published articles each year. Journal articles on knitwear fashion increased approximately three-fold compared to the beginning of the 10-year period, demonstrating its growing importance in academia.

The research trends reflect the growing interest in and production of knitwear due to the changes in fashion trends toward casualwear in response to the active lifestyle in modern life. This indicates the expansion of knitwear fashion in both research and industry.

The sharp increase in the amount of fashion design research in the latter half of the decade suggests that the knitwear fashion industry is in need of fashion design knowledge. The increased fashion design research is likely a desirable trend, considering the rising imports of knitwear products and the wide variety of foreign knitwear fashion product designs.

Research on the development of new knit fabrics and structure, quality improvements, and reasonable pricing should continue being conducted along with the research and development of fashion design so that the Korean knitwear fashion industry can meet consumers’ diverse needs and maintain a competitive edge in the global market.

The limitations of this study include limiting the study period to 2001–2010, and limiting the study subjects to journal articles. Therefore, future research needs to include longer periods with more recent studies in the analysis of research trends, and a wider scope of study subjects needs to be examined that includes Master’s and doctoral theses in addition to academic journals.

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