

The “Mini Me” In Fashion Design as Contemporary Trend and Social Attitude



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Submission: October 31, 2017; **Published:** October 01, 2018

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Introduction

The term “mini me” is actually used to identify a very recent phenomenon of the fashion industry referring to collections of coordinated clothes or accessories designed for both parents and children, and in particular for the target mother-daughter. At the beginning, this practice was created a few years ago in the USA and made public through its adoption by well-known actresses and bloggers especially during public occasions such as Gala, Golden Globe, Red Carpet evenings. During this kind of happenings famous mothers and daughters wore luxurious coordinated outfits. Pretty soon, from haute couture this trend began spreading and attracted the attention of fashion brands (from ready-to-wear to mass market), which started to design capsule collections dedicated to this particular public of users. In the autumn-winter 2015-16, Dolce & Gabbana fashion house decided to dedicate the collection named «Viva la Mamma», the Mommy & Me Capsule, to the Italian mothers with clothes designed for special occasions and inspired by the world of fairy tales and princesses.

A few years earlier in the spring of 2011, Zara, a mass market brand, proposed the Mummy and Me capsule collection of shoes and handbags for Mother’s Day, thinking that every little girl would like to imitate her mom and dress like her. Since then, the collections dedicated to this particular audience, composed by moms interested to dress as their daughters and vice versa, started to become recurrent in fashion brands capsule collections from Dior to H&M almost like a standard one. It’s quite true that children always try to imitate their parents, mom and dad. It’s a common memory for everyone to have tried parents’ accessories or clothes to imitate them for fun, but in the real life it is important to design according to the children needs both for play and for practical functions - body measures, comfort, skills, behaviours and so on. Indeed, children have to be considered children and not small adults.

This trend in fashion design was born with the simple miniaturization of clothes and accessories in adult collections. We can see this, for example, in Armani’s Autumn Winter 2013-14 “Mini Me” collection, where, for the first time, he proposed

the same clothes designed for the women collection also in scale for the children one.

Even before fashion firms started to dedicate ad-hoc capsule collections to the mom-daughter paradigm, around the 2012, some already well-known fashion brands for adults started to propose also kids collections. They took inspiration in adult collections and, according to the new needs of society and the central role of children, in every aspect of parents’ day life. In accordance with this, we can say that the attention to the children’s public has also affected other industrial sectors such as the interior design one. Indeed, many furniture companies have started to scale down famous products such as Philippe Stark’s Lou Lou Ghost chair, produced by Kartell in 2008 or the Vanity Chair of Poltrona Frau company for children.

These miniaturizations do not really take into account the main public/user, the children, but they refer to the adult ones who appreciate the design furniture products that can be placed in their home interiors without altering the aspect in comparison with the most popular products for children on the market. Fortunately, in the last 10 years, the products designed to meet the needs of both children and adults are also spreading, even if slowly, in interior design. We can identify this tendency for example, in Puppy of the collection Me too, from Magis Kids, which is a product for children with anthropomorphic shape that leaves room for kids fantasy and imagination; it is a product that it is possible to define as «not-definitive» and that it is also appreciated by the adults.

At present, in the fashion industry, the mini me and even the fashion kids collections are increasingly seeking to meet the needs of children in relation to their physical conformation, to their abilities and at the same time also to their imagination. According to these values, fashion companies are going back to design clothes and accessories more and more children-centred, even if coordinated with adult collections. Nowadays, among the fashion children companies that took part in the international fashion exhibition called Pitti Bimbo, held in Florence in 2017 and anticipating the trends of summer 2018, well 85 fashion

firms proposed kids collections inspired from one side to men and women collections and from the other to peculiarity of the childrens wear. We can say that the phenomenon of the «mini me for ready-to-wear” clothing arose in Italy, where the value of family within the society is very high since a long time and the importance of the link between mum and daughter/son is considered a paradigm.

This trend is spreading all over the world to testify and to answer the social desire to dedicate more time and attention

to the parents / children relationship. In fact, we can state that with the “mini me” in fashion design approach, as parents are children’s reference models, they can consolidate the relationship with their kids through real life opportunities and common experiences and, at the same time, it is a chance for children to play around by imitating them in the real life. As a conclusion, fashion and the language of clothing has become today a means of communicating the desire of parents and children to spend more time together and at the same time a tool that contributes to this realization.



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DOI: [10.19080/CTFTE.2018.04.555637](https://doi.org/10.19080/CTFTE.2018.04.555637)

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