



FASHION IN INDIA : FROM TRADITION TO SUSTAINABLE CONTEMPORISATION : AN APPRAISAL

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Amity University india is known for its traditions and culture. Minority communities in India are known for their traditional skills, arts and crafts. But due to forces of competitive market and globalization, and also due to deteriorating socioeconomic condition of master craftsmen/artisan, these skills are not being pursued by the young generation. Government of India is of firm conviction that these arts/crafts are needed to be preserved. There is a need to augment traditional arts and entrepreneurial skill which are the backbone of cottage and small scale industry and establish better market linkages, enhance branding and ensure access to credit.

I. INTRODUCTION

Fashion is ever changing. India is a country with diversified customs and cultures. People following various traditions live here, their way of dressing also differ from each other. The traces of Indians being fashionable can be found out from the ancient remains of Harappa and Mohenjodaro civilizations. After the independence, globalization is being witnessed in the Indian fashion industry, due to which changes have occurred in the style of Indian dressing.

India is a country with an ancient clothing design tradition, yet an emerging fashion industry. Though a handful of designers existed prior to the 1980s, the late 80s and the 1990s saw a spurt of growth. This was the result of increasing exposure to global fashion and the economic boom after the economic liberalisation of the Indian economy in 1990. The following decades firmly established fashion as an industry, across India.

II. CLOTHING IN INDIA- PAST TO PRESENT

History of clothing in India, dates back of ancient times, yet fashion is a new industry, as it was the traditional Indian clothings with regional variations, be it sari, ghagracholi or dhoti, that remained popular till early decades of post-independence India. A common form of the Indian fashion originates from the Western culture. Fashion includes a series of sequins and gold thread to attract customers and apply a statement to the Indian fashion community. A famous Indian fashion trademark is embroidery, a art of sewing distinct thread patterns. A way to include the traditional look and create a new fashion statement includes embroidery applied to different dresses, skirts, shirts, and pants to reflect the western culture influence as well as include the Indian tradition. As a part of larger revival movement in the Indian textile industry, Ritu Kumar, a Kolkata-based designer and textile print-



expert started working on reviving the traditional hand block printing techniques of Bengal, and making it a part of the fashion industry, established "ethnic chic". She opened her first boutique in Delhi in 1966. In 1973, she first showcased the Zardozi embroidery in her garments, which had its origins in the royal costumes dating back to the Mughal era. This led to the revival of this lost art. In time embroidery became prominent feature of Indian wedding attires, and also one of the biggest fashion exports. This was period of revival, where various organisations, NGOs and individuals were involved in reviving traditional Indian techniques, in weaving, printing, dyeing or embroidery, including *ikat*, *patola* (double-ikat), *bandhani* (tie & dye) and *shisha* (mirror embroidery).

III. CONTEMPORISATION OF FASHION

in the recent decades, with increasing exposure to the West, its influence is no longer as strong as in the previous decades,^[5] by the 2000s, with rise in Indian diaspora around the world and the non-resident Indians, Bollywood continues to exert far greater influence on the fashion sensibilities amongst Indians around the world.

There are models called as theories of fashion which affects the change and dissemination of fashion in a population. Basically there are three popular theories as: the Trickle-down theory which states that the movement of fashion starts at the top with consumers of higher socioeconomic status and moves down to the general public. This is the oldest and most accepted theory of fashion movement. Then comes the trickle-up theory, that states that the movement of fashion starts with consumers on lower-income levels and then moves to consumers with higher incomes. Lastly and the most common theory of present time is trickle across theory, this theory hypothesizes that designs are produced at all price levels at the same time. The merchandise quality and lines may vary, but new fashion exists for all groups. The trickle across theory is the most popular theory especially in the 21st century because technology allows designer fashions to be copied quickly and easily, making them available to all consumers sooner.

India's centuries old tradition of ornamenting fabric has survived with the ravages of time and preserved local crafts, which reflect ample testimony to this great culture. Dyeing, printing, painting, brocading and embroidery have been traditionally used by women all over the world to decorate textile and apparel articles for their personal use. Embroidery, an expression of aesthetics, rendered with patient labour, is an art described as "painting by needle". Embroidery adds grace and elegance even into articles of everyday use garments in the modern society is in increasing demand due to the fast changing fashion and their gracious look.

Warli, Aipan, Madhubani, Kantha, Kalamkari, Thappa, Bandhej etc. are the few name of art forms, which are entering the fashion field, is a revolution to these art itself. Designers were inspired by the simplicity of these art and have tried to implement them into today's fashion. Everything about these arts, is natural and beautiful. They have the aptitude to create the nostalgia. They can make you feel the smell of the culture and tradition. Today, anyone can see these folk art forms as a wall hanging, as a home decor, as a garment, as a craft items, as an accessory and still more.

After globalization, in the 1960s, tight "Kurtas" And "Churidars" were a trend among ladies. In the 1970s international fashion arrived in India much before the MTV culture with the bold colors, flower prints and bell-



bottoms. Synthetics turned trendy and the disco culture affected the fashion scenario. It was in the early 1980s when the first fashion store “**Ravissant**” opened in Mumbai. With the evolution of designer stores in Mumbai, clients immediately transformed into the high fashion fold where they were convinced that that the word “**Fashion Design**” Means, it had to have a higher price tag. In the 1990’s, the price tags, which had reached a peak, began their downside journey. In those times the downturn was not only experienced in the prices of the garments, but also in the business of fashion shows. More models, choreographers, make-up men, hairstylists and designers streamed down into this business. The fun and party time in the Indian fashion scenario did not end with this, but continued. It was a point, where it reached a certain steady level and from there, in the beginning of the 21st century, with new designers and models and some sensible designing, the fashion hype accelerated. There are many factors that accelerate or decelerate the movement of fashion. The accelerating factors are communications and mass media, good economic conditions, increased competition, technological advances, social and physical mobility, more leisure time, higher levels of education, changing roles of women and seasonal changes. Whereas the factors that decelerate the fashion are Bad economic conditions, Cultural and religious customs, Laws or other governmental regulations, Disruptive world events.

For the global fashion industry, India is a very big exporter of fabrics and accessories. India’s strengths not only depend on its tradition, but also in its raw materials. World over, India is the third largest producer of cotton, the second largest producer of silk and the fifth largest producer of man-made fibres, apart from having cheaper skilled work force. India provides these fabrics to the international fashion houses at competitive prices with shorter lead time and an effective monopoly in designs which covers elaborated hand embroidery. Indian garments embellishment with bead work is another area which is in demand in the international market.

Fashion has always been greatly influenced by social standings and accessibility to money. During austerity period, when the money was scarce, one was able to get cheap fabrics and more women started sewing more themselves to save money as well which enabled them to set trends in their own social circles that were to stay around for decades. As the effects of cinema became more evident, the hemlines altered from mid-calf during day time to full length in the evening. Mens fashions were more relaxed and the v neck sweater and wider pants replaced the 3 piece suit. A hat for a man was a social standing and was a sign of a well-dressed male.

Technology had many advances during the 20th century as well. This included the first glimpses of the TV set, as well as medical improvements. It has proved to be a great drive in the vicissitudes and trends in fashion. The internet has also proved indispensable to the growth of fashion business .The website facilitates ordering for commercial and private customers alike, showcasing the full collection alongside color variations and prices. Working with a website not only provides a more direct route to the final customer, but also helps to gain exposure and portray a more professional brand. Private consultations with the designer offer a unique shopping experience, and a participatory role in the design process as the consumer becomes a co-designer in the final product.

Social networking, such as Facebook, also play an important role in this type of business model; prospective customers are able to interact with established customers, initiate debates, view collections, follow promotions, and identify up-coming events (Burns, C., 2011).



In a period of economic austerity, this competition becomes all the more apparent as consumers become more prudent. In recent years, the growth of fast fashion has made clothes much cheaper relative to income in comparison to a few decades ago (Black, 2008, p.14). It is therefore unfeasible for the fashion entrepreneur to compete with these price scales and for that reason that their product ranges have the added value worth that merit their higher prices.

Despite the climate of austerity, the growing numbers of craft and fashion events indicate a market for fashion products, although a definite change in consumer attitudes is perceptible.

In addition, a greater level of customer service establishes a strong reputation and ensures that customers will return or recommend the brand to others. Identifying and understanding the needs of the consumer is critical, finding an appropriate sales location, or targeting the right craft fair is essential.

In addition, the ability to quickly embrace new technologies to advance their business allows Fashion businesses to compete in the market place against stiff competition from all sectors of the global fashion and textile industry. More importantly, this new media has become instrumental as a way of moving product to the market place, cutting out the middle man, and providing an easier and more profitable alternative to supplying retailers. Even from a remote location, it is an excellent tool for networking with customers & retailer.

The Indian folk arts with printing and embroidery play important role in creating new designs. Escalating demands of consumers requires modification in the fashion industry with respect to design, colour, style and technique. So an attempt was made to develop a design pool using folk art of Uttarakhand (aipan) for applique work. This also provides the opportunity to use the adapted traditional motifs on textiles and to preserve the beautiful traditional folk art. Aipan motifs were adapted for center design, border design, and buti design. Total thirty motifs / designs were developed keeping in mind their suitability for articles like bags, pencil purse and mobile holder. All the developed designs were subjected to visual evaluation for selection of two best designs in each category by the panel of thirty judges to find out the suitability of the developed designs for appliqué work. Thus total six motifs were selected for preparation of the five arrangements for each article. Four final selected arrangements with appliqué work were prepared using different embroidery stitches (slip hemming, couching, buttonhole and chain stitch). Plain red poplin and left-out fabrics were used to prepare articles. Finally articles were prepared by using selected arrangements and these prepared articles were highly appreciated by the consumers.

Indian fashion industry as such remains academically understudied. Even though there is research available on textiles, craft traditions and history of Indian dress. The only anthropological study of the Indian fashion industry, based on ethnographic research in Northern India, specifically New Delhi and Lucknow and dealing with both the worlds of luxury fashion designers and the worlds of craftspeople and workers in the industry, is [TerezaKuldova's](#) seminal work: 'Luxury Indian Fashion: A Social Critique' published by Bloomsbury in 2016

IV. CONCLUSION

As India is known for its traditions and culture. Minority communities in India are known for their traditional skills, arts and crafts. But due to forces of competitive market and globalization, and also due to deteriorating socioeconomic condition of master craftsmen/artisan, these skills are not being pursued by the young

generation. Government of India is of firm conviction that these arts/crafts are needed to be preserved. There is a need to augment traditional arts and entrepreneurial skill which are the backbone of cottage and small scale industry and establish better market linkages, enhance branding and ensure access to credit.

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