



Next Level of Y2K Fashion Trend in Aespa "Spicy" Music Video

Shannon Glenda Tenardi¹

¹ School of Design, Universitas Pelita Harapan, Jl. M. H. Thamrin Boulevard 1100 Lippo Village Tangerang 15811, Indonesia
shannon.tenardi@uph.edu

Abstract. The Y2K phenomenon originated from a computer bug that threatened global infrastructure. It symbolized the transition from 1999 to 2000, when systems recorded only the last two digits of the year, causing malfunctions. This crisis evoked mixed emotions, with people envisioning a utopian future infused with advanced technology. This led to the development of Y2K aesthetics, encompassing product design, music genres, visual effects, and fashion trends. The Y2K trend resurged in 2021, embraced by celebrities and luxury brands. Korean fashion also embraced it, featuring low-rise pants, high-waisted skirts, cable-knit sweaters, vibrant colors, and denim-on-denim looks. AESPA, a futuristic K-pop group, incorporated Y2K fashion in their music and videos, further evolving the trend. Their latest release, "Spicy," showcases their distinctive styles as popular high school clique students with Y2K fashion trends on it.

Keywords: Y2k, Fashion Trend, Aespa.

1 Introduction

According to Nabila et al., [1] The Y2K era, also known as the year 2000, was initially associated with a potentially catastrophic technological crisis, the "millennium bug," which threatened to disrupt global infrastructure due to the two-digit year format used in computer systems. This looming threat invoked a mix of apprehension and hope as the world transitioned into the new century. Amidst the uncertainty, people began to envision the future as a utopian realm where advanced technology and endless possibilities in visual culture would reign as mentioned by Chen [2]. This imaginative vision eventually gave rise to what we now recognize as the "Y2K Aesthetics." This encompassing term extends beyond fashion and encompasses product design, music genres, visual effects, and various other aspects of popular culture as mentioned by Yang [3]. Fashion, as a prominent component of this trend, has experienced a rapid resurgence in recent years.

Fashion trends have always been influenced by trends in the past, often evolving into modern styles. The Y2K trend exemplifies this phenomenon, making a notable comeback in 2021, embraced by celebrities and luxury brands alike. According to Allaire [4], notable figures such as Dua Lipa, Bella Hadid, Rihanna, and Hailey Bieber have been spotted wearing Y2K-inspired outfits, infusing them with modern touches.

© The Author(s) 2024

R. Ihwanny and S. Hakim (eds.), *Proceedings of the International Moving Image Cultures Conference (IMOVICCON 2023)*, Atlantis Highlights in Social Sciences, Education and Humanities 20,
https://doi.org/10.2991/978-94-6463-390-0_23

However, the Y2K fashion trend's influence extends beyond Hollywood; it has made a significant impact on the global fashion industry, particularly in Korean fashion trends. Korea has joined Hollywood and global luxury brands in embracing the Y2K trend, with the 2022 spring-summer season collection featuring a range of Y2K-inspired fashion products. Iconic Y2K fashion items such as low-rise pants or skirts, high-waisted pants or skirts, denim shorts, cable-knit sweaters, crop tops, corsets, varsity jackets, tracksuits, vibrant color palettes, and denim-on-denim ensembles have all made a triumphant return as mentioned by Zhilin [5].

According to Lee [6] the influence of Y2K fashion has resonated strongly within the K-pop industry since the 3rd generation idols such as BTS, Blackpink, and Red Velvet. They have embraced and reinvented this nostalgic trend. RM from BTS made a bold statement with a Y2K yellow varsity jacket from Louis Vuitton, highlighting luxury brands' embrace of this style. Blackpink incorporated Y2K miniskirts and chunky shoes in their "Lovesick Girls" performance. Red Velvet modernized Y2K with denim-on-denim ensembles during their "Queendom" performance. These K-pop idols contribute significantly to the revival and evolution of Y2K aesthetics in global fashion.

As stated by Chen [7] Y2K Fashion has also gained more popularity on the 4th generation of KPOP girl groups such as NewJeans, NMIXX, IVE and Aespa. Aespa has embraced the Y2K concept through their unique fusion of 'Avatar X Experience' with 'aspect' in their music and visuals. They initially introduced a futuristic and colorful Y2K style in "Black Mamba" but later transitioned to a modern futuristic theme with darker concepts in subsequent releases like "Savage" and "Girls". In 2022, they continued their Y2K aesthetic with references to iconic 2000 films in the music video for "Life's Too Short,". With each music release, Aespa has introduced distinct elements of Y2K fashion while continually evolving their visual concept as mentioned by Nuranda [8]. However, with subsequent releases like "Savage " and "Girls," they transitioned to a modern futuristic theme with a darker concept. In 2022, Aespa released the dreamy Y2K-themed music video "Life's Too Short," where their Y2K aesthetic incorporated references to iconic 2000 films such as "Mean Girls" and "Clueless" as mentioned by Chakraborty [9].

The year 2023 saw the release of Aespa's music video "Spicy," marking the next level of their Y2K fashion trend evolution. In this video, Aespa's fashion choices have incorporated a pivotal role in defining their unique style. Each member's distinct fashion approach contributes to the overall Y2K aesthetic, making it an ideal subject for closer examination. Aespa's "Spicy" music video takes viewers on a journey through the high school experience with a modern and stylish twist. As the video unfolds, the group's members done a range of Y2K-inspired outfits that not only harken back to the fashion trends of the early 2000s but also infuse them by creating a visual narrative that bridges the gap between past and present as mentioned by Reign [10].

Hence, the aim of this research is to provide answers to the following question:

1. How does Aespa incorporate Y2K fashion items in "Spicy" Music Video?

2. How does Aespa bring incorporation to Y2K Fashion through the clothing of each member in “Spicy” Music Video?

2 Methodology

The methods of study for this journal are qualitative descriptive with a literature review approach. The method of literature review conducts sources from journals, websites, film, music video and other relevant knowledge sources related to specific problems, fields, or theories under discussion of the Y2K Fashion History, Y2K Fashion in Hollywood celebrities, movies and AESPA itself.

Through this process, researchers are able to describe, summarize, and critically evaluate the relevance of the information sources to the problem being investigated. By employing this method, researchers can establish the existing knowledge base, identify gaps in understanding, and contribute to the advancement of scholarly discourse in their chosen area of study as mentioned by Fink [11].

Through reading these academic sources, researchers were able to gain insights, gather information, and critically evaluate the existing knowledge and discourse surrounding Y2K, Y2K Fashion Trends in Iconic Hollywood celebrities movies and daily Y2K street fashion. Through the information, researcher started to analyze the implementation of Y2K fashion in Korean celebrities. However, within this journal, the focus intensifies as researchers delve into the girl group Aespa's "Spicy" music video. This method provided a foundation for the journal, allowing for a comprehensive exploration and discussion of these topics based on established research perspectives.

3 Result

In the comprehensive evaluation of Y2K Fashion showcased in Aespa's music video "Spicy", several distinct characteristics have come to the forefront. Researchers have keenly observed and documented the remarkable parallels that exist between Aespa's fashion selections and the iconic styles prevalent in Hollywood actresses' wardrobes, music videos, movies, and even the everyday Y2K street fashion scene.

Aespa's deliberate embrace of Y2K Fashion within the "Spicy" music video is a nod to a cherished era. It pulsates with the palpable nostalgia of the 2000s, conjuring memories of Hollywood's leading ladies who once graced the silver screen with their trend-setting ensembles. Aespa's members, in their roles as musicians and fashion icons, skillfully blend elements of the past and present in a harmonious fashion choreography. The video's fashion choices resonate deeply with the rebellious spirit of Y2K street fashion, capturing the essence of self-expression and boundary-pushing that defined that era. As they navigate this rich landscape of style, Aespa successfully bridges the gap between the iconic portrayals of Hollywood and the lived experiences of Y2K streets. In doing so, they create a visually captivating language that resonates with fans worldwide.

Aespa's “Spicy” music video thus stands as a compelling testament to the enduring allure of Y2K Fashion and its continuous impact on modern culture. It's a vibrant tapestry woven from the threads of nostalgia, modern, and a profound understanding of

the timeless artistry of fashion. The examination of Y2K fashion elements within Aespa's "Spicy" music video reveals a compelling tribute to the Y2K aesthetic, prominently featured in the video's opening scene. A central focus within this visual narrative is the collective use of tracksuit jackets by the group's members. This choice is particularly remarkable as tracksuit jackets were an emblematic trend of the Y2K era, known for their popularity in the year 2000 according to Allaire [12]. During this era, one standout brand in tracksuits was 'Juicy,' which gained immense popularity among A-List Hollywood figures. This trend reached its zenith in 2001, prominently exemplified by Jennifer Lopez's 'I'm Real' music video. The 'Juicy' tracksuit became an iconic emblem of Y2K fashion, symbolizing a blend of comfort and style.

Aespa's homage to this trend is a testament to their meticulous attention to detail and their commitment to encapsulating the Y2K aesthetic. By incorporating these tracksuit jackets, the group not only pays homage to a specific facet of the Y2K era but also intertwines it with their own modern flair. This fusion illustrates their capacity to transcend time and bridge fashion eras, creating a captivating narrative that resonates with fans and fashion enthusiasts alike. The evolution of the tracksuit trend over the years reflects its enduring appeal and adaptability in the world of fashion. In 2021, Rihanna played a pivotal role in resurrecting this iconic style, confidently sporting Y2K Adidas tracksuits. Her endorsement demonstrated the timeless allure of this fashion staple, sparking a revival of interest. Fast-forward to 2023, and we witness Aespa's members taking the tracksuit trend to new heights with a noteworthy twist. They opted for CELINE tracksuits that ingeniously fused elements of both Jennifer Lopez's velour Y2K tracksuits and Rihanna's modern selections. This fusion of influences goes beyond mere aesthetics; it forms a captivating visual narrative that speaks to a distinctive blend of Y2K nostalgia and modern flair.

The CELINE tracksuits worn by Aespa offer a captivating fusion of Y2K aesthetics. Within these tracksuits, the vibrant Y2K color palettes that embrace Jennifer Lopez's era with design influences drawn from Rihanna's modern choices. Aespa's CELINE tracksuits symbolize fashion trends that can adapt and incorporate from past fashion trends to today while preserving their intrinsic charm. Aespa has worn CELINE tracksuits that combine characteristics from both JLO and Rihanna's tracksuit designs. They incorporate the white color and short length characteristic of JLO's tracksuits, as well as the stripes and collar design inspired by Rihanna's tracksuits.

Upon closer examination of Aespa member Karina's tops, it becomes evident that they bear a striking resemblance to the Y2K fashion trend, particularly the "Crop Tops" that were prevalent in the early 2000s. The crop tops worn by Karina exude a distinct Y2K vibe, reminiscent of designs seen on Fergie in 2004 and Ariana Grande in 2019. Notably, Ariana Grande's ensemble was itself inspired by the 2000 movie "Mean Girls," showcasing how fashion trends have a cyclical nature. Karina also incorporates the iconic blonde Mean Girl hairstyle from the iconic movies. In contrast, Aespa's Winter embraces the "Tank Top" trend, reminiscent of Britney Spears' 1999 music video and Dua Lipa's 2021 Y2K street fashion. Her tank tops mirror the color scheme of Spears' "Baby One More Time" video and feature strap designs akin to Dua Lipa's. This fusion highlights Y2K fashion's timeless allure. Furthermore, Winter even incorporates the

same choker, the black shawl design as worn by Dua Lipa, seamlessly blending elements of the past with modern style.

Beyond their designs, Karina and Winter's outfits wholeheartedly embrace the Y2K color trend. The vibrant Hot Pink hue, in particular, takes center stage, creating a cohesive and visually engaging aesthetic. Winter's top and the chunky Y2K-style shoes she does, showcase this bold and lively color, further emphasizing the group's commitment to channeling the essence of the Y2K era. Overall, Aespa's meticulous selection of tops not only pays homage to the Y2K fashion trend but also highlights the cyclical nature of fashion, where iconic styles from the past resurface with a modern twist. Karina and Winter's outfits serve as visual testaments to the enduring allure of Y2K fashion, demonstrating how this trend continues to captivate and inspire fashion enthusiasts across different generations.

However, the vibrant Hot Pink hue isn't limited to Winter's top and chunky Y2K-style shoes. It also makes a prominent appearance in Karina's headbands and miniskirts. This striking color isn't exclusive to Karina either; other Aespa members like Giselle and Winter also embrace this trend. These short skirts, often referred to as "Y2K Mini Skirts" or micro miniskirts, were popularized in iconic 2000s movies such as "Mean Girls" and "Clueless." These micro miniskirts, which were a staple of high school fashion, frequently featured distinctive patterns or shades of pink, further enhancing the Y2K authenticity of Aespa's skirts. In a separate but equally captivating fashion choice, Aespa's Ningning offers a modern take on the classic "Denim on Denim" Y2K trend by incorporating it into her shorts. Ningning incorporates short designs inspired by Clueless movies and recent Hailey Bieber Y2K Fashion in 2021 Vogue. This innovative interpretation of the trend showcases the group's ability to infuse timeless Y2K elements with modern touches, exemplifying their prowess in revitalizing fashion trends from the past.

Aespa's fashion choices showcase their mastery of blending nostalgia with modern sensibilities while paying homage to Y2K trends. They adeptly embrace iconic elements such as sporty and fashionable tracksuits, nostalgic yet modern tank top designs, micro mini skirts, and denim-on-denim styling. The group's ability to seamlessly incorporate these Y2K-inspired elements into their wardrobe demonstrates not only their understanding of fashion history but also their skill in adapting it to modern tastes. The tracksuits, reminiscent of the Y2K era's athletic chic, exude both nostalgia and a sense of current fashion relevance. Their tank tops, drawing inspiration from Y2K Hollywood's icons like Britney Spears and Dua Lipa, strike a perfect balance between retro and modern aesthetics. Moreover, Aespa's inclusion of micro miniskirts, a hallmark of high school fashion during the early 2000s, and their innovative take on denim-on-denim ensembles, underline their commitment to revitalizing Y2K trends.

4 Discussion

In response through the analysis, AESPA has once again demonstrated their exceptional ability to incorporate the iconic Y2K fashion trend. Their meticulous curation and flaw-

less integration of various fashion elements have resulted in a seamless merge of futuristic and modern Y2K styles. This masterful combination created iconic high school films of the 2000s, effectively transporting the viewer to a realm of Nostalgia Teenage High School Movies. What's particularly impressive is how each member of the group skillfully employs distinct Y2K combinations, infusing their own unique personality into the trend. This creative approach combined with the unifying touch of Y2K-inspired tracksuit jackets, weaves a visual narrative that bridges different eras and aesthetics. Through their incorporation approach to stylization, AESPA has thoughtfully combined and harmonized Y2K elements within modern wardrobes. In doing so, AESPA's impact on the Y2K fashion revival lies in their ability to transform nostalgia into a modern visual language. Their meticulous attention to detail is evident in every aspect of their style, from clothing to accessories to hairstyle choices. This dedication to perfection is a testament to the group's commitment to delivering an authentic Y2K experience.

AESPA's journey within the Y2K fashion incorporation isn't merely about mimicking the past; it's about reimagining it. Their fashion choices effectively blur the lines between eras, creating a fusion that speaks to both the familiarity of Y2K aesthetics of today's fashion scene. The Y2K tracksuit jackets adopted by AESPA are symbolic of their commitment to bridging the generational gap in fashion. These jackets serve as a connective thread, tying together the essence of the 2000s with the sensibilities of the present day. In doing so, AESPA has created a visual narrative that transcends time, allowing fans and fashion enthusiasts alike to embark on a journey that spans across decades, all within the confines of a single ensemble. AESPA's influence extends far beyond their music and fashion; it's a cultural phenomenon. Their ability to seamlessly blend elements from different decades has sparked a renewed interest in vintage fashion. Aespa's incorporation of their own style has become a symbol of creative freedom and self-expression, inspiring a new generation of fashion enthusiasts to embrace the Y2K aesthetic with confidence.

5 Conclusion

In this new phase of fashion, Korean Y2K Fashion has showcased an understanding of how to incorporate elements of the past and present. Through “Spicy” music video AESPA has encapsulated a harmonious blend of iconic Y2K features, including tracksuits, glossy textures, and daringly vibrant pink color palettes. These stylistic choices not only evoke reminiscence of an era gone by but also establish a unique visual identity for the group. Their hairstyles, makeup, and accessories all contribute cohesively to the Y2K aesthetic, demonstrating a meticulous attention to detail. AESPA's incorporate Y2K modern Hollywood fashion with Iconic High School and Hollywood movies in 2000. They incorporate accessories that represent teenage high school students such as, black shawl choker, headband, ribbon and glasses. They achieve an image of fashionable and edgy teenage high school students with Y2K fashion style. Meanwhile, the other 4th generation of KPOP girl group such as NewJeans, NMIXX and IVE have

their own interpretation through the Y2K fashion trend in each of their music video and stage comeback.

NewJeans has the characteristics of Y2K Fashion trends through vibrant and colorful tops and pants or skirts incorporated with chunky flip flops and heels. The difference between Aespa is their inspiration comes from 90s-00s iconic animated movies "Powerpuff Girl". The group manages to encapsulate the trend of the 2000s while simultaneously infusing it with a modern fun and colorful girly twist. Furthermore, NMIXX in their comeback music video "Young, Dumb Stupid" has implemented the Y2K fashion trend through crop tops and Jersey incorporated with baggy ripped jeans to create a sporty, fun and playful approach. This approach is quite similar to Giselle Aespa Tops in Spicy Music Video that represent her as sporty. On the other hand, the difference lies in how each member in Aespa could incorporate their style characteristics rather than unifying all of the garments from their members with the similar outfit.

Moreover, IVE also has accomplished a Y2K Fashion style through their music video "Kitsch". They incorporate a varsity jacket and mini skirt with a twist of rock and roll. Rock and Roll twist through a patch and accent of chain in their skirt. In conclusion, the trajectory of the Y2K fashion trend's evolution finds a captivating example in Korean Fashion. Their ability to weave nostalgia into modernity, and their dedication to detail all contribute to a compelling case study of how fashion trends can be revitalized. As the fashion world continues to seek unique incorporation, Aespa stands as one of the creative girl groups combining Y2K Fashion. They incorporated Y2K fashion from 2000s Iconic Hollywood Movies and stars with a modern and nostalgic approach.

References

1. Nabila, R., Rahmawaty, D., Magdalena, R., Kusmayadi, T., Syamsiah, S., Vincent.: Fashion Collection Inspired By The Y2K Bug in the Year 2000. *Jurnal Desain –Kajian Penelitian Bidang Desain*, 2(2), 318-329 (2022)
2. Chen, C., Zhao M. (2021). Analysis on the Characteristics of "Y2K" Clothing Style and Its Style Return. *West Leather* (19), 55-56 (2021)
3. Yang, X.: Retro futurism: The resurgence of Y2K style in the fashion field. *SHS Web of Conferences*, 167, p.1–3. <https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/202316702003> (2023)
4. Allaire, C.: Like it or not, Gaudy Y2K style is roaring back. *Vogue*. <https://www.vogue.com/article/y2k-style-celebrity-runway-trend>, 2021/07/26
5. Zhilin.: Korean Fashion Trend Alert: The Y2K Aesthetic is making a comeback in spring/Summer 2022. *InkiStyle*. <https://inkistyle.com/korean-fashion-trend-alert-y2k-spring-summer-2022/>, 2022/05/22
6. Lee, S.: Y2K style is back – here are 7 K-pop looks to inspire your 'fits. *Soompi*, 2022/03/04
7. Chen, Y.: Exploring the Style of Korean Girl Group NewJeans in the Context of Contemporary Consumerism. *SHS Web of Conferences*, 174, p.03024. *EDP Sciences* (2023)
8. Nuranda, D. R.: Idola K-Pop dan dualisme alter ego: Analisis Resepsi Audiens K-Pop Indonesia terhadap girl group Aespa. *Universitas Gadjah Mada*. <http://etd.repository.ugm.ac.id/penelitian/detail/210919> (2022)
9. Chakraborty, R.: Watch Aespa's dreamy Y2K-themed "Life's too short" video. *Rolling Stone India*, 2022/06/24

10. Reign, J.: AESPA defines “Spicy” with gorgeous comeback concept photos. allkpop. <https://www.allkpop.com/article/2023/05/aesp-de-fines-spicy-with-gorgeous-comeback-concept-photos>, 2023/05/07
11. Fink, A.: *Conducting Research Literature Reviews*. SAGE Publications (2014)
12. Allaire, C.: Juicy Couture is back! 10 superfans on why they can’t quit the Tracksuit. *Vogue*, 2020/11/2
13. Bae, S., Y., Kim, B., Y., Park, H.J.: Y2K fashion pictorial styling utilizing the playfulness of Kitsch. *Fashion & New Media* (2022)
14. SMTOWN.: Artist. Music Nation SMTOWN. <https://www.smtown.com/artist/musician/10766> (2021)
15. Ye-eun, J.: Gen Z fuels Y2K fashion revival. *The Korea Herald*. <https://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20220422000649>, 2022/04/22

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter’s Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter’s Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

