

Chair Design Preferences of Indonesian Millennials: A Study of Carl Hansen & Son Furniture and Design Recommendations

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ABSTRACT

The development of global furniture trends has increased public interest in Scandinavian furniture design, particularly among Indonesian millennials who prioritize aesthetics, simplicity, and functionality in interior products. Carl Hansen & Son is recognized as one of the leading Scandinavian furniture manufacturers, known for its minimalist and timeless chair designs. However, differences in cultural preferences, lifestyle, and ergonomic needs indicate the necessity of adapting Scandinavian furniture characteristics to Indonesian users. This study analyzes the design preferences of Indonesian millennials toward Carl Hansen & Son chair products and develops design recommendations based on the findings. The research employed a descriptive qualitative approach supported by quantitative questionnaire data collected from 50 respondents aged 22–40 years, examining preferences regarding chair form, material, color, finishing, and functionality. The results indicate that Indonesian millennials prefer simple and modern forms, natural wood materials, neutral colors, and multifunctional furniture concepts that support contemporary urban lifestyles. Based on these findings, the study proposes several chair design alternatives that combine Scandinavian design principles with the preferences and characteristics of Indonesian users. The research contributes to the development of adaptive furniture design strategies for the Indonesian market while maintaining the design identity of Scandinavian modern furniture.

KEYWORDS

Carl Hansen & Son
Millennial preference
Scandinavian
furniture
Ergonomics

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1. Introduction

Planning and design in architecture and interiors continue to evolve alongside advances in technology, visible in the steady emergence of new design concepts and innovations responding to client needs. Solving design problems has kept pace with the times as human needs grow increasingly diverse, complex, and specific. Furniture is one such solution within interior space, and seating furniture in particular is a design element that must be shaped carefully to accommodate its users' sitting needs, with numerous factors to consider when designing chairs and other seating.

Technological advances have also broadened the processes and techniques available for chair and seating design. Hans J. Wegner is one of the most influential figures in this field: his designs are simple yet highly functional, giving his chairs a more iconic status than many competing brands. Carl Hansen & Son (hereafter CHS) is one of the companies holding rights to produce Wegner's chairs, carrying forward the sleek, light, and durable character of Danish design across a wide range of materials and finishes. This positioning is consistent with what brand research identifies as the core value drivers of heritage luxury brands—timelessness, craftsmanship, and prestige—values that consumers across different age groups consistently associate with brands built on a long design lineage rather than short-term trends (Halwani, 2019).

CHS is currently better known among senior architects and design professionals, a pattern closely tied to their clients' openness to and purchasing power for premium goods. When clients can afford high-

quality products, architects are able to offer well-known branded options, and clients with greater purchasing power tend to be more open to a wider range of brand choices. This pattern is not universal, however, as a considerable number of designers remain aware of established brands like CHS without having explored them in depth, often due to ongoing constraints on project funding. Part of what makes a brand like CHS legible to designers and clients alike is how consistently its heritage is communicated visually—through consistent brand symbols, product legacy, and reference to its own history of craftsmanship—a mechanism shown to meaningfully shape how consumers read and evaluate heritage brands in visual, image-driven contexts (Butcher & Pecot, 2022).

The millennial generation has now reached working and purchasing age, with many established in professional careers, and CHS is seeking to reach this wider market—particularly in Indonesia—amid the broad flow and openness of information that characterizes this generation. Millennial communities in developing countries represent a distinct and increasingly important segment for luxury and premium brands: their consumption patterns have been shown to meaningfully support the economic development of the countries in which they live, motivating international brands to understand local market conditions in order to attract millennial consumers specifically (Kang et al., 2022). This dynamic is echoed closely in the Indonesian context, where recent research finds that Indonesian millennials increasingly regard luxury and premium purchases as a form of investment, and place particular weight on symbolic and financial value alongside self-identity—rather than exclusivity alone—when forming brand preferences (Sun et al. 2024).

This research was therefore carried out to examine the CHS market in Indonesia, with particular attention to the millennial generation. Conducted in collaboration with Carl Hansen & Son Indonesia, the study evaluates various chair types, material choices, and finishing options in order to draw conclusions about the composition and combination of CHS products best suited to millennial consumers, particularly in Indonesia.

2. Method

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach, supported by quantitative questionnaire data—a design suited to research aiming to understand a social phenomenon from the perspective of its participants rather than to test a fixed hypothesis (Sugiyono, 2018). This approach fits the nature of the research problem: understanding how Indonesian millennials perceive and prefer CHS chair products is a matter of interpreting user perspectives, not measuring a predetermined set of variables in isolation. The object of this research is Carl Hansen & Son, a Danish furniture manufacturer, examined here specifically in relation to market interest among Indonesian millennial consumers.

Data collection proceeded in two stages. The first involved gathering brand and product data directly from CHS, covering chair types, materials, and finishing options currently available. The second involved distributing a structured questionnaire to millennial and Gen Z respondents to capture their design preferences across the same dimensions—form, material, color, finishing, and functionality. Combining company-sourced product data with respondent-sourced preference data allowed the two datasets to be read against each other, a form of data triangulation intended to strengthen the precision and credibility of the resulting analysis (Sugiyono 2014). This pairing of qualitative and quantitative data collection within a single study is consistent with established mixed-methods research design, which treats quantitative and qualitative approaches as complementary rather than competing ways of answering a research question (Dawadi et al., 2021).

Data were accordingly separated into two categories: primary data, collected directly through the questionnaire, and secondary data, drawn from CHS reference materials and relevant literature. Questionnaire responses were analyzed and cross-referenced against this secondary data to identify consistent preference patterns across the sample, which in turn informed the chair design recommendations presented in the Results and Discussion. Beyond the design recommendations themselves, this analysis is intended to help industry stakeholders identify which products carry the strongest market potential for the specified age group, supporting more targeted promotional strategy—an application consistent with the broader principle that promotional media effectiveness depends on how precisely it is matched to a defined target market (Schneider, 2011).

3. Results

3.1 Mapping and Determination Variable

In this research, the object used as a sample is product selected from Carl Hansen who already own market potential in Indonesia, indicators from the potential is object products that have familiarity, favorite products and materials based on results statistics sale the most in previous years as informed by Carl Hansen. There is three category Products that are quite well known by the Indonesian people are single chairs, single sofas and long sofas. The single chair product was selected from Carl Hansen in this research are:

- Whisbone Chair (CH24)
- Elbow Chair (CH20)
- Chair (CH46)
- Chair (CH23)
- Chair (CH88)

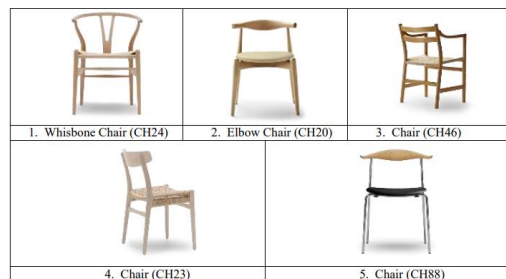


Fig. 1. Single Chair Variations in Research

The selected single sofa products from Carl Hansen in this research are :

- Lounge Chair (CH25)
- Wing Chair (CH445)
- Colonial Chair (OW149)



Fig. 2. Single Sofa Variations in Research

The selected long sofa products from Carl Hansen in this research are :

- Sofa (OW602)
- Embrace Sofa (E300)
- Colonial Sofa (OW149-2)



Fig. 3. Long Sofa Variations in Research

Stand CHS chairs use a variety type of material. Prospective buyers can also choose a custom list of types along with the colors and patterns desired in the design available products . This research also limits several types of materials available by selecting materials that are more available characteristics products that have been known to its users . As for the seat material selected from Carl Hansen in this research are :

- Paper Cord : Natural and Black Colors
- Leather : Sif Pure Aniline, Thor, Loke, Saddle, Cowhide
- Fabric : Canvas, Fiord, Hallingdal
- Flag Halyard : Natural and Black Colors
- Edging Strip : White and Natural Colors

In the production process Carl Hansen products use four type of wood material as the main material the chair . These four materials are also variables in the research for consideration potential users . Following is type wood owned by Carl Hansen:

- Ash : Long fiber, The fibers are visible & touchable even when painted, White-ish color
- Oak : Shorter fiber than Ash, The fibers are visible & touchable even when painted, The Heaviest Deep Yellow-ish color
- Beech : Shorter fiber than Oak, Smooth surface, The fibers will not visible if painted or lacquered, Pink-ish color
- Walnut : Wide color range, Irregular wood which difficult to foresee the wood color before-opening the log, Deep brown-is

Carl Hansen also has a finish that gives a specific appearance to the material the chair has Lots choice color . Choice the finishing color also becomes interest separately for candidates the buyer , so variant Finishing color is also a variable in the research . As for variants Finishing colors are as follows :



Fig. 4. Finishing Color Variations in Research

3.2 Questionnaire Results

Distributed questionnaires aimed at the target generation millennials with age between 26-41 years old who were born in 1980-1995. As for the presentation method questions to make it easy understood by respondents through selection answers accompanied by picture illustrations that are variables in the research . Number of respondents recorded is as many as 50 respondents . As for questions questionnaire submitted is covers the following topics :

- Type of wood material
- Color variants finishing
- Material variants on the stand
- Design variants chair selected
- Single Sofa design variant
- Long Sofa design variant

Based on results questionnaire show that many types of wood material chosen by generations millennials as respondents is *Oak (Shorter fiber than Ash, The fibers are visible & touchable even when painted*

, *The Heaviest, Deep Yellow- ish color*) as much as 52%. In second position is *Beech (Shorter fibers than Oak, Smoothsurface , The fibers will not be visible if painted or lacquered, Pink -ish color)* by 21%, third There is *Ash (Long fiber, The fibers are visible & touchable even when painted, White- ish color)* by 19%. Lowest is *Walnut (Wide color range, Irregularwood which is difficult to see the woodcolor before-opening the log, Deepbrown-ish)* by 8%.

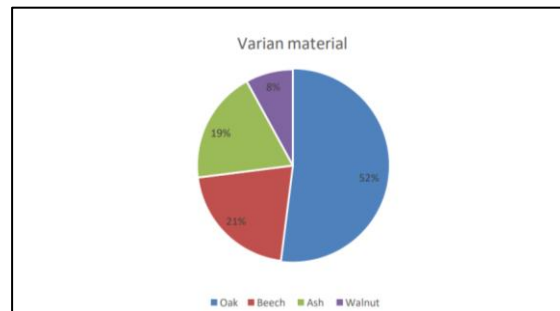


Fig. 5. Carl Hansen and Son Wood Material Variant Questionnaire Results

Meanwhile, in variants finishing color based results lots of questionnaires chosen by generations millennial was the highest 44% selected is Soft white, the highest second is Soft Black at 30%, rating third 15 % is soft green , the remaining 11% choose soft red, gray and blue.

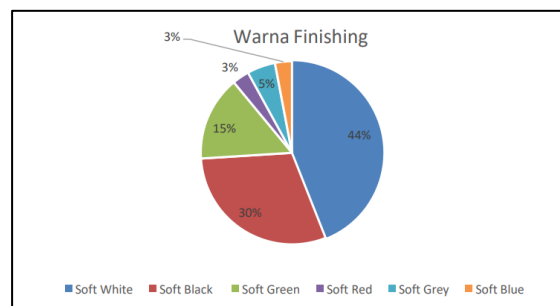


Fig. 6. Carl Hansen and Son Finishing Color Variant Questionnaire Results

If on the results questionnaire about material variant on the stand , highest position are leather and fabric with a percentage of 26% each, the highest both respondents chose Edging Strip at 22%, the highest third is a paper chord at 16%, then the lowest position is Flag Halyard material of 10% which is not Lots chosen by the respondent .

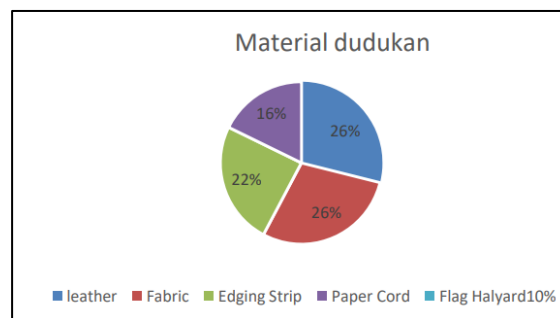


Fig. 7. Carl Hansen and Son Seat Material Variant Questionnaire Results

On measurements next respondents asked to choose design chair typical Carl Hansen's character has been selected according to company needs . The results show that ranking highest choice generation millennial is CHAIR (CH23). Based on results of interviews with respondents who chose this design , the average respondent convey that form it feels more clean, light , modern, however Still own character typical tropical where Indonesia is on the hemisphere earth temperate tropical .

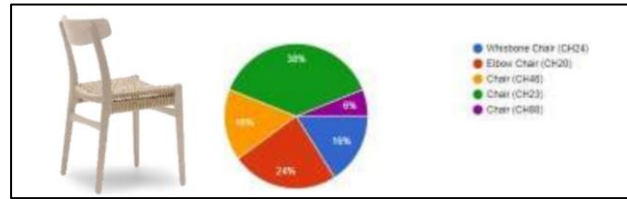


Fig. 8. Chair Carl Hansen and Son's Choice Questionnaire Results

Next is the respondent asked to choose typical single sofa design Carl Hansen's character has been selected according to company needs. The results show that ranking highest design chosen by generations millennial is a lounge chair (CH25) for 56% of total respondents. Based on interviews with respondents The single sofa design gives a more natural impression from the seat material woven into the sofa frame from solid wood with impressive natural finishing materials experience highlight texture and fiber wood. The character of the material and design is deemed appropriate for the environment temperate tropical like in Indonesia.

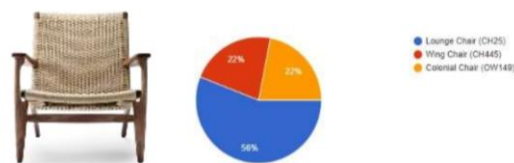


Fig. 9. Carl Hansen and Son Single Sofa Choice Questionnaire Results

In the final stage of the respondent asked to choose several designs selected from a long sofa owned by Carl Hansen. The results show that long sofa design with code E300 named Embrace Sofa occupy ranking highest by the respondents generation millennial between other long sofa designs. According to respondents, this long sofa design looks the most comfortable among the others because character The thick seat and finish impress gentle. Apart from that, this long sofa is modular and can be divided into two different lengths when separated, so Users can adjust to the current room layout needs arrange furniture in the interior.



Fig. 10. Carl Hansen and Son Long Sofa Choice Questionnaire Results

3.3 Object Analysis Study

Has been curated product trade Carl Hansen, curation process products also have validated by Carl Hansen that products The selected ones are product brand representative. Stages The analysis is carried out by validating several products to candidates consumer Carl Hansen, which in this case is interior designers, and interior design students in the final stages. The sample is assessed Already own knowledge about popular furniture objects so that already familiar with Carl Hansen products, so own objectivity in choosing considered product own Power pull high in the Indonesian market, especially in the segment generation millennials and Z.

After doing stages mapping and determination variable, and do it questionnaire related interest potential customers towards product trade Carl Hansen with specified variables so obtained results questionnaire related interest Colun customer towards type of wood material, color of finishing material, material of components stand, design product chairs, one sofa seat, and long sofa. From these results, initiation is carried out design with motivation to meet the target market generation millennials and Z.

Initiation The design carried out aims to offer recommendation design product trade to Carl Hansen regarding generational markets millennials and Z. With results questionnaire addressed New data is obtained from the target market which can be used as a reference design new things related to their interests. Taken one sample classification product Carl Hansen's trade as a basic reference,

namely product design chair . Product design chair selected as the object design because familiarity potential customers towards product most Carl Hansen trades is on the object design chair .

3.4 Results of Design Initiation

Leave from he decided object design selected based on previous analysis , object design chair used as a sample design new for the generation Z and millennial market in Indonesia. Object design seat with code The Wishbone Chair (CH23) product is used as the basic object initiation practice new furniture design . Design activity The main thing to do is replace existing materials with materials decided by the respondent , and adjust shape with options respondents . The new value offered by this design is Dining chairs made of oak wood with textures and patterns highlighted veins . Target market segment is practitioner design , architect with residential work projects group upper middle class with hope These designers and architects use CHS products in their projects . Following is results the design .



Fig. 11. Final Design Results

From the basic shape of the wishbone chair , initiation is carried out design with results like the image above. The changes made are: adjustment of wood material and finishing using Oak wood material with finishing oil. Change second found in the use of material in the holder which uses paper cord. In terms of form chair , the changes made are in the shape backrest becomes flatter with sharper corners However still circle to guard visual familiarity with character Carl Hansen products, the second is in addition component design , namely arm rest. Add arm rest components that are connected to the front and rear leg components with the aim of distributing heavy burden on component structure.

4. Conclusion

Carl Hansen & Son offers an extensive product range that is well known within the furniture industry, but this recognition is concentrated primarily among design practitioners—interior designers and architects—rather than among end users directly. In practice, CHS products are rarely purchased directly by the people who ultimately use them; instead, they are selected and proposed by designers and architects on behalf of their clients within architectural and interior design projects. This positions practitioners, not consumers, as CHS's effective gatekeepers to the Indonesian market. Despite the brand's established reputation, awareness of CHS remains constrained by its price tier, distinctive design language, and overall brand image—constraints that have limited its reach specifically among millennial and Gen Z designers and architects, many of whom have not yet found a clear point of relevance between CHS products and the kind of work they produce. This research set out to establish that relevance from the standpoint of visual interest, examining how younger practitioners respond to CHS's products, materials, and finishing options, through three linked stages: mapping and determining the relevant product and material variables, distributing a preference questionnaire to a millennial and Gen Z sample, and translating the resulting findings into a concrete design recommendation for CHS.

The findings show that specific furniture components are consistently favored by millennial and Gen Z respondents, and that these preferences can be meaningfully translated into new product development. Using the Wishbone Chair (CH24) as a base design reference, this study demonstrates that targeted adjustments and additions to existing components—rather than an entirely new design—are sufficient to align an established CHS product with younger practitioners' preferences, an approach consistent with how heritage furniture brands are understood to sustain relevance across different consumer age groups without abandoning the design lineage that defines their identity in the first place (Halwani 2019). This also supports the broader premise raised in the Introduction that younger consumers in emerging markets

increasingly evaluate premium purchases through a lens of enduring, investment-like value rather than novelty alone (Sun et al. 2024)—a framing that a heritage-preserving, incrementally adapted design serves well.

Reflecting on the resulting design and its position within the broader Indonesian furniture market, several strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats emerge as considerations for future development. On the strength side, the wood selected meets minimum age standards, yielding low moisture content and therefore a lighter, more durable material, sourced from forests holding green certification, while the design itself preserves a minimalist, elegant Scandinavian character recognized for its timeless production quality and refined joinery details. These strengths come with corresponding trade-offs: the materials used are prone to damage when stored outdoors, limiting the design to indoor use; wood material costs remain relatively high; production costs, including shipping, are substantial; and the resulting high price point narrows the design's appeal to a specific market segment rather than a mass audience. Set against these constraints is a clear opportunity, in that the wood material itself is readily available in the market at an affordable price, and once crafted into a finished chair, commands a comparatively high resale value—suggesting room for the design to be produced and positioned profitably despite its cost base. At the same time, an ongoing threat lies in the material's inherent vulnerability to rot, termite damage, and mold, which requires proper, consistent care and storage practices to protect the value the design otherwise offers.

Taken together, these considerations suggest that the recommended design offers a viable, brand-consistent path for CHS to engage the millennial and Gen Z segment in Indonesia, provided that future development accounts for the material and cost trade-offs identified here—an appropriate basis for continued research and refinement.

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