

Evolution of Fashion with Reference to Indian Culture

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Lifestyle and trends are strongly influenced by social-cultural changes, such as modernization, technological innovation and also by artistic movements. Trend analysis looks at the interaction of shifts in fashion, consumer lifestyle and culture and is a framework for understanding and interpreting fashion changes. It is important to realize is, that trends are made by people, who on different levels get involved with different artistic environments.

In order to understand a fashion trend, we need to be aware of what will surround us in terms of our social-cultural way of living. The development of new trends usually involves three main sources, which influence our cultural live and lifestyle.

Fashion & Art is a product of human activity, made with the intention of stimulating the human senses, as well as the human mind by transmitting emotions or ideas. In terms of fashion inspiration, these emotions and ideas can later on undergo a further process and lead to new forms of inspirations and concepts.

'Nothing is constant except for change!' Fashion is nothing but a constantly changing trend.

Great philosophers have come up with different definitions for fashion. But all of them hold one concept in common - looking and feeling good! Being fashionable will certainly help you in taking the first step towards your goal.

Fashion has a long history of trials and errors. What was considered fashionable a few decades back might be synonymous to killing fashion in modern times! Similarly, what is considered fashionable in modern times may be like a fashion suicide for people living a few decades back! The era, beliefs held by the people living in it, and the culture in that era and in that region plays a considerable role in influencing its fashion trends.

Designers and manufacturers produce clothing and accessories in accordance with the culture of a particular region. It becomes the fashion of the region, then. People adopt a trend in clothing only if it is in accordance with the culture of that area.

I. INTRODUCTION

Fashion is the style and custom that is adopted at a given period of time and it keeps on changing from time to time. As the world progresses toward the innovation of more powerful machines which are easy to manipulate, on the other hand fashion is not left behind. Different types of clothes made from different materials and designs have made people to change their mode of dressing of which smartness may vary from one person to the other. To wear a pair of jeans while attending an official duty was seen as indecent, but nowadays one can wear as there are some of jeans that look like official wears and match best with shirts. Fashion can not only be on the clothes design, but also the under garments, caps and all that entails dressing in general. Nowadays there are different clothes that suit different occasions. There are certain clothes that are best for music; there are those for afro music, and they like wearing big clothes and the hair style will also reveal the

type of music. In the past there clothes were for general purposes there were no specific clothes for specific functions except for the wedding gown which one could know it was meant for a bride.

There are clothes meant for summer others for winter, spring and autumn and this is as a result of fashion. Women are the one who are greatly affected by the fashion trend and they always want to be the first to have a certain fashion that is new in the market. Hair is also included as part of the fashion as there are many different hair styles.

The advantage of fashion is it has brought civilization and discovery of other textile that are durable, long lasting. Most of the people observe fashion as the western habit which occurred mainly during their economic or social change but in real sense nowadays fashion is experienced in every corner of the world with every community coming up with their own mode of fashion that identifies them.

What a person wears can easily tell what kind of a person he is, the behavior and generally you can be accorded respect as per the mode of your dressing.

Fashion also varies according to age, social class, generation occupation and the geographical location. The young may look well when dressed in the old people clothes but when an old person decides to dress like a youth bet he will attract the attention of all the people because he will be looking ridiculous. Fashion has also been used to denote a certain social class as one can easily tell the class one belongs to through the mode of dressing and the make ups used and the material. It can also tell someone's occupation and the geographical region one is coming from.

Indian Culture, which is one of the oldest & richest cultures, is now days posing a serious threat as western culture is establishing its strong base in India and slowly and gradually wiping the Indian culture. No doubt the western culture is versatile and has taught to be self-independent but this does not mean that we will forget our culture at all and blindly follow it. Since India has the tradition to take good things from others but this does not mean that we will completely forget our values. Indian have such a rich cultural heritage which is very rare and should carry this forward and inherit the same to our new blooms who are going to be our future.

Indian fashion trends have been constantly changing due to several factors including diversity within the country, Islamic invasion, western colonialism and foreign traders that have visited the country from time immemorial. The basic reason of the immense popularity of Indian fashion wear across the globe is its receptivity. Indian fashion absorbs all foreign elements, designs and styles in such a manner that they seem to be an inherent part of the apparels. Today's Indian fashion industry is very much influenced by western world due to globalization of the industry and demand of innovative Indian apparels having a western touch. Let's have a look at its reasons.

As mentioned at the outset, India is having scads of cultural diversities which has made Indians very open-minded. Various ethnic groups stay in one country learning about each other's culture and language. Each ethnic group has a distinct style of dressing which becomes a new thing to try for the other. It makes Indians more experimental about their dresses. That's why Indian fashion designers have gained utmost dexterity and global fame in amalgamating various styles in attires.

Indian beauties have made their mark by winning lots of fashion pageants of international level. These girls wear several types of dresses which are usually influenced by western styles and designs. There's no need to tell

how passionately these models are being followed in their styles and apparels. It also encourages western elements in Indian fashion industry.

This nick name given by media to Hindi film industry explains a lot about the influence of Hollywood on it. People from any country tend to wear what their favorite actors do. Same holds true for India and hence Bollywood has become a big platform popularizing western wear trends.

Indians going to western countries for educational, employment or business opportunities. These people also add to the western impact on Indian fashion wear. When they come back to their homeland, they bring some traces of western culture along with them which later are adopted by their family members and friends as well.

The world has become a global village where all the countries are engaged in importing and exporting. Along with materials and stuffs, cultural elements and fashion trends also gets delivered. Along with that, liberalization has also played a significant role here.

Civilizations do meet and even merge but never has such an impact been witnessed as the impact of the west on India. A Birdseye view of the Indian scenario would depict a miniature or a distorted West in India.

The impact has been so great and so deep that, wherever we go, and, as far as the eye can see, we notice only western modes and we are for a moment set to wonder if we are in India or in some western country.

Impact of cultures is felt elsewhere also and this is bound to be, when two people or two societies or two countries meet but, neither leaves its own system wholesale as in India. This is a unique feature in India only, where the culture of the west has penetrated so deep and far and wide that, the original Indian culture has got lost somewhere.

To find western impact on India we do not have to go far to seek. Each and every home, each and every sphere of life has been completely influenced by the west that it is difficult to recognize what is Indian in India. Our food, and food habits, our dresses, our dances, our songs, our music, our life style are all of the western pattern. One often wonders whether where we live is India, or a colony of the west? The influence is also changing our education system. In schools, the language most prominent is English and not Hindi. The medium of instruction is also English, so far so good.

However, the sad part of this system is that, the schools that lay more stress on Hindi, or use the Hindi Medium of instruction, are known to be second rate schools. Thus, we have not only adopted the British ways but we also appreciate them only.

The height of it all is seen when see that, a person who can communicate in English is known to be smarter than a person who cannot. This volume of change is not understandable. It implies that, not only have we taken to western styles, we also admire only them who follow the western styles, in comparison to those who follow the Indian styles. This much influence is not only unwarranted but also shameful. It has often been seen that countries do adopt methods of other countries but in doing so, they maintain their own identity. The loss of the identity is only found in India.

To a great extent the influence of the British can be well understood as, we have remained slaves to them for two centuries. This much may be excused, but to revolt if anything Indian or anything indigenous is being introduced cannot be forgiven at all.

This only points to the ugly fact that, we have got independence from the British only physically and politically but, mentally and culturally the onslaught on India has been complete. We, even to-day, remain culturally and mentally bonded to the west. Whenever anything Indian is talked about there is an attitude of derision for it, even in the highest echelons of society.

This indicates a full and complete degeneration of Indian culture and its total merger with the culture of the west.

In my view, it is good to learn whatever is good anywhere, but, to learn a thing just because it is of the west only depicts a crumbled and shattered state of the Indian mind. We must learn to sort out and learn what is good elsewhere and maintain what is good in us.

If we do this we can have the best of all - and that is what an intelligent person or community should be doing - alas India has not done it and got lost in the labyrinth of western notions at the cost of all that was ours.