

Yasmina E. Zaki

PhD CANDIDATE (S U B M I T T E D , V I V A P E N D I N G)

Lecturer in Digital Media & Programme Coordinator
Researcher in Marketing, Branding, Digital Media & Design Pedagogy

University College of Bahrain, Communication & Multimedia Department

Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain I +973 3322 8923 I yasminazaki7@gmail.com
ORCID 0000-0002-2100-2895 | Google Scholar | dryasminazaki.com | LinkedIn

I research how immersive digital environments reshape the relationship between brands and consumers. My primary stream examines metaverse marketing strategies — branded NFTs, XR gamification and immersive retail — and the mediating role of virtual brand experience in consumer-based brand equity in fashion. A second, connected stream investigates creative and design pedagogy in digital higher education, focusing on assessment, feedback and the evaluation of digital creativity. My work has appeared in Emerald and Springer outlets and has been presented at the University of Cambridge and across the Gulf. This stream is grounded in my teaching as Lecturer in Digital Media and Programme Coordinator at University College of Bahrain, supervise final-year digital media projects, and lead curriculum development in Digital Media. Alongside this I maintain an active graphic design practice in brand identity, visual communication and experience design for clients.

RESEARCH PROFILE

TOTAL PUBLICATIONS	JOURNAL ARTICLES	SPRINGER BOOK CHAPTERS	CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS	CITATIONS H INDEX	CITATIONS H INDEX	CITATIONS I 10 INDEX
17	9	8	9	6	6	5

RESEARCH METRICS

EDUCATION ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

PhD in Marketing and Branding submitted, viva pending

Brunel University of London, Department of Business Management

Thesis Title: The Impact of Metaverse Marketing Strategies on Brand Equity in the Fashion Industry: The Role of Brand Experience as a Mediating Variable.

2023 - 2026

Supervisors: Dr Meng-Shan Wu, Prof. Dorothy Yen, Dr Alalam.

Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (AFHEA)

Advance HE, United Kingdom — Fellowship ref. PR314222, conferred 9 July 2025

2025

Recognised against the UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and learning support in higher education.

MA in Communication, specializing in Visual Communication and Graphic

University of Bahrain GPA 3.82 / 4.00

2017 - 2020

Thesis: The Role of Bahraini Governmental Mobile Applications in Motivating Public Usage.

BA in Communication, specializing in Electronic Communication

University of Bahrain GPA 3.86 / 4.00

2013 - 2017

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Lecturer in Digital Media and Programme Coordinator

Communication and Multimedia Department, University College of Bahrain

2021 - present

Lecturer in Digital Media (part-time)

Department of Art and Design, University of Bahrain

2021 - 2022

PEER- REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

9 Zaki, Y. E., & Wu, M.-S. S. (2026). Examining the mediating role of virtual brand experience between metaverse marketing strategies and consumer-based brand equity in the fashion industry. Journal of Business and Socio-economic Development, 6(3), 233–252. Emerald. SCOPUS · EMERALD
doi.org/10.1108/JBSED-10-2025-0471

8 Al Hashimi, S., Abuelainin, H., **Zaki, Y**., & Ghurbal, M. (2023). Evaluating the pedagogical usability of learning management systems in art and design educational settings. The International Journal of Design Education, 18(1), 1–23.
doi.org/10.18848/2325-128X/CGP/v18i01/1-23

7 Al Hashimi, S., Alamarat, Y. I., & **Zaki, Y.** (2022). Students' perceptions of online assessment, feedback practices, and challenges. International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education (IJERE). SCOPUS
https://doi.org/10.11591/ijere.v11i4.22753

6 Al Hashimi, S., Alamarat, Y., & **Zaki, Y.** (2022). Art and design assessment and feedback practices in the online classroom in higher education. The International Journal of Assessment and Evaluation, 29(1), 67–87.
doi.org/10.18848/2327-7920/CGP/v29i01/67-87

5 Al Hashimi, S., Alamarat, Y., & **Zaki,** Y. The role of creative app interface and UX design as a critical factor in enhancing technopreneurial innovation and improving tech start-ups' success rates. The International Journal of Design Management and Professional Practice, 17(1), 19–38.
The role of creative app interface and UX design as a critical factor in enhancing

4 Al Hashimi, S., Gharbi, K., Mahdi, N., **Zaki, Y**., & Al Muwali, A. (2022). The role of support organizations in Bahrain in enhancing nascent techpreneurial growth and innovation: A multiple-case study analysis of innovative Bahraini tech start-ups. International Journal of Entrepreneurship, 26(3), 1–30.
abacademies.org — publisher record

3 Al Hashimi, S., **Zaki, Y.**, Al Muwali, A., & Mahdi, N. (2021). The role of nurturing technopreneurship education and building university students' entrepreneurial mindsets and skill sets in fostering digital innovation and augmenting the tech start-up ecosystem in Bahrain. International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research, 20(6), 152–173. doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.20.6.8

2 Al Hashimi, S., Al Muwali, A., **Zaki, Y**., & Mahdi, N. (2019). The effectiveness of social media and multimedia-based pedagogy in enhancing creativity among art, design, and digital media students. International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (iJET), 14(21), 176–190. SCOPUS https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v14i21.10596

1 Al Hashimi, S., Mahdi, N., Al Muwali, A., & **Zaki, Y**. (2019). Proposing a framework for evaluating digital creativity in social media and multimedia-based art and design education. Global Journal of Arts Education, 9(2), 48–62. doi.org/10.18844/gjae.v9i2.4238

BOOK CHAPTERS

8 **Zaki, Y.**, Bukhari, S., Sharif, M., & Alsharabi, H. (2026). Understanding the metaverse: Definition, boundaries, and distinctions from virtual reality. In R. K. Hamdan (Ed.), Integrating Big Data and IoT for Enhanced Decision-Making Systems in Business (pp. 571–581). Springer, Cham. SCOPUS doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-97609-4_49

7 Bukhari, S., Khan, M. S., **Zaki, Y.**, Mohammed, M. M., & Wasel, K. Z. A. (2026). Is it intelligent influence or strategic disruption? Public relations and AI in Bahrain. In R. K. Hamdan (Ed.), Integrating Big Data and IoT for Enhanced Decision-Making Systems in Business (pp. 147–155). Springer, Cham. SCOPUS doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-97609-4_13

6 Thomas, J. J., & **Zaki, Y**. (2025). Exploring the potential of electrochemical sensors in precision agriculture for Bahrain. In A. Hamdan (Ed.), Integrating Artificial Intelligence, Security for Environmental and Business Sustainability (pp. 1023–1034). Springer. SCOPUS doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-91424-9_89

5 **Zaki, Y**., & Juma, M. (2025). Sustainability in the metaverse: Exploring the role of brands and consumers. In B. Alareeni (Ed.), Big Data in Finance: Transforming the Financial Landscape (Studies in Big Data, Vol. 169). Springer, Cham. SCOPUS doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-80656-8_48

4 **Zaki, Y**., Wu, M.-S., Hamdan, A., & Alsharabi, H. (2024). A conceptual framework for metaverse marketing strategies in the fashion industry: Exploring the role of brand experience and brand equity. In B. Alareeni & I. Elgedawy (Eds.), Opportunities and Risks in AI for Business Development (Studies in Systems, Decision and Control, Vol. 545). Springer, Cham. SCOPUS doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-65203-5_28

3 **Zaki, Y.,** Wu, M.-S., & Hamdan, A. (2024). Exploring the integration of the metaverse for marketing and branding in organizational frameworks. In A. Hamdan & A. Harraf (Eds.), Business Development via AI and Digitalization (Studies in Systems, Decision and Control, Vol. 538). Springer, Cham. SCOPUS doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-62102-4_20

2 **Zaki, Y.,** Wu, M.-S., Hamdan, A., & Thomas, J. (2024). Fashion brands in the metaverse: Redefining digital marketing and branding landscapes. In A. Hamdan & A. Harraf (Eds.), Business Development via AI and Digitalization (Studies in Systems, Decision and Control, Vol. 538). Springer, Cham. SCOPUS doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-62102-4_19

1 Al Hashimi, S., **Zaki, Y**., Al Muwali, A., & Mahdi, N. (2019). Infusing creativity and technology through repurposing existing digital tools and social media apps for educational purposes. In ArtsIT, Interactivity and Game Creation / Design, Learning and Innovation (LNICST). Springer, Cham. SCOPUS doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-06134-0_36

CONFERENCE PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS

9 **Zaki, Y**., Bukhari, S., Mohsen, M., Joma, M., & Alsharabi, H. (2026). Beyond digital ownership: How branded NFTs foster social brand experience and brand equity in the fashion metaverse. UCB International Conference on Business and Innovative Technology (UCBICBIT 2026), Manama, Bahrain, 20 May 2026.

8 **Zaki, Y.**, Wu, M.-S., & Hamdan, A. (2026). From metaverse marketing strategies to brand equity. 9th Equal Opportunities Conference (EO'2026), Ahlia University, Manama, Bahrain, 9–10 February 2026.

7 **Zaki, Y**., Wu, M.-S., Hamdan, A., & John, J. (2025). Fashion branding in the metaverse: A systematic review of metaverse marketing strategies and their impact on brand equity and brand experience. 8th Equal Opportunities Conference (EO'2025), Manama, Bahrain.

6 **Zaki, Y.**, Bukhari, S., Sharif, M., & Alsharabi, H. (2025). Understanding the metaverse: Definition, boundaries, and distinctions from virtual reality. UCB International Conference on Business and Innovative Technology (UCBICBIT 2025), Manama, Bahrain.
published as chapter 8 above.

5 Bukhari, S., Khan, M. S., **Zaki, Y**., Mohammed, M. M., & Wasel, K. Z. A. (2025). Is it intelligent influence or strategic disruption? Public relations and AI in Bahrain. 2nd UCB International Conference — Sustainable Business Futures, Manama, Bahrain.
published as chapter 7 above.

4 **Zaki, Y**., Wu, M.-S., Hamdan, A., & Alsharabi, H. (2024). A conceptual framework for metaverse marketing strategies in the fashion industry. ICBT Cambridge Conference, Murray Edwards College, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom, April 2024.
published as chapter 4 above.

3 Thomas, J., & **Zaki, Y**. (2024). Exploring the potential of electrochemical sensors in precision agriculture for Bahrain. UCB International Conference on Business and Innovative Technology (UCBICBIT 2024), Manama, Bahrain.
published as chapter 6 above.

2 **Zaki, Y**., & Juma, M. (2023). Sustainability in the metaverse: Exploring the role of brands and consumers. International Conference on Business and Technology (CBF 2023), Manama, Bahrain.
published as chapter 5 above.

1 Al Hashimi, S., Al Muwali, A., **Zaki,** Y., & Mahdi, N. (2019). Infusing creativity and technology through repurposing existing digital tools and social media apps for educational purposes. International Conference on ArtsIT, Interactivity and Game Creation, **Lisbon, Portugal**.
published as chapter 1 above.

RESEARCH GRANTS AND FUNDING

In preparation — 2026/27

Institutional seed funding application, University College of Bahrain, for an industry-partnered study of immersive retail experience in Gulf fashion brands. Currently scoping bilateral UK–Gulf research and mobility schemes building on the Brunel–Bahrain relationship.

TEACHING PORTFOLIO

University College of Bahrain, Communication and Multimedia Department

Undergraduate teaching across digital media, multimedia production and graphic design

- Design, deliver and assess undergraduate modules in communication, multimedia and graphic design, including lectures, studio seminars and tutorials.
- Author course materials, lesson plans, rubrics and assessments aligned to programme learning outcomes and accreditation standards.
- Supervise final-year graduation projects in digital media, multimedia production and graphic design, from proposal through to submission, defence and portfolio assessment.
- Provide structured academic advising and career guidance to students entering digital media pathways.
- Continuously revise curriculum content to track industry developments in digital media, AI and immersive technology.

2021 – present

University of Bahrain, Department of Art and Design

Undergraduate teaching, Art history and Graphic Design

2021 - 2022

Teaching recognition

Excellence and Innovation in Teaching Award, University College of Bahrain (2023) Community Engagement Award, University College of Bahrain (2023, 2024, 2025), Students' Career Guidance Award (2026), Associate Fellow, Advance HE (2025).

COURSES TAUGHT

Studio core sequence

- GRD103 Foundation Studio
- GRD204 GD I Studio
- GRD205 GD II Studio
- GRD306 GD III Studio
- GRD307 GD IV Studio

Drawing, illustration fine art

- GRD131 Basic Drawing
- GRD132 Colour Fundamentals
- GRD133 Illustration
- GRD129 Pastel Painting
- GRD128 Printmaking
-

Studio core sequence

- GRD103 Foundation Studio
- GRD204 GD I Studio
- GRD205 GD II Studio
- GRD306 GD III Studio
- GRD307 GD IV Studio

Typography production

- GRD213 Typography I
- GRD323 Pre-press Production

Digital timebased media

- GRD134 Digital Photography
- GRD221 Digital Media I
- RD326 Motion Graphics
- GRD427 Interactive Digital Media

History theory

- GRD151 Art History I
- GRD152 Art History II
- RD353 Graphic Design History

Capstone professional

- GRD408 Final Year Research
- GRD409 Final Year Project

Final Year Project Supervision

GRD408 Final Year Research GRD409 Final Year Project
Supervise final-year graduation projects from proposal through research, production and public exhibition — approximately 5 students per year since [2023], across brand identity, digital media, illustration and motion. Students' work is presented annually at the departmental exhibition.

Designer — University College of Bahrain Newsletter

University College of Bahrain

2023 – present

Lead the design and visual production of the college newsletter, developing layout, visual identity and editorial presentation across each issue.

Master of Ceremonies — Institutional Events

University College of Bahrain

Ongoing

Host and compère major college events, including the UCB International Conference on Business and Innovative Technology and the annual graduation ceremony.

Peer Reviewer — Journal of Strategic Marketing

Taylor and Francis

Ongoing

Review submitted manuscripts on brand strategy, digital and immersive marketing.

Programme Coordinator — Communication and Multimedia

University College of Bahrain

2021 – present

Coordinate programme delivery, scheduling, Moderation, curriculum mapping and quality documentation across the department.

Self-Evaluation Report (SER) Accreditation Lead Contributor

Communication and Multimedia Department, University College of Bahrain

Ongoing

Contribute to the department's institutional accreditation submission: evaluating curriculum against accrediting-body standards, auditing faculty and resource provision, evidencing learning outcomes, and drafting the self-evaluation documentation used to secure and maintain programme accreditation. department.

Convenor — Communication and Multimedia Department Annual Exhibition

University College of Bahrain

Annual

Curate and produce the department's annual public exhibition of student work spanning print, digital media, short film, illustration and visual identity.

Research Participation and Departmental Committees

University College of Bahrain

Ongoing

Contribute to departmental and college-wide committee work, focus groups, research panels and outreach

INVITED TALKS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Digital Presentation and Delivery Skills — 2026
Public workshop, University College of Bahrain · Microsoft Teams

Principles of Thinking Outside the Box — 2024
Public workshop, Media Creativity Club, University College of Bahrain

All-in-One Guide to Midjourney: The Art of Prompts — 2024
Public workshop, University College of Bahrain

The Potential of the Metaverse and NFTs in the Art and Design Industry — 2022
Invited seminar, University of Bahrain

The Future of the Metaverse — 2022
Invited workshop, University College of Bahrain

UCB Research Dialogue — Art and Design Assessment and Feedback in the Online Classroom — 2022
Faculty research seminar, University College of Bahrain

Modern Tools and Applications to Enhance Scientific Research Writing — 2021
Invited seminar, University of Bahrain

Scientific Research, Leadership and Innovation: Between Opportunities and Challenges — 2021
Invited seminar, University of Bahrain

AWARDS AND HONOURS

Excellence in Best Career Guidance — 2026
University College of Bahrain — for exceptional teaching.

UCB Creative Communication Excellence Award — 2026
University College of Bahrain — for exceptional creativity, innovation, dedication in designing UCB newsletter

Best Presentation — 16th Annual PhD Symposium — 2025
8th Equal Opportunities Conference (EO2025), Brunel University of London and Ahlia University

Best Paper — 15th Annual PhD Symposium — 2024
7th Equal Opportunities Conference (EO2024), Brunel University of London and Ahlia University

Best Presentation — 15th Annual PhD Symposium

7th Equal Opportunities Conference (EO2024), Brunel University of London and Ahlia University

2024

Excellence and Innovation in Teaching Award

University College of Bahrain — for exceptional teaching.

2023

Community Engagement Award

University College of Bahrain — for outstanding contribution to the community. 2022/23

2023

Abdullah Al Zayed Media Award

University of Bahrain

2018

Best Animation Project, MCM 355

University of Bahrain

2018

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND CREDENTIALS

International Association for Media and Communication Research (2023– present) programmes.	IAMCR	Interaction Design Foundation (2023– present)	IxDF
Special Interest Group on Computer Graphics and Interactive Techniques (2023–present)	ACM SIGGRAPH	International Group of Artificial Intelligence (2022–present)	IGOA
Associate Fellow, AFHEA — ref. PR314222 (2025)	Advance HE	Global Ambassadors of Sustainability Initiative (2026–present)	GAoS
Adobe Creative Educator Adobe Education Exchange (2021–present)	Adobe	Certified Metaverse Professional Expert (2022)	Blockchain Council
Certified Microsoft Innovative Educator (2021), McKinsey Forward Programme (2023), Google Digital Marketing Certificate (2020), Design Thinking, Creativity and Innovation — Coursera, Udemy, Edraak, Gulf Innovation Academy (2023–2024).			Certifications

METHODOLOGICAL AND TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

Quantitative survey design and instrument validation, structural equation modelling and mediation analysis, systematic literature review, qualitative interviewing, focus groups and thematic analysis, mixed-methods design usability and pedagogical-usability evaluation.	Research methods
Metaverse marketing, Immersive marketing, Branded NFTs, XR and immersive retail Virtual brand experience, Consumer-based brand equity, Fashion branding, Consumer behaviour, Design pedagogy, Digital creativity, Assessment and feedback, Digital media, education, Higher education.	Research domains

Adobe Creative Suite — InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop, After Effects, Animate, XD, Lightroom, Portfolio UI/UX design and prototyping motion graphics and animation, web design, photography and videography.	Design and production
SPSS, AMOS, SmartPLS, Mendeley, AI tools	Academic tools
Arabic (native), English (fluent).	Languages

CREATIVE AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Independent Graphic Designer and Brand Consultant

Brand identity, visual systems and digital campaign design for regional clients

2017 – present

Trainer and Consultant – Design, AI and Research Practice

Independent · Bahrain and regional

Deliver professional training and one-to-one consultation in graphic design and visual communication, generative AI tools and workflows, and academic research practice; clients include [Students / professionals / organisations].

2024 – present

Marketing, Graphic Design and Public Relations Officer

University College of Bahrain

Led institutional marketing and PR: campaign strategy, press communications, visual identity and promotional material development across departments.

2021 – 2023

Chief Executive Officer

Surprise Forever. Bahrain — experience design venture

Founded and led a company designing bespoke customer experiences; responsible for events management and service design.

2020 – 2021

Digital Media Specialist

American Chamber of Commerce. Bahrain

Developed and executed the organisation's social media strategy, produced its digital resources and visual content, authored a social media metrics research report, and delivered event media coverage.

2017 – 2019

Graphic Designer

Bar'ah Training Centre. Bahrain

2016 – 2017

Dr Sama'a Al Hashimi
Associate Professor and Programme Director, BA Arts and Design
University of Bahrain
Phone: 00973 33969 1414
Email: dr.samaa.alhashimi@gmail.com

Dr Amani Al Halwachi
Assistant Professor of Digital Media
University of Bahrain
Phone: 00973 3699 9190
Email:dr.amani.alhalwachi@gmail

A third reference from the doctoral supervisory team at Brunel University of London is available on request.

Yasmina Laki